



## EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

### Introduction and Purpose

The **School of Marketing** provides a range of digital marketing training and development programmes/courses which are designed to meet the needs of education and employers. We believe that engaging and working in partnership with employers to help develop and deliver learning programmes ensures commitment and successful outcomes for and supports apprenticeships.

The purpose of this policy is to both define and confirm the **School of Marketing's** commitment to delivering "Outstanding" employer engagement. By linking education and industry, and understanding the need to work in partnership with employers and their employees/apprentices.

To develop and train apprentices and keep them informed of progression throughout their learning journey, and by supporting and inspiring the next generation of qualified digital marketing professionals.

The **School of Marketing's** approach to employer engagement is essential in promoting all of our programmes, including that of our new apprenticeship offer, and also in establishing robust contractual agreements, and the delivery and management of successful programmes.

The **School of Marketing** demonstrates an ongoing commitment and working partnership strategy with employers in order to outline the key mechanisms of delivering high quality and employer focused apprenticeship programmes.

The **School of Marketing** complies to the ESFA regulations outlined in the funding rules, and this policy identifies the key requirements and ensures that there is a transparent approach and evidence to the agreement of apprenticeships between the employer and the **School of Marketing**.

Apprenticeship provision and delivery is also included within the scope of Ofsted, therefore, the Education Inspection Framework (EIF) is pertinent and supports the content of this policy.

### Responsibility

The CEO of the **School of Marketing** has the overall responsibility for this policy, however, the Head of Apprenticeships and the team have the responsibility to ensure the day to day management of the policy.

The **School of Marketing** apprenticeship team is responsible for ensuring that our employers are involved from the beginning stage of promoting the apprenticeship, all the way through the apprenticeship journey, and supporting the continuous development of our employer engagement service.



This policy is reviewed on an annual basis or if there are any regulatory changes which impact, for example the ESFA funding rules and/or Ofsted EIF are revised.

### **Employer Engagement - Promotion of offer**

The **School of Marketing** actively seeks to build network opportunities across a range of stakeholders. For example through:

- Education & Training events
- Conferences
- Sector forums
- Local and national group activities
- Social media - LinkedIn/Twitter
- Website - always updated and current
- School/College engagement
- Professional Body events/forums

By implementing a robust networking strategy it enables the **School of Marketing** to engage with stakeholders and promote our apprenticeships and services.

The **School of Marketing** will promote the 'Find Apprenticeship Training' (FAT) service through links on our website, in order to support our employers. In addition, the **School of Marketing** course directory will be regularly updated to ensure that the information within the Find Apprenticeship Training site is valid and up to date.

### **Employer Engagement - Initial contact**

The **School of Marketing** engages with employers through a range of different means such as partnerships, tender and bids, direct marketing and networks. We have sector specialists which meet with employers to identify their needs and how we can best support them in the design and development of high quality and robust apprenticeship provision within their organisation.

The **School of Marketing** applies early interventions to clarify that the employer is either levy paying or non-levy paying, as this impacts on the contract arrangement which is to be confirmed and agreed.

In addition the following activities will also take place as part of the initial contract as key IAG process:

- Explore the perceived needs of the employer
- Support the employer with skills gaps and CPD opportunities - training needs analysis
- Identify Levy/Non Levy arrangements
  
- Provide relevant information:
  - Presentation of apprenticeship offer
  - Delivery methodology
  - Provide relevant marketing/promo/info materials



- Establish is it 'tender or bid' for procurement?
- Contract details etc.

### **Apprenticeship design**

It is the aim of the **School of Marketing** that all apprenticeship programmes delivered for our employers are tailored to their needs, and also that of the apprentice. Our approach is to design an apprenticeship programme with the employer to establish the key aspects of delivery that will suit their needs.

To further support our programme offer, we have a 'board' of specific employers and sector professionals that take active roles in the design, development planning, and long term management and delivery aspects of our programmes.

Some of the ways we ensure a quality bespoke programme include:

- **Programme (Curriculum/module development)** - Through the identification of specific learning outcomes that support the individual need/role of the apprentice, and how the **School of Marketing** will develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours as part of the standard and any wider skills required.
- **20% off the job** - Understand how 20% off the job can be delivered e.g. through classroom based delivery, a mixture of face to face, digital packages, employer visits, work shadowing etc.
- **Flexibility of delivery** - Preparation and planning the appropriate programme delivery pattern, which meets the needs of work patterns.
- **Accessibility** – Identifying that the environment and all required resources are appropriate and confirmed.
- **Additional learning support** – Identify how reasonable adjustments for learners with additional learning needs are put in place.
- **Portfolio management** – The **School of Marketing** through discussion and agreement with the employer will confirm 'portfolio and evidence' arrangements, and agree who from the organisation will support the **School of Marketing** in maintaining evidence and records. This includes line managers contributing to reviews and logging training on the 'off the job' log.

### **EPA Arrangements**

It is the intention of the School of Marketing to deliver continual support to the employer throughout the apprenticeship journey. This will be facilitated by the **School of Marketing** Head of Apprenticeships and the Tutor who will provide ongoing coaching, mentoring and regular updates to the apprentice regarding their apprenticeship programme.

Each individual employer/organisation is encouraged to help 'shape' their specific requirements of the apprenticeship by adding any specific arrangements within their commitment statement and contract of service.



### **Contract Management**

The **School of Marketing** have identified a number of strategies to support and manage employer relationships and their contracts, and these include:

- Formal contract review meetings - these are face to face meetings at agreed stages throughout the year
- Informal contract review - these are regular remote calls, for example, weekly or monthly.

The **School of Marketing** apprenticeship team has the authority to act independently and make decisions to support the employer. However, where there is a required change to the contract agreement, this should be escalated to the Head of Apprenticeships and Managing Director for approval.

Where an employer has concerns/issues which are not being adequately addressed by a member of the Apprenticeship Team, they will be able to escalate their concern/issue to the Managing Director.

Additionally the **School of Marketing** Complaints Policy/Procedure is available to the employer, and they can escalate any concern/issue following this process.

### **Continual engagement**

In addition to the contract management activities there are other events throughout the contracting period and beyond that the **School of Marketing** undertake in order to support the employers. These include but are not limited to:

- Employer forum and surveys
- Employer network events
- Support with national apprenticeship week
- Employer communications such as news bulletins
- Apprenticeship reviews (line managers to be involved which enables the delivery team to arrange and agree targets and off the job training on a regular basis)
- Direct helpdesk for general questions and queries (this is for employers to contact our central team to action any day to day queries such as system support for e-portfolio).

### **Managing underperformance**

Any employers/organisation who the **School of Marketing** finds to be in breach of their contract agreement by not adhering to the principles of an apprenticeship, such as not permitting apprentices adequate off the job time, will be issued with contract concern notice.

It is in the best interest of all parties that all breaches are resolved by identifying short term actions that will tackle the underperformance. The **School of Marketing** will provide an updated agreement which will be outlined and managed to ensure that the apprenticeship programme is brought back in line with correct protocols.



### **Contract updates**

During the contracting year, there may be the need to implement updates and/or changes. This is usually due to regulatory change, such as ESFA guidance, Ofsted guidance and/or fee updates. This will lead to an updated agreement/contract being issued to employers in order to agree to any changes to the contract of service and commitment statements. This updated agreement must be kept as part of the employers evidence pack.

The **School of Marketing** Administrator will update the ILR and evidence pack accordingly to reflect the changes.

### **Continual improvement**

Through the **School of Marketing** performance management approach we continue to review and manage the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP). The Head of Apprenticeships and the Quality Assurance Manager (IQA) are responsible for analysing, evaluating and monitoring performance against organisational goals and contracting terms. There are regular meetings to review performance which includes employer satisfaction and performance is reviewed by analysing:

- Employer forum feedback
- Employer survey feedback
- Complaints analysis
- Queries and feedback from contract meetings
- Employer performance through data scrutiny e.g. apprentice achievements by employer, progress of apprentices and management of 20% off the job by employer.

The QIP will form the central record of all continual improvement activities that are established from employer related meetings, data and feedback. This is reviewed and updated monthly and is overseen with the Quality & Curriculum Manager.