

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT TOOLKIT FOR ENHANCING APPRENTICE MENTAL WELLBEING

**SUBTITLE: QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR EMPLOYERS REGARDING MENTAL
WELLBEING, TEMPLATES AND TOOLKIT.**

DATE: 10TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Introduction

This toolkit is designed to assist providers in establishing effective communication and support structures with employers to enhance the mental well-being of apprentices. By utilising the "Getting to Know You" concept, providers can gain insights into each employer's existing support mechanisms, allowing for tailored interventions and improved outcomes.

This toolkit should be shared with account management and safeguarding personnel at the provider to ensure that it aligns with existing practices. The content received via the toolkit (from employers) should be built into the handover process from business development/account management to operational delivery so that skills development coaches/tutors are aware of the process and support available at the employer level.

Toolkit Components

Getting to Know You Document

Objective: Understand the structures, support, and referral mechanisms existing within each employer that supports apprentices' mental well-being.

Key Sections and questions:

- **Employer Overview:** Basic details about the employer and their apprenticeship programs.
- **Organisational Structure:** Overview of departments and key contacts.
- **Support and Referral Mechanisms:** Detailed understanding of the employer's support systems.

Questions to Include:

1. **Designated Safeguarding Lead and Contact Details:**
 - Do you have a designated safeguarding lead and/or a person responsible for managing mental well-being referrals? If so, please provide their contact details. Who should we contact for ongoing communication regarding safeguarding and mental well-being concerns?
2. **Reporting Procedures:**
 - What is the process for reporting a safeguarding concern within your organisation?
3. **Mental Well-Being Support Services and Resources:**
 - What mental well-being support services and resources are available to your employees and apprentices, such as counselling or employee assistance programmes?
4. **Referral Processes:**
 - What is your process for referring staff or apprentices to mental well-being support services?
5. **Support Mechanisms for Apprentices:**
 - What specific support mechanisms do you have in place for apprentices who may be struggling with mental well-being issues?
 - How do you ensure apprentices are aware of the support available to them?
6. **Handling Crises or Emergencies:**
 - How do you handle mental well-being crises or emergencies within your organisation, and do you have a protocol for immediate support or intervention?
7. **Monitoring Mental Well-Being:**

- How do you monitor the mental well-being of apprentices throughout their program?
8. **Coordination with Training Providers:**
- How can we best coordinate with your team to support the mental well-being and safeguarding of our apprentices?
9. **Additional Support or Resources:**
- Are there areas where you feel additional support or resources are needed?

Effective use of the getting to know you concept

We utilised the "Getting to Know You" concept in two key documents and processes, enabling us to capture the required content and update it both at the start of a new employer engagement and for existing and established employer relationships.

Key Documents:

Core Organisational Needs: "Getting to Know You"

- In addition to any SWOT or other analysis you complete, we have incorporated the collection of mental well-being information about the employer into this initial discussion document. This approach allows us to conduct a thorough analysis of organizational needs to support apprenticeship implementation effectively and to identify existing support and referral mechanisms for any mental well-being concerns or safeguarding issues. **ANNEX 2 Example full getting to know you document.** Aimed at NHS Trusts but can be adapted to support any sector in getting to know the employer.

Health, Safety, and Well-Being Checklist

- We have incorporated mental well-being criteria into the required checklist for completion by either the apprenticeship lead or colleagues prior to learner enrolment. An example of this, embedded into a standard employer health and safety checklist document, can be found in **ANNEX 1 – Employer Health, Safety, and Well-Being Checklist.**

Implementation Guide

A step-by-step instruction for using the toolkit effectively.

Steps:

Preparation:

- Gather necessary information and documents.
- Schedule meetings with employers.

Conducting Meetings:

- Use the "Getting to Know You" document to guide discussions built into either your own organisational needs analysis or employer health and safety checklist.
- Have a set agenda in advance so that mental wellbeing is a set discussion point for staff – i.e.
 - **Agenda Objective:** Ensure a smooth transition of information from business development/account management to operational delivery.
 - **Welcome and Introductions.** Brief introductions of participants. Overview of meeting objectives.

- **Overview of Employer Collaboration** including curriculum development, implementation projects and highlight key support structures and processes including mental wellbeing promotion and structures from both parties.
- **Discussion: Roles and Responsibilities**. Clarify roles and responsibilities of skills development coaches/tutors, where safeguarding starts and ends with the provider. Where mental wellbeing referral will be taken and how this is or is not communicated to the apprenticeship lead.
- Ensure all parties understand the support available at the employer level.
- **Next Steps and Action Items** - Outline immediate next steps and responsibilities including completion of getting to know you questions / or action to get completed via appropriate parties.
- Confirm timelines for implementation.

Follow-Up:

- Develop action plans based on the information gathered.
- Coordinate with employers to implement support mechanisms.

Review and Feedback:

- Regularly review the effectiveness of implemented strategies as part of Account management review (minimum every 6 months).
- Gather feedback from apprentices and employers to make improvements via your existing learner and employer survey mechanisms.

Conclusion

By using this toolkit, providers can establish stronger partnerships with employers, ensuring that apprentices receive the mental well-being support they need. Continuous collaboration and communication will foster an inclusive and supportive environment for all apprentices.

B	Health and safety induction training will be provided to new employees, including Apprentices and any candidates placed on work experience or a work placement.		
Assessment of Standard 4		Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES	Part met <input type="checkbox"/> Not met <input type="checkbox"/>

5 The employer has made arrangements for provision and use of personal protective equipment and clothing suitable for the individual			
Criteria		Yes/No	How is this standard demonstrated?
A	Personal protective equipment and clothing (PPE/C) is provided for employees as determined from the risk assessment.		
Assessment of Standard 5		Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Part met <input type="checkbox"/> Not met <input type="checkbox"/>

6 Fire and emergencies			
Criteria		Yes/No	How is this standard demonstrated?
A	A means of raising the alarm and fire or emergency detection is in place, including tests and drills.		
B	Appropriate means of firefighting are in place.		
C	Effective means of escape are in place, including escape routes and unobstructed exits.		
D	There is a named person, or persons for emergencies.		
Assessment of Standard 6		Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES	Part met <input type="checkbox"/> Not met <input type="checkbox"/>

7 Equality and diversity			
Criteria		Yes/No	How is this standard demonstrated?
A	There is a policy covering equality and diversity, which covers harassment and bullying, and which is communicated to all staff.		
B	Terms and conditions of employment are provided in writing to new employees. These include details of the grievance procedure.		
C	Managers and staff are aware of their responsibilities and rights relating to equality of opportunity.		
Assessment of Standard 7		Met <input type="checkbox"/> YES	Part met <input type="checkbox"/> Not met <input type="checkbox"/>

8 Safeguarding and Prevent			
Criteria		Yes/No	Further information
A	Are you aware of your safeguarding duties?		

B	It is advisable to have DBS checks in place for all staff or employees working with learners under 18. Are your staff members who have substantial unsupervised access to the learners DBS checked?		
C	Do you know where and to whom to report a cause for concern regarding a learner? What is the process for reporting a safeguarding concern within your organisation?		
D	Are you aware of Prevent and Channel		
Assessment of Standard 8		Met <input type="checkbox"/>	Part met <input type="checkbox"/> YES
			Not met <input type="checkbox"/>

9 Mental Wellbeing		
Criteria	Yes/No	Further information
A	Do you have a designated safeguarding lead and/or a person responsible for managing mental well-being referrals? If so, please provide their contact details. Who should we contact for ongoing communication regarding safeguarding and mental well-being concerns?	
B	What mental well-being support services and resources are available to your employees and apprentices, such as counselling or employee assistance programmes?	
C	What is your process for referring staff or apprentices to mental well-being support services?	
D	What specific support mechanisms do you have in place for apprentices who may be struggling with mental well-being issues? How do you ensure apprentices are aware of the support available to them?	
E	How do you handle mental well-being crises or emergencies within your organisation, and do you have a protocol for immediate support or intervention?	
F	How do you monitor the mental well-being of apprentices throughout their programme?	
G	How can we best coordinate with your team to support the mental well-being and safeguarding of our apprentices?	

H	Are there areas where you feel additional support or resources are needed with regards to supporting apprentices with mental wellbeing?		
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Assessment outcome

Recommendation	Accept <input type="checkbox"/>	Accept with action plan <input type="checkbox"/>	Reject <input type="checkbox"/>
Risk Banding	High <input type="checkbox"/>	Medium <input type="checkbox"/>	Low <input type="checkbox"/> YES

Employer representatives

Please sign below to confirm that this is an accurate record of the assessment:			
Name:	Signature:	Job Title:	Date:

Assessment undertaken by

Please sign below to confirm that this is an accurate record of the assessment:			
Name:	Signature:	Job Title:	Date:

Assessment details

Initial assessment <input type="checkbox"/> YES	Re-assessment <input type="checkbox"/>	Date of next assessment:

Employer Action Plan

Action Plan				
Standard Number	Action required	By whom	Target date	Completion Date (sign off)

ANNEX 2 Example “Getting to know you” document

Getting to Know You

Understanding the needs of our employers to support embedding of provision on a learner-by-learner basis

This living document should be completed by the appropriate internal member of the Business Development team at the start of the employer relationship. It should be reviewed and updated at least every 6 months to maintain a thorough understanding of our clients' evolving training needs and to ensure the continuous relevance and effectiveness of apprenticeship programmes.

BDM/ Account Manager completes prior to meeting to support informing discussion and meet.

Name of employer:	
Programmes we are delivering:	
Apprenticeship Lead Contact details (name, title, email, Tel no.):	
AS contact details if different from above:	
What are the Companies Values / Mission Statement	

Information gathered at meeting.

What is your Workforce development plans for the staff we are delivering to (request copy)	
What is the planned learning activity for the learners enrolling onto our programmes i.e., mandatory training (request document copy if available).	
For the programmes we are looking to promote and start - Are the staff on employment contracts or apprenticeship contracts.	
Are they new entrants or existing staff	
What is the appraisal process / timeline for staff?	
How do staff request CPD activity?	

What is the process for learners expressing an interest in and signing up for an apprenticeship programme?	
Key Quality targets / focuses of the Trusts – what is the Trust trying to improve?	
Current Staffing capacity – what are the key pain points of recruiting?	
What are the big retention risks / issues – reasons for leavers?	
What is the employers career progression process?	
Has a protected study time policy been implemented – i.e., minimum expectations for each learner?	
If more than 1 learner on prog per dept – do, we need to stagger teaching sessions?	
What is your process for promoting apprenticeships at the Trust?	
How can we support this (suggest support, options, i.e., info sessions, stands, promotional events.	
We can offer you marketing content including blogs, articles, case studies, testimonials, and other information that can be shared across your communication channels e.g., Intranet, internal newsletters.	
If you would like us to do this, who is the best contact to refer this information to, i.e., marketing or comms contact?	
Process for Safeguarding / ED I concerns internally at the Trust including contract details of anyone outside of App lead for referrals.	
Are there any questions you have for us?	

Needs Identified and Resource Planning

Learning Programme Identified	Anticipated Volume	When

Business Development Admin Questions

Is the address the same for certifications/apprenticeship certs to be sent? If not please detail, name, address and telephone number.	
Who is the procurement org utilized?	
Please confirm that you have updated your internal IT department that your staff will be receiving emails from PROVIDER NAME so that communication is not blocked by organisation Firewalls.	
Confirm end point assessment organisation per programme we will be delivering for you:	
Funded Levy or non-levy?	
Will you be adding the apprentices' details, or would you like us to on the digital apprenticeship service? (DAS).	
PROVIDER would like to celebrate our partnership on LinkedIn and in our employer Newsletter. Do you give permission to use your company logo? Please complete the consent form attached. (We use a standardised template to celebrate please upload logo to this link Add Consent Logo Link).	
Would you like access as an observer to your apprentices E-Portfolio? If yes, confirm the email addresses of the persons who have approved access.	
As relevant, how are you delivering the care certificate? Learners completed care cert prior to enrolling onto an App?	

FUNDED BY



Department
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Apprenticeship workforce development is delivered by:

