



Employer Toolkit

A practical guide for employers
on cyber security and digital
technology apprenticeships

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Introduction

We are all increasing our use of digital technologies and the internet at home and at work, and it is critical that these technologies are secure and resilient.

Scotland, like the rest of the world, needs a strong supply of people with important cyber security and other digital-related skills to ensure organisations, businesses and public services are digitally secure and resilient.

When it comes to attracting and retaining new talent, or developing your existing workforce, knowing where to start can be daunting.

This toolkit will guide you through the different types of training available for new recruits and for members of your existing workforce. It will also explain some practical considerations relating to wages, your responsibilities as an employer, funding for training, and other important points to think about.

Apprenticeships are Scotland's most formal and structured training option for young people entering the world of work, but did you know they are also a great option to grow the skills of your existing workforce – and that they are available to people of all ages?

This toolkit also highlights other options for attracting new talent into your organisation, including through work experience placements and internships.

These are usually offered on a more temporary basis, but can provide a pipeline of talent ready to move into your organisation.

Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to.

RICHARD BRANSON



Apprenticeships: Getting Started



How do apprenticeships work?

Apprenticeships are offered by employers and a training provider. As an employer, you will work with the training provider to make sure the training is tailored to the needs of your business and the apprentice's role.

The programme is formalised in an individual training plan, which is signed by you, the training provider and the apprentice.

Training providers can and will supply delivery models using a mix of classroom training, online resources and one to one assessor-led support.

The apprentice should be supported whilst undertaking their training and study. Most of the training is on the job, with time off for attending training if required (this will be agreed in advance), but some flexibility may be required, for example for visits to the workplace by the assessor or for the completion of assessments.

If day release for training is tricky because of where you/the apprentice are based, then you should explore all the potential options with local training providers but also online training providers. Time at college or university, or to attend a training centre, may be by day or block release.

The training provider helps the apprentice to achieve their qualification and will also help them identify potential additional training opportunities at the end of the apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships tend to offer the best return in terms of training young people.



What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship combines a real job with a structured programme of learning and leads to industry-recognised qualifications. You can recruit an apprentice or support one of your existing employees through an apprenticeship.

An apprentice is aged 16 or over and will be employed in their role, full or part time, for one to three years (depending on the length of the programme).

An apprentice earns while they learn, gaining a wide mix of skills and knowledge on the job. This learning may be supported by classroom-based learning provided by a university, college or independent training provider. The training is agreed between you, the apprentice and the training provider, and is built around the job role to meet the needs of your business or organisation. This is formalised in a training plan.

An apprentice is given real responsibilities in a real working environment, and should be treated as normal employees, with employment contracts setting out their rights under employment law, including paid holidays and sick pay. You should provide an apprentice with time each week, (recommended to be between two and four hours each week) to concentrate on the learning and studying they need to do.

As an employer, you are investing your time and efforts in the apprentice's learning and development. Equally, an apprentice is committing to a long-term period of training, so is usually motivated and driven to learn and succeed.

Which apprenticeship is right for your organisation?

MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

Data Analytics Technical Apprenticeship [Level 8]

Information Security [Level 6]

Information Security [Level 8]

Digital Technologies Technical Apprenticeship [Level 8]

IT & Telecommunications [Level 6]

IT & Telecommunications Technical Apprenticeship [Level 8]



GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIPS

Cyber Security

Data Science

IT: Software Development



Important questions to ask yourself before you take on an apprentice.

- What does my organisation need?
- What benefits would an apprentice bring to my organisation?
- How will I involve an apprentice in the day-to-day running of my organisation?

Content of the apprenticeship programme

Each apprenticeship programme has a framework. The framework sets out which competence-based qualification (such as an SVQ), core skills and optional units that allow the training provider to tailor the learning programme to the needs of your business, or the apprentice's specific role.

Frameworks help to ensure that apprenticeship programmes are delivered to the same standard, no matter where the apprenticeship takes place. There are various frameworks to suit different types of apprenticeships, and these are designed in partnership with industry and training providers.

The training provider will help you to decide which framework is most relevant to the job and will incorporate optional units relevant to your business. These could include, for example, software development, data analytics or penetration testing.

Core skills include numeracy, communication, information technology, problem solving, and working with others.

Meta-skills focus on developing critical thinking, creativity and leadership. All of these skills form the basis of an apprenticeship framework.

Apprentices need to show they have achieved a minimum standard in these skills to be able to successfully complete the qualification.

These elements of the framework can sometimes cause apprentices concern, perhaps if they have had a negative experience of learning in the past, but when the learning and assessment is delivered in the context of work, apprentices often achieve successfully.

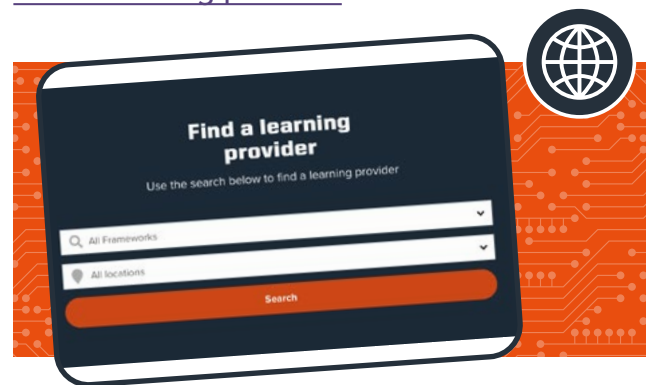
Evidence shows that apprenticeships that have the most success are those where the apprentice is quickly integrated into the existing team, well mentored and supported throughout, and given a broad range of experience within the organisation.

Finding an apprentice

A training provider can help you to enrol an existing employee onto an apprenticeship programme or support you in finding a suitable candidate through their recruitment service.

Employers are encouraged to post apprenticeship opportunities on apprenticeships.scot. A local training provider can also help you, through their links with schools, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) groups and career advisors. Many employers also advertise for apprentices through social media channels.

Before you employ an apprentice, you should contact your local training provider or search for a training provider at [Apprenticeships | Find a training provider](#)



To enrol on an apprenticeship programme, a young person must:

- Be 16 and over (and usually up to 24 although some frameworks provide funding for apprentices over the age of 25)
- Have a full-time or part-time paid job
- Not be in full-time education
- Live in Scotland or have their main place of work in Scotland

There are different financial contributions provided by Skills Development Scotland to support the delivery of an apprenticeship. There are three distinct age categories of candidates with different SDS contribution values. Candidates aged 16-19 receive the maximum contribution for their apprenticeship, those aged 20-24 normally receive 50% of the available contribution and 25+ less than 50% of the available contribution. The contributions are to support the costs for your approved training provider to deliver the Modern Apprenticeship programme. As an employer you may also be asked by the training provider to make additional financial contributions towards the programme delivery.

Our contribution table shows how much we pay towards the cost of training for every apprenticeship. Use [this table](#) and then talk to different training providers to discuss their training costs.

Once you have found a suitable candidate, the training provider will arrange to visit your organisation to look at the working environment and carry out a risk assessment.

There is always a commercial consideration when giving an apprentice experience in different parts of the business, but an early investment of time and support is often repaid by a confident, able and motivated employee who can effectively deal with challenges as they develop.

How can an apprenticeship benefit my organisation?

- You get access to a pipeline of future talent, making the recruitment process time and cost effective.
- Apprenticeships can help your business to develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.
- Research shows that structured training increases job satisfaction and morale among employees, motivating them to do a better job.
- Greater skills and motivation mean that your business will be more able to adopt new technologies, processes and innovations.
- It also helps you to keep staff, reducing employee turnover and time spent recruiting and training new staff.
- Creating these opportunities keeps young people in the local area and within the sector, giving a wider talent pool. This not only benefits employers but the industries and communities as a whole.

How are apprentices assessed?

Throughout their training the apprentice will be assessed in a number of ways, either off the job, in a college or other setting, or in the workplace, or in a mixture of both. The apprentice should be able to show that they can confidently and competently perform tasks to the required standard.

The time it takes to complete the apprenticeship depends on the skill, the apprentice's abilities, and the amount and range of on-the-job experience you can offer.

Our apprentices are hugely important to our business and our clients as well as contributing to the wider digital economy. Their strong work ethic, self-drive and collaborative spirit have encouraged us and our clients to think differently.

LOUISE MACBEAN, APPRENTICE PROGRAMMES MANAGER, CAPGEMINI

What is the cost?

WAGES

Although the minimum you can pay an apprentice is set, some employers pay an enhanced rate as they recognise the value an apprentice brings to the business.



EQUIPMENT

You may need to provide protective clothing, extra equipment or licences for the apprentice so they can carry out their role.



TIME

You will need to devote time to mentoring the apprentice (supervision, review and support) and monitoring and evaluating the programme with the training provider.



RECRUITMENT

Recruitment costs can be kept to a minimum, for example by using www.apprenticeships.scot to advertise your vacancy, or by contacting training providers.



FUNDING

Funding for the training part of the apprenticeship is provided directly to the training provider through Skills Development Scotland.



What you need to know?

Apprenticeships are the longest term and most formal training option described in this toolkit. They need an agreed framework and training plan, a formal contract of employment, a committed mentor, a full induction and health-and-safety briefing, and a salary (see the Employers' Checklist: Apprenticeships card).

If you are considering offering further structured training to an existing member of staff and an apprenticeship is not appropriate, contact your local training provider for an alternative solution, such as fitting staff into part-time courses. The Skills Development Scotland Employer helpline (0800 783 6000) provides information on relevant funding for your business.



4 steps to hiring an apprentice

1

Decide who your apprentice will be – new or existing employee

2

Contact your local training provider to establish funding and appropriate

3

Advertise and promote the position if taking on a new employee (for example on apprenticeship.scot)

4

Hire your apprentice!

Work Experience & Internships



Offering work experience can inspire learners to keep going with their studies, help them move from education to employment and develop their employability skills.

Work experience is a short-term, meaningful period of work, usually requested by school pupils, college students or graduates who want to learn more about working in a particular industry or improve their CV. The work experience can be for as little as a day, a week, or agreed days over a month.

How does work experience and internships work?

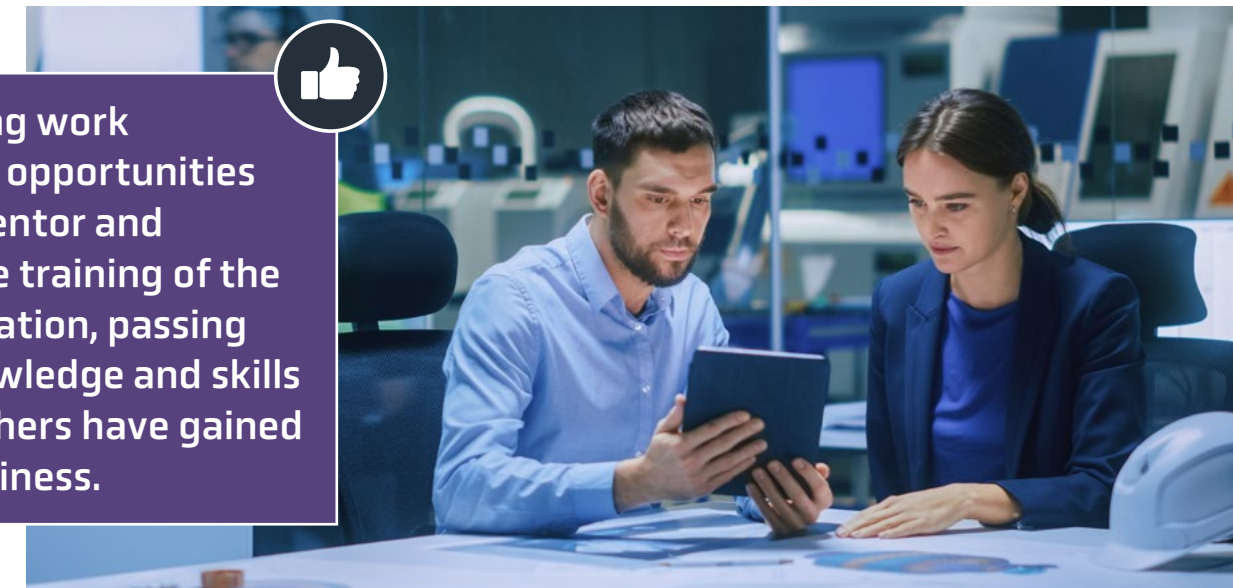
The best work experience opportunities and internships provide learners with a relevant, challenging, enjoyable and appropriate experience in the workplace. The learner will usually 'shadow' someone in the business, helping with tasks where appropriate.

An internship is more formal and tends to be a longer fixed-term placement, usually requested by degree students or graduates as part of a qualification, or by those looking for experience in the industry.

Both can be paid or unpaid, but should comply with [Fair Work requirements](#) and need to be flexible to fit in with school or college commitments.

The responsibility you give them will depend on their age, experience and the length of their placement.

By providing work experience opportunities you can mentor and support the training of the next generation, passing on the knowledge and skills you and others have gained in your business.



How do I find a work experience student or intern?

Often a request for work experience will come from a school or college, or direct from the student or a parent.

If you are looking for a work experience student, contact a local school, college or your Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Regional Group, who can advertise the position for you.

How will offering a work experience opportunity or internship benefit my business?

- It can help you identify potential employees, if not for now, for when you need someone at a later date.
- You can gain a sense of how a worker will fit into your team if you offered them a more permanent role.
- By developing the next generation you are supporting the future needs of the cyber/tech sector.

What is the cost?

Work experience and internships are over a short, defined period, and you are not usually expected to pay the student or intern.

To ensure fair working practices are followed, further info for employers can be found in the Scottish Government's Fair Work Action Plan.

If the work experience or internship is for a longer period (for example over a few months), it should be treated as paid work, and the National Minimum Wage will apply.

What you need to know

You will need employers' liability insurance when offering work experience, and it is important to give the student a short induction and health and safety briefing before they start.

They often need more supervision time but this varies depending on the role. Being realistic and upfront and clarifying both your and the student's expectations will greatly improve the experience for all concerned.

Offering the best experience

- Support the learner by providing appropriate training and guidance.
- Provide ongoing feedback to the learner and the organiser.
- Offer a rich and varied experience so the learner can understand the businesses' culture and practices, develop practical skills and undertake meaningful tasks.
- Encourage the learner to apply their knowledge and skills, and to share their views about the business in relation to the way it works.
- Invite the learner to suggest ways in which the business, approach to work experience could be improved.

Getting Involved, Mentoring

When you employ an apprentice, an important part of the programme is the mentoring. You can also use the mentoring skills to support those on work placements and internships.

Although mentoring is important in all forms of training, it is most relevant in the case of apprenticeships and is, in fact, central to a successful programme for you and the apprentice.

Taking on our first apprentice in January 2013 was a proud moment for me having been an apprentice myself. My apprenticeship was an excellent start to my working life and this felt like my chance to give someone else the start that I had.

NEIL STARK, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MICROSYS SOLUTIONS LTD

What is mentoring?

Mentoring is an informal and supportive relationship where someone with experience shares their knowledge and skills with someone who is less experienced and wants to learn more or improve in a role.

Mentors provide support to the apprentice, helping them to understand their role in the business and develop their career path. They also provide a listening ear if the apprentice is facing any problems or challenges. A good mentoring relationship is based on honesty and trust, with the mentor leading the way in interactions with the apprentice, and also supporting and listening, and gradually building the apprentice's confidence and resourcefulness.

Good mentoring can make the difference between keeping an apprentice or not. It is important to have regular meetings to maintain a successful relationship. They do not need to be long meetings – regular contact is more important.

Mentoring/Buddy systems can help to establish relationships with other team members to ensure they have support across the business.

Some mentors use technology such as WhatsApp, FaceTime or social media to help support the apprentice, especially if they have more than one. However, there is no substitute for a face-to-face chat.

Training staff as assessors can help bring the cost of vocational training down, have a positive impact on workplace efficiency, reduce staff turnover and help your business exceed industry standards.

A great mentor needs to be...

- **An enthusiastic volunteer** – interested in helping the apprentice and setting their own personal gains aside
- **Accessible** – apprentices should be able to contact mentors easily, but within defined, agreed limits
- **Sensitive** – aware of and sensitive to cultural, and gender differences. (See page 21 for more information on equality in the workplace).
- **Self-Aware** – of their own weaknesses and values, and to be honest about them. They should be able to share their values without enforcing them.
- **Trustworthy** – confidentiality is vital for building trust in the relationship.
- **Willing to learn** – mentoring should be a mutual learning experience, not purely one way.
- **Non-judgemental** – try to use positive reinforcement and encouraging behaviour.
- **Patient** – patience is especially important in the early stages of building a relationship.
- **Positive** – have high or positive aspirations for the apprentice.
- **Kind, tolerant and understanding** – Supporting an apprentice isn't always easy, but it is worth it.
- **Sharing** – share their experiences of their career to show an apprentice that there is a career ahead of them if they put in the effort to succeed.

Who should mentor?

It is essential for the mentor to have experience and knowledge of the apprentice's role. However, most important are listening and questioning skills. Which can help the apprentice devise new or more effective ways of approaching problems and challenges.

Many cyber businesses are small, and so the business owner tends to mentor the apprentice. However, it's worth identifying whether that really is the only option. Could an ex-apprentice, now an employee,

develop mentoring skills and support them? Or is there someone who is experienced, but not working directly with the apprentice, who could take on the role of mentor? Delegating the role to someone else can help that person to develop management skills, it can also help free up your time.

Employers can also learn from other businesses who have previously taken on an apprentice.

What are the benefits of mentoring?

Mentoring, if done right, can be a mutually beneficial learning experience, and a way of improving morale and skills for both parties.

Giving the role of mentor to relatively junior workers or ex-apprentices can increase their management skills, particularly for those moving into more senior roles in the business.

Mentoring builds...

ROLE MODELS

Giving the mentoring role to other staff in your business sends new starters a clear message about the potential for their career and the kind of work ethic and qualities that are valued. This in turn can inspire the mentors to become even better role models to those just starting out.



MUTUAL RESPECT

Mentoring builds a culture where each person's contribution and career goals are valued, and where individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and behaviour and to consider what skills they need to develop to best contribute to the success of your business.



LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Many of the skills associated with good mentoring can improve your own management skills. Mentors learn to empathise with the apprentice, listen to their concerns and how they might affect their performance and draw on their own experience and knowledge to support the apprentice in a constructive way.



The Training Agreement

How to mentor effectively

1 Create structure

Agree a structure for meetings to clarify the purpose of mentoring and record outcomes. This may include an agreed timetable of regular meetings (for example the first Friday of every month) and a mutual understanding of what will be discussed. – progress on objectives, feedback from both parties, identifying areas of opportunities for improvement and airing any concerns. This structure makes sure that both parties take the mentoring seriously and prevents mentoring arrangements from slipping when other things crop up.

2 Be clear on your own aims and targets

Decide what your mentoring needs to achieve for it to be a success and have goals that allow you to measure success every six months. These could include the following;

- Improved retention rates – have you had previous apprentices who left the business? Determine whether mentoring makes it more likely that apprentices will stay with your business.
- How soon the apprentice can perform certain activities – is it important for the apprentice to be able to perform certain tasks to add value to the business?
- How quickly can these tasks be performed by the apprentice?
- Has the mentoring helped with this?

3 Let the mentee identify some of their own aims

These may change as they understand more about what the role involves, but it is important that they are also involved in target setting. Help them to identify what their initial concerns are about their own abilities within the apprenticeship programme and how progress can be measured.

Useful documents to produce

- A mentoring code of conduct so your apprentice and their mentor understand the boundaries of the relationship in terms of confidentiality, knowledge and expectations.
- A continuous professional development (CPD) plan in which both the mentor and apprentice consider and record their own development needs and how they will meet them. It asks questions such as “What do you need to learn?” “What impact will this have?” and “How will you learn it?”.
- A mentoring-session sheet to record discussions and agreed actions from meetings. Filling it in together records the apprentice’s progress and assesses whether the mentoring programme is achieving its goals. It is also useful background when you are giving feedback to the training provider.

It is important that during the apprenticeships, work experience opportunity or internship, you should:

- ✓ Give the learner feedback on their performance relating to their personal goals or targets
- ✓ Reflect on any feedback you receive

When you recruit an apprentice, you are making a commitment to develop and mentor them. The training agreement provides a structure for this.

The training provider draws up a training agreement for the apprentice, and this signed by all parties – you, the apprentice and the training provider. Training agreements are reviewed regularly and we recommend you agree review dates with the training provider and apprentice at the start of the apprenticeship.

It is important that you, the apprentice and the training provider read and agree to the content of agreement (see box).

Formal progress reviews are then carried out by the training provider. The progress review is a chance for the apprentice, their immediate manager or supervisor and the training provider to discuss progress made through the training programme. This can also support the apprentice’s manager or supervisor and help them develop their skills.

What if the apprenticeship doesn’t work out?

Your apprentice has the same responsibilities as any other employee and they should be committed to completing their training. They should be given a job description so that you both have the same expectations about the requirements of the role. This will help if there are any performance issues which can and should be discussed with the training provider.

If you apprentice is keen to leave, contact the training provider as soon as possible. It may be that there is another issue (for example, problems at home) which you are not aware

of, or that they simply need to talk through their concerns with someone outside the workplace.

If this does not solve the problem, a new apprenticeship may be found for them with another employer or in a different career.

The Training Agreement must include

- The apprentice’s personal details, the start date and expected end date of the apprenticeship and their planned attendance. Hours can vary depending on the age of the apprentice. An apprentice aged 16 or 17, cannot work more than 8 hours a day and 40 hours a week. If aged 18 and over, an apprentice should not work more than 48 hours on average per week.
- A brief statement of the apprentice’s employer or career objectives.
- Details of the full framework of the apprenticeship programme and any extra in-house or off-the-job learning they will receive.
- Any accreditation of previous learning that has been identified (this is, credit for what they have done before is taken into account).
- How the training and assessment will be provided.
- Targets for completing the SVQ and Core Skills (where appropriate) and any other mandatory qualifications.
- Planned dates for reviewing progress.
- Any identified support arrangements for the learner, such as scribe for assessments.

Extra Support

Employers and mentors can make a significant contribution to apprentices who need extra support due to;

- Disability or health
- A previous bad experience of learning or training
- Family circumstances
- Social and emotional factors

This might be the young person's first job therefore it would be useful to consider extra emotional and well-being support for the apprentice. They may have just left school where there has often been lots of support. Mental health awareness, feedback and confidence building are essential to ensure they are able to cope with the new world of work and make the transition smoothly.

If you are considering taking on an apprentice who needs extra support, you will have the opportunity to be involved fully in discussions and decisions about their learning. You will want what is best for them and your business and are ideally placed to help provide specialist knowledge and experience to both the apprentice and the training provider.

An assessor from the college or training provider may ask you to help them understand the effect the apprentice's needs will have on their ability to learn and develop within the business, and they can work with specialists to make sure negative effects are reduced.

Partnership is vital to making sure that young people who need extra support benefit fully from their learning. You can share any concerns with the training provider, and work together to overcome any issues.

Help and support is available from Enquire, the Scottish advice and information service for additional support for learning. Call Enquire's helpline (0345 123 2303) to get advice on your specific circumstances.

The Disability Confident employer scheme can provide guidance and resources about employing disabled people and how the scheme can help your business.

Equality & Diversity

Work experience and apprenticeship programmes play an important role in challenging stereotypes by providing people with broad and diverse experiences in the workplace.

It is important to note however that workplace processes and practices can create unnecessary barriers for groups such as females and neurodivergent individuals. Removing barriers helps to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to maximise their talents. Inclusive workplaces also result in high creativity, innovation, productivity and retention.

Legislation imposes a minimum standard of behaviour on employers and individuals, and as an employer you have the responsibility to provide advice, guidance and opportunities that contribute to;

- Eradicating discrimination
- Promoting mutual respect
- Equality of opportunity across genders, social background, disabilities, ethnicities, sexual orientation and religions

The Equalities Act 2010 protects apprentices from discrimination, including bullying and harassment, in the workplace, including self employment and people working for you on a contract. You are responsible for discrimination carried out by your employees unless you can show you have done everything you reasonably could to prevent or stop it.

Further information for employers can be found at www.gov.uk

Visit apprenticeships.scot for equality and diversity guidance for employers.

Equality Legislation

DISABILITY

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (and 2005) gives disabled people at work protection from discrimination.

EQUAL PAY

Employers must give men and women equal treatment in the terms and conditions of their employment contract if they are employed to do work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation study, or work found to be of equal value.

EX-OFFENDERS

Under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, many ex-offenders are given certain employment rights if their convictions become 'spent' (that is, the offender is considering to have been rehabilitated).

RACE DISCRIMINATION

The Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended) makes it illegal to treat a person less favourably than others because of their race.

SEX DISCRIMINATION

Under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (as amended), employers should not discriminate because of a person's sex or marital status, or because they intend to undergo, or have undergone, gender reassignment.

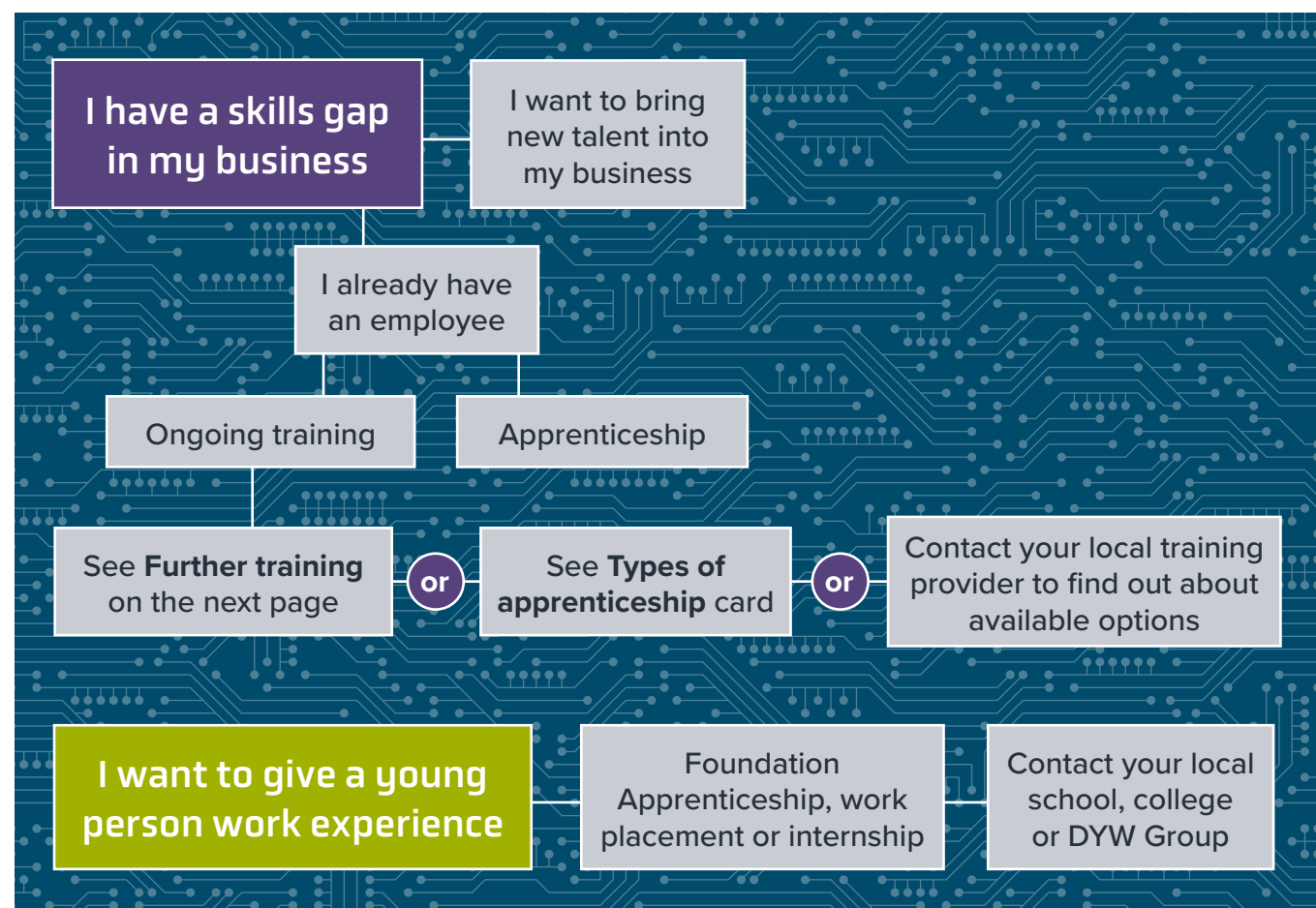
RELIGION OR BELIEF

The Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003, protect people from discrimination because of their religion or beliefs.

SEXUALITY

The Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003, protect people from discrimination because of their sexuality.

What type of training would suit my business



Further Training

Sometimes learning can be infectious!

The cyber sector has a variety of further training available to develop the skills of you and your team.

Training can be one-day courses, professional qualifications such as CompTIA, or part-time study, either online through a training provider, college or university and covering different levels of expertise.

To find out more about the training providers who are delivering Modern Apprenticeships in your sector or local area, visit apprenticeship.scot.

Others types of training or professional qualifications to suit your needs may be available through your local college, an independent training provider (www.stf.org.uk/members/) or an industry body.

If you're looking for help on where to start then fill in a skills support request form at ourskillsforce.co.uk or visit digitalworld.net



An apprenticeship is an excellent opportunity for a candidate to enter an industry they are interested in, and start working immediately to gain the experience required to further their career. On top of this an apprenticeship also provides industry recognised qualifications which can be obtained alongside working.

LEWIS JAGGER,
SERVICE DESK AGENT, TSG
(Currently undertaking a SCQF Level 8 Information Security Apprenticeship)



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