

# Apprenticeship Strategy



L.E.A.D. Academy Trust  
Lead • Empower • Achieve • Drive



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## Introduction

The Trust's Apprenticeship Strategy 2018 – 2021 looked at how the organisation would be able to develop its apprenticeship provision to move towards the Government Reform target of 2.3% of its staff on programmes. These targets were designed to address UK skills shortages and stimulate economic growth. In early 2018, this figure stood at 0.79% however, in September 2020, as part of statutory reporting, we were able to hit the reform target figures, six months earlier than targeted.

The Trust has invested significantly in the apprenticeship route, not only for new starters but also encouraging continuous professional development (CPD) through a variety of programmes. The Trust's Apprenticeship Strategy enables the organisation to meet its workforce planning needs whilst promoting diversity, inclusion and social mobility.

Our strategy is reviewed annually to ensure the processes in place are fit for purpose and considers further improvements in our practices, ensuring our schools receive the best provision from our apprenticeship training partners.

This document builds upon the previous strategic outcomes and aims to ensure that progress is made in relation to our apprenticeship provision in an ever-changing educational environment.



## Benefits of apprenticeships

Apprenticeships offer huge benefits for both new entrants and existing employees as part of their career development. These benefits include:

- Attraction of talent
- Tackling potential skills gaps
- Providing employees with opportunities to develop management skills by supervising and supporting new apprentices
- Allowing for non-traditional career development opportunities for existing employees through higher level apprenticeship opportunities
- Potential to reduce recruitment and turnover costs through a more engaged workforce
- Nurturing and growing our own workforce with embedded Trust values to deliver a high-quality educational experience for our students

Enhancing the Trust's reputation as an employer of choice through offering high quality apprenticeship offerings for both new entrants and existing employees

## Vision

Apprenticeships are seen as high-quality pathway to successful careers for the current and future needs of the Trust, providing opportunities for both new and existing employees. We believe that through the development work already undertaken with our apprenticeship offerings we are rapidly changing the more traditional view that apprentices are only entry level employees.

As at February 2021, the Trust currently have employees engaged in a large variety of programmes including:

- Teaching Assistant
- Teacher training
- Education Management
- Project Management
- Finance/AAT
- Business Administration
- Facilities Management
- Leadership Development

## Progress Made So Far

Since the Trust has had a more strategic focus on the utilisation of the apprenticeship levy fund, it has allowed a wider apprenticeship offering for our schools and Trust. This has increased our proportion of apprentices from 0.79% to 2.3% which equates to over 50 apprentices throughout the Trust.

The training being undertaken by these apprentices' range from Level 2 to level 7 qualifications, as exemplified below:

**Level 2** - Teaching Assistants, Early Years Assistants, Production Chef

**Level 3** – Teaching Assistants, Business Administration, Customer Service, AAT, Team Leader

**Level 4** – Project Management, Facilities Management

**Level 5** – Operations/Departmental Manager, Education Management

**Level 6** – Chartered Manager Degree, Teachers

**Level 7** – Senior Leaders Masters in Education, Professional Accountant

Examples of courses being undertaken by existing employees as part of their professional development include a Teaching Assistant currently undertaking her Teacher apprenticeship to allow her to progress with her career; a Site Manager undertaking his Facilities Management qualifications as part of his personal development into a future wider role and middle leaders undertaking Operations/Departmental Manager qualifications to ensure they are prepared for greater responsibilities as these arise. This shows a clear change from early 2018 when it was only a small number of Teaching Assistants that were undertaking learning.

## Strategic Aims

The Trust aims to provide high quality professional development and opportunities for all. With wider options now available to the Trust through the apprentice route, our strategy revolves around continuous evaluation, not only of the variety of learning options but also the quality of provider.

### Identify further apprenticeship opportunities

The Trust will regularly review new apprenticeship courses and programmes that become available to evaluate whether they could be an option for our schools and central team. For example: Level 5 Coaching may be a programme that could be adopted and implemented across the Trust for first line and middle leaders. The SENCo apprenticeship is currently in development and could offer an opportunity for schools to develop individuals as part of succession planning processes.

### Actively promote apprenticeship opportunities within the Trust

The Trust will discuss with schools options available to them through the apprenticeship route when reviewing staffing, such as part of an organisational change programme or succession planning processes. The

apprenticeship option will be actively encouraged when undertaking appraisals and reviewing professional development plans. As part of budget setting each year, schools will be asked to submit apprenticeship funding requests for the forthcoming year so that the Trust is able to equitably allocate funds from the central levy.

#### **Improve partnership relationships to enhance quality**

The Trust will continue to develop relationships with providers to increase the range of apprenticeship options available to the organisation and to ensure the quality of provision. Our aim is to develop partnerships with a small number of providers to enhance the quality of learning. Regular feedback on the apprentice's performance is important to the Trust but at present this varies depending on the provider.

#### **Apprentice pay relative to the open market**

Whilst legislation requires for a minimum pay rate to be applied for new apprentices, the Trust believes in being competitive in the marketplace therefore will pay above these rates to attract, retain and fairly reward its apprentices. These rates will be reviewed annually in line with pay policy reviews. Pay rates for any Level 4 or above apprenticeship post will be determined on a case by case basis commensurate to the job role due to the complexity of the sector specifics. Where current staff are undertaking programmes as part of their CPD, there are no changes to their terms and conditions or rates of pay.

#### **Celebration of Success**

As the overall number of apprentices increase, the Trust aims to work towards cohorts of apprentices training together. For example, a teaching apprenticeship group would commence in September each year so the Trust could offer training and support as a cohort of trainees, celebrating successes and sharing good practice.

## Performance Monitoring

Progress towards the completion of apprenticeships will be undertaken by the training provider in collaboration with the individuals line manager/mentor. The Trust however through closer partnerships with providers, will be able to receive regular feedback relating to all apprentices so they can monitor ongoing progress. This allows for early intervention, if necessary, where concerns are highlighted and attempts can be made to bring the apprentice back on track.





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