



*Your  
Apprenticeship  
Experts*

# **APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYER UPDATE**

August 2021





## Welcome to our Apprenticeships update – read about new developments and how we can continue to support your Apprenticeship programme.

In light of the Coronavirus Pandemic, we have made a series of amendments and improvements to our service, to ensure our clients and apprentices are best supported. This includes providing a full virtual delivery model, providing extra support and guidance to employers around COVID H&S security, increasing safeguarding support and the ability to support you with extra funding to recruit and train apprentices. Please read on for more information on how we have increased our level of support during this pandemic.

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At PTS we pride ourselves on the level of support and customer service we provide. Prospect Training Services can assist your business in the areas of:

- Business Administration
- Customer Service
- Health & Social Care
- Team Leading
- Adult Care

By working with PTS you gain the expertise of our professional Apprenticeship HR and Recruitment team. We are here to discuss your needs and ensure you have the best financial package, plus we'll keep you informed of any updates.

Apprenticeships were extremely successful in the past to create a workforce with the relevant skills, knowledge and experience. This is still true today as apprentices work with you to learn and improve, taking pride in their new skills, and giving you serious effort and loyalty in return.

Apprentices benefit their employer, using every opportunity to make progress, adding value, motivation and enthusiasm to your workforce.

Thank you for working with Prospect Training Services and taking part in this worthwhile initiative.

### Contact us:

**Ewen Saunders (Commercial Director)**

**01452 886 888**

**[ewens@trainandrecruit.com](mailto:ewens@trainandrecruit.com)**

*What's new?*

# AWARDING ORGANISATIONS FEEDBACK

We are excited to say we have received a successful and really positive feedback report from our Awarding Organisations about how evident it is that we have supported the Health & Social Care Apprentices throughout lockdown to enable them to achieve their Apprenticeship Programmes which we are very proud of at PTS.

## ESFA Update

The Education and Skills Finding Agency (ESFA) has updated the reservation of funds for employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy, allowing them to recruit additional apprentices and receive extra help.

Since the 1st of April, any employer who does pay the levy will have their reservation levels reset to 0. They can now make up to 10 new reservations for any apprentice that begins in the financial year of 2021-2022. If a reservation was made before the 1st of April, this can be converted to start within the reservation period, however, these will not count towards the number of reservations made in 2021-2022.

The reservation period for funding has also changed from three months to six months before an apprentice begins, allowing more flexibility when planning apprenticeship programmes. These will be available to use from the selected month of the apprenticeship's start date and then for the next two following months. If this is not used, the reservation fund will expire at the end of the third month.

For more information, please contact Ewen on **01452 886 888** or [ewens@trainandrecruit.com](mailto:ewens@trainandrecruit.com).



# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

From the 1st of July, **Access to Work Mental Health Support** Service has facilities that allow you and your employees to receive free support for their mental health. This is delivered through Able Futures who have teamed up with Case-UK Limit to deliver this throughout the South West of England.

A mental health specialist can be assigned to your employees and can provide them with lessons on how to use coping mechanisms as well as therapy to help with the issues they are struggling with. Able Futures can also work with you to help make adjustments to suit your employee's needs.

This support consists of nine months of confidential advice, guidance and support that is free and can help your employees with their:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Stress
- Bereavement
- Seasonal affective disorder (SAD)
- Mental wellbeing
- Sleep
- Eating and drinking

The service is flexible and is tailored to suit your needs. This can be done face-to-face or via the telephone and is 100% confidential.

## You can apply if your employees:

- Are aged 16 or over.
- Are currently working in a job or apprenticeship, about to start working or furloughed.
- Have mental health issues that affect their work.

To find out more, visit [www.able-futures.co.uk](http://www.able-futures.co.uk) or contact them via email at [hello@able-futures.co.uk](mailto:hello@able-futures.co.uk) or telephone on 0800 321 3137 from 8am to 10.30pm, Monday to Friday.





# NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE AWARDS 2021

The National Apprenticeship Service Awards have been created to recognise and reward the achievements of apprentices and their employers, including any that set the standard for their industries and create an exceptional workplace for their apprentices. There are four awards that can be won:

- Apprentice of the year - for apprentices who have made an exception difference to the workplace.
- Employer of the year - for employers who have made the most of the apprenticeships they have provided.
- Rising star - identifying apprentices who have made exceptional progress in their career.
- Apprenticeship champion of the year - for apprentices with incredible passion and enthusiasm for what they do.

For more information, please visit our website [appawards.co.uk](https://www.appawards.co.uk) or call **0800 954 88 96**



# TRAINEESHIP & APPRENTICESHIP GOVERNMENT EMPLOYER GRANTS

The government move to ward off mounting fears of a surge in youth unemployment by increasing support for apprenticeships and funding six-month job placements for 18 to 24 year olds has been welcomed.

The chancellor Rishi Sunak announced what he said was a three-point strategy to support, protect and retain jobs amid evidence that the fallout from the coronavirus lockdown has hit vulnerable young workers the hardest.

In addition to this, we know that many of you already work with PTS to offer work placements to our Traineeship learners. You can now potentially access **£1,000 per placement** you provide to a young person on a Traineeship.

Part of that strategy is **£3,000** in funding for **every** new apprentice a business hires between the 1st of April and the 30th of September 2021. They can be at any age and there is no limit to the amount of new apprentices you can claim for. However, they must start or have started between the 1st of April to the 30th of November 2021.

This incentive is in addition to the **£1,000** you will receive for hiring an apprentice if they are:

- 16-18 years old
- Under 25 with an education, health and care plan or have been in the care of their local authority.

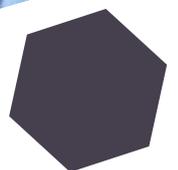
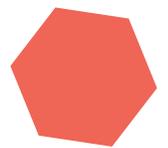
We at PTS can help you secure this funding and support you as an organisation to identify a new member of your team to support your succession planning for your workforce.

By working in partnership with PTS we can identify you an excellent new young member of your team and access up to **£4,000** per young person you take on and up to **£5000** if they were on a Traineeship placement before their apprenticeship.

Within the current climate, it is vital that young people are given the opportunity to develop the experience and skills they need to succeed and we are calling on employers like yourselves to support this where you can.

Don't miss out on this additional government funding and contact us at PTS today.

Please contact Ewen Saunders on **01452 886 888** or **ewens@trainandrecruit.com**



# CASE STUDY

## CIVICA GROUP

### Rachel Higgins

When Rachel left school, the idea of going to college was not appealing because she wanted more practical training opportunities. A PTS apprenticeship seemed attractive because it offered the opportunity of gaining support at the beginning of her career. Rachel decided she wanted to join a PTS Apprenticeship Programme in Customer Service.

Rachel said 'PTS provided a great level of support and in different ways. For instance, an allocated tutor was arranged to deliver regular workshop sessions to myself and in accordance with my training needs. PTS also provided on demand support to myself, as they were easy to contact and responded quickly to requests. My tutor, Chrissie, was very motivating and provided words of encouragement for enhancing my confidence. Chrissie made great efforts in getting to know my learning needs and demonstrated great ability to adapt training methods to my learning needs. She regularly offered constructive feedback in order to support the enhancement of my learning'.

When Rachel started her apprenticeship placement, she had little idea how to provide customer services. When she joined Civica, she was provided with continuous learning and knowledge of customer services. Rachel felt the quality of her employer's support was of equal quality to the support that PTS staff and tutors offered her. Her employer made great efforts in getting to know her training needs and demonstrated great ability in delivering training sessions that were tailored to support her needs. They allowed her to develop her experience in her role and put her job knowledge into practice. The employer provided regular constructive feedback, which enabled her to improve her performance and knowledge.

Rachel said 'As a consequence of being able to easily request on-demand support, I credit PTS for helping me successfully complete all modules of the apprenticeship training programme, with great results. As a result of their workshops, I have developed excellent customer service skills'. Since completing her apprenticeship, Rachel secured herself a permanent position with Civica, as a qualified Customer Service Advisor. Rachel said, 'I really enjoy representing my employer in a positive manner and helping people. Since working with my current employer, my general attitude has developed into a mature nature and is now of a more confident attitude type'.

Rachel is very grateful that her professional development is ongoing. Rachel said, 'Since passing my apprenticeship, I have been trained to deliver more services and have been given an increased level of responsibility within my employer's organisation. I have continuous learning of different services and customer service knowledge. My confidence has increased since learning how to contribute to a positive working environment and continuing to be successful in doing so. I am also proud that I am entrusted to provide a professional image of my employer's organisation and to be helping people in life. I would like to continue developing in my current role for another five years. I am keen to continue with a career in customer service and in the future, I would like to work in a financial customer service position'.

If you are interested in our apprenticeship opportunities, contact Ewen Saunders on **01452 886 888** or email: [ewens@trainandrecruit.com](mailto:ewens@trainandrecruit.com)

*Our continued service to you ...*

# PREVENT & SAFEGUARDING UPDATE FOR EMPLOYERS

Prospect Training Services have a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of their learners and staff, and to ensure they operate within the law. As an employer providing work related learning you also have a duty of care for your learner's health and wellbeing. The PTS Safeguarding Team are here to support and advise you on how to do this:

## Safeguarding at PTS

We have a robust safeguarding policy and procedure in place which all of our learners are informed of as part of their induction. This information is made available to our employers and can be requested at any time. We strive to keep our learners safe and ensure that they know they can access support at any time during their programme.

### Reporting Safeguarding Concerns:

If a learner discloses anything that gives you reason to suspect that they may be at risk of harm, you should:

1. Listen carefully and take what is being said seriously.
2. Tell the learner you have a duty to report concerns.
3. Tell the learner you cannot promise confidentiality.
4. Write down what the learner says in their own words.
5. Email the PTS Safeguarding Manager [katew@ptsyouth.co.uk](mailto:katew@ptsyouth.co.uk) (please do not include any sensitive information in the email and please only use the initials of the learner). If you would prefer to call and ask for advice you can contact **Kate Whereat** on **01452 300 255** to discuss your concerns.
6. You will be advised on what actions will be taken and fully supported to submit your concern/referral in a secure way.
7. PTS have a Child Protection Online Management System (CPOMS) in place to record and monitor all concerns raised about their learners, so it is vital that you report your concerns as soon as possible, no matter how big or small you think they might be.

### The use of Microsoft TEAMS Virtual Learning

As the country is easing out of the restrictions put in place due to Covid-19, we are now able to meet with our students face to face. However, your apprentice can continue to have 1:1 sessions with their assessor if this is what they require. Please rest assured that this has been fully risk assessed for us to keep the apprentice safe from online harm. We have provided each apprentice with a Virtual Learning Code of Conduct and their assessor will ensure that they are aware of the safeguarding protocols ahead of each virtual session. There may be occasions where you could be asked to take part in a 3-way review on Teams, we hope you will find this different way of working enjoyable and that it will help you to play an important part in your apprentice's journey. If you have any comments or concerns relating to the use of Microsoft Teams please let us know, your feedback is important to us!

## Learners & Prevent

All of our learners will cover the online training modules listed below as part of their apprenticeship or study programme:

- Radicalisation
- British Values
- Equality and Diversity
- Keeping Themselves Safe Online

If you would like to view these modules, or even complete them yourself to increase your awareness and knowledge in this area, you can access the Side by Side resources at:

<https://www.etflearners.org.uk/login/index.php>

We have also introduced an Action Counters Terrorism course for all learners. This is a mandatory part of our programme which covers:

- Introduction to Terrorism
- Identifying Security Vulnerabilities
- Identify and Responding to Suspicious Behaviour
- Identify and Deal with a Suspicious Item
- What to do in the Event of a Bomb Threat
- How to Repond to a Firearms Attack

Each learner will be awarded with a certificate after completing this course and we hope that this will further enhance their skills in the workplace and provide them with the knowledge to keep themselves and your employees safe.

**If you would like any further information on Prevent or Safeguarding please contact:**

**Kate Whereat**

**01452 300255**

**[katew@ptsyouth.co.uk](mailto:katew@ptsyouth.co.uk)**





## Current Local Safeguarding Campaigns

PTS work closely with the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards. This includes the active promotion of national campaigns and undertaking any relevant training that is offered by the boards. In this newsletter I would like to draw your attention to the current topic:

### Everyone's Invited

As you may already know, there is a new helpline and website that has recently launched called Everyone's Invited, a campaign that is trying to remove rape culture. As a company, PTS completely supports this movement and do so by having the following in place:

- We have a zero tolerance approach to this in all of our centres and programmes. Bullying or harassment of any kind is not and will not be tolerated.
- PTS have an open-door policy where disclosure will be listened to and handled in a professional and non-judgemental manner.
- With every programme that we teach, we always include lessons on respect and how to understand personal boundaries.
- Learners will also be informed of the support available to them and how they can access this.
- We also make it clear to our students and apprentices about our code of conduct which states how they should behave both in our centres and in the workplace.
- Our policies and procedures outline how we recognise the risks that young people and customers are vulnerable to, which includes sexual abuse, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour.
- We work closely with our local partnerships to make sure that when a disclosure is made, the key agencies are involved. This isn't just from a legal point of view. This ensures that the individual in question has the right support.
- Our recruitment policy has been created in line with Safer Recruitment, which means that every member of staff we recruit has had a secure background check.

As a company, we accept Ofsted's review into safeguarding policies for schools and colleges. We have and will always do everything we can to make sure that our students feel safe. This includes making any improvements when needed, taking any training or listening to any feedback provided from reviews.

**We fully support Everyone's Invited.  
Let's end rape culture together!**





# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS APPRENTICESHIP SESSIONS

**Does your apprentice need to brush up on their Functional Skills Maths, English or ICT to achieve their Apprenticeship with PTS?**

We are providing small group and 1:1 sessions for your apprentices if they need support. These sessions can be accessed virtually or face to face where possible.

To book a slot, please contact **Liz Handley** on **01452 300 255**



For further information, please contact  
**Ewen Saunders (Commercial Director)**  
on **01452 886 888** or **07540 778 503**  
or **[ewens@trainandrecruit.com](mailto:ewens@trainandrecruit.com)**