

BMet

Employer Apprenticeship Guide



Welcome to BMet

BMet has a strong heritage of working with businesses across the region and throughout the UK.

We are committed to actively working with you to meet your skills needs to drive strong, sustainable economic growth.

As a leading training provider, BMet specialises in developing business-led, high quality, results-driven training programmes to support organisations to look after their most important asset – their people. Whether it is apprenticeship programmes, recruiting new talent or embedding training programmes to support the training of a current workforce, we will work with you to deliver the skills you need, now and in the future.



Pat Carvalho
Principal and Chief Executive
Birmingham Metropolitan College

Introduction to BMet

BMet has a very good record of employer engagement, and our apprenticeship provision was graded good by OFSTED in October 2023.

BMet's vision is

We aim to provide excellent learning opportunities to serve the needs of Birmingham and the city region.

Our five core values are listed below:

- We are passionate to see our students achieve their full potential
- We create an environment that is ready, respectful and safe
- We see strength in our diversity and strive for equality of access and opportunity
- We are inspired to continually develop our professional practice
- We are three colleges, one team.

Our vision and values drive BMet's strategy and operations.

BMet is made up of Matthew Boulton College, in Central Birmingham; James Watt College in Great Barr, Birmingham; Sutton Coldfield College in Sutton Coldfield and has around 12,000 students.

What is an apprenticeship?

Introduction

Apprenticeships benefit employers and individuals, by boosting the skills of the workforce and help to improve economic productivity. An apprenticeship is a real job with training. It is a way for individuals to earn while they learn gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role.

Apprenticeships are available in 1,500 occupations across 170 industries. Businesses of all sizes and sectors in England can recruit an apprentice and they can last anything from 15 months to four years.

Name	Level	Equivalent Educational Level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 or A* to C
Advanced	3	2 A levels
Higher	4	Higher National Certificate/ HE Cert
	5	Higher National Diploma/ Foundation Degree
	6	Degree
	7	Master's/Post Graduate Certificate

BMet offers all levels of apprenticeships, across a wide range of job roles and employer sectors.

Further information on our apprenticeship offer [CLICK HERE](#) or please call BMet Business Development team Birmingham 0121 362 2101.

How do they work?

BMet has been graded by OFSTED in 2023 as Grade 2 – good apprenticeship provision. Our Employer Engagement team will work closely with you to ensure that the apprenticeship offered is the most appropriate for the individual's job role, whilst reflecting individual employer and learner needs. We will help you complete an organisational needs analysis and support you in making the right choice of apprenticeship programme.

Most of the training is on-the-job, working with a mentor to learn job specific skills in the workplace.

Off-the-job training will depend on the occupational area, the training organisation and the requirements and wishes of the employer. This training may be delivered in the workplace, through 'day release' or at premises away from the working environment. On completion of the apprenticeship the apprentice must perform tasks confidently and competently to the standard set by the industry.

Who are they for?

Individuals over the age of 16, living in England and not in full time education can apply for an apprenticeship. Employers can offer apprenticeships to new entrants or use them to grow talent from among current employees. The focus of an apprenticeship is to equip individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills and behaviours required for specific job roles, future employment and progression.

Benefits of hiring apprentices

Hiring apprentices is a productive and effective way for businesses to grow their own talent by developing a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce. 83% of employers would recommend apprenticeships to others¹.

The average apprentice increases business productivity by £214 per week, with these gains including increased profits, lower prices and better products².

Other benefits that apprenticeships contribute towards include:

- Improving productivity in the workplace
- Increasing employee satisfaction
- Reducing staff turnover
- Reducing recruitment costs.



¹ BEIS Apprenticeship Employer Survey 2017

² Productivity Matters, Centre for Economic and Business Research 2013

BMet's undertaking to employers

BMet supports the delivery of apprenticeships and employer programmes by:

- Working with businesses of all sizes to analyse organisational training needs, identify relevant apprenticeships and other training and development requirements
- Supporting employers by recruiting apprentices. BMet has a dedicated Employer Apprenticeship Recruitment Team who take the agreed apprentice job description, and arrange for the apprenticeship vacancy to be advertised on the National Apprenticeship Service Account and BMet apprenticeship vacancy websites. Applicants are screened by the team and a short list of candidates for interview is prepared and sent to the employer
- Working with employers to carry out Health and Safety and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion checks prior to apprentices starting their programmes
- Working with employers to develop the in-company training element of the apprenticeship to ensure that it fits with both the apprentice, business and apprenticeship programme
- Preparing and providing a written agreement between the employer and BMet
- Completing a tripartite agreement between the employer, apprentice and BMet
- Providing an account management service that includes apprentice and employer reviews
- Working with employers to support the Government's agenda and BMet's legal requirements on Safeguarding, Prevent, Fundamental British Values (FBV) and Equality and Diversity. An employers' guide to Safeguarding and Prevent are provided within this guide.

Did you know ...

BMet works with employers to provide work experience for our students on vocational college based programmes and to provide a “back to work” employment based programme using Adult Education funding. These programmes provide a pool of potential applicants for employer job roles.

BMet's undertaking to employers: apprenticeship delivery

BMet aims:

- To provide an employer managed service with tailored and flexible solutions to meet individual needs with delivery within agreed timescales
- To communicate in a clear and timely way providing all parties with effective information and support
- To ensure employees study in a clean, safe environment.

At the start of the employee programme

BMet will provide employees with:

- An Apprenticeship Guide
- An employees Training Plan/Individual Learning Plan (tripartite agreement) which will be discussed and signed by the employer, the learner, and BMet
- The employee's first learning session.

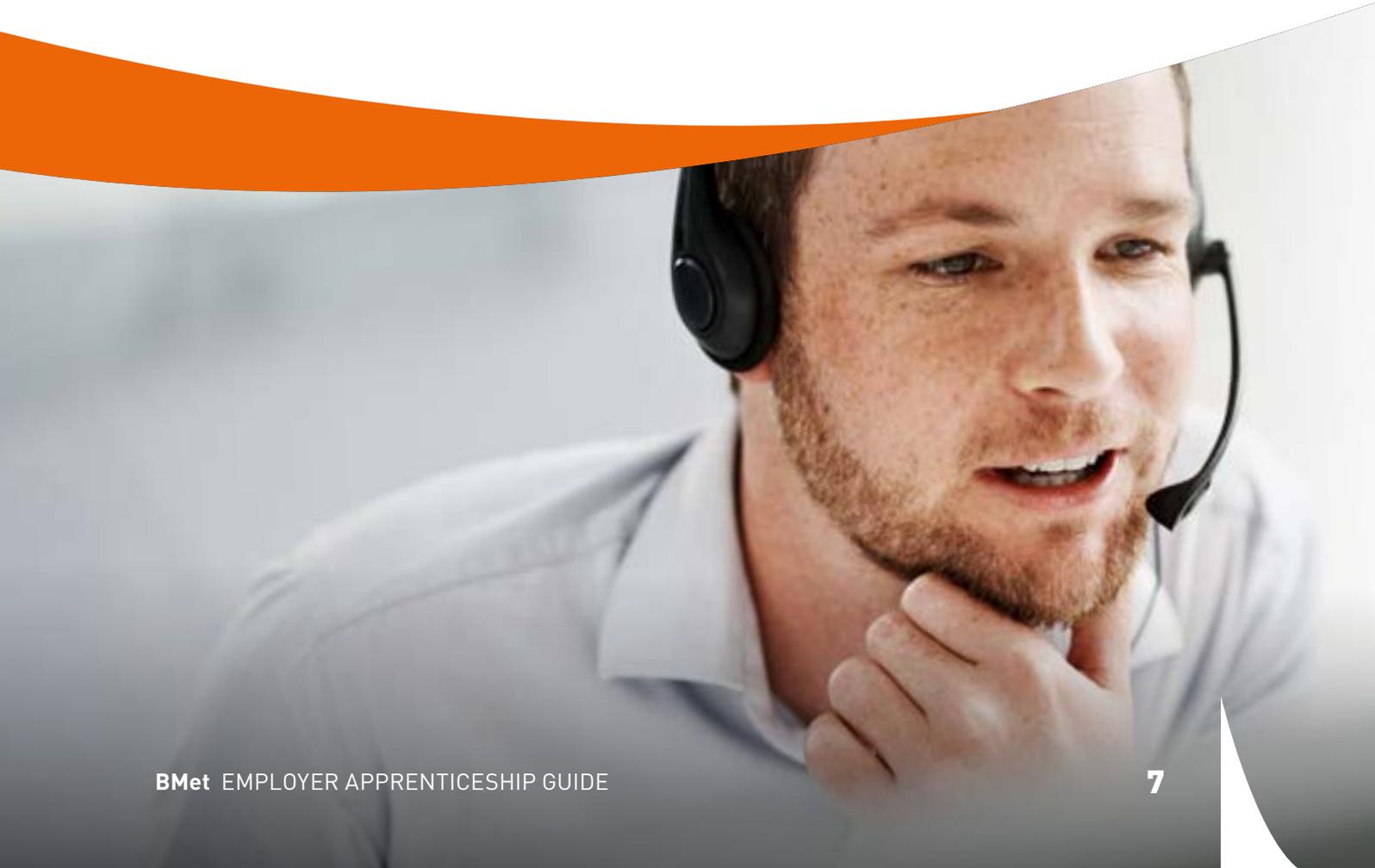
During the employee programme

BMet will provide:

- Experienced and qualified staff to deliver a planned programme
- A range of learning techniques appropriate to the programme and meeting the individual needs of the learner
- Regular reviews of employees' progress, setting SMART targets for further learning
- The opportunity for employers to feedback on our services
- Regular contact from both academic staff and our Business Development team.

On completion of the employee programme:

- Employers will have employees with enhanced knowledge, skills and behaviours and appropriate qualifications to benefit their company
- BMet will identify further development opportunities for the employees to progress further within their chosen vocational and career area
- BMet will work with employers post programme to identify the opportunity for them to assist in training additional employees.



Employer responsibilities

Employer Agreement

Employers must give their apprentice an induction into their role and provide on-the-job training. Employers are responsible for paying their apprentice's wages and issuing their contract of employment. By employing an apprentice, employers have certain requirements to meet:

- An apprenticeship agreement between the employer and the apprentice must be in place
- The apprentice must receive the Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage (or higher). Many business pay more. If you require any further information on this, please [CLICK HERE](#)
- The minimum hours of employment for an apprentice should be at least 30 hours per week
- All apprentices must receive the same benefits as other employees.

Employer's responsibility when an apprentice is on a programme

- Monitor the timekeeping, ability and attendance of the apprentice
- Monitor the ability of the apprentice to undertake their duties and their level of enthusiasm for the role
- Allocate time for the apprentice to complete assignments and competence based work. From 1 August 2022 newly recruited apprentices need to receive a minimum average of 6 hours off the job training per week. Any issues are to be reported to BMet, so we can then work together to address them
- Ensure support and mentoring is available to the apprentice to support them both in the workplace and through their apprenticeship
- Be involved within the apprenticeship journey.

Apprenticeship funding

The Apprenticeship Levy

The levy was introduced on 6 April 2017 and charges at a rate of 0.5% of an employers' pay bill, paid through PAYE on a monthly basis. Each employer will have a levy allowance of £15,000, this is not a cash payment. It works in a similar way to the personal tax allowance and cannot be used to purchase apprenticeship training. The impact of the allowance means that fewer than 1.3% of UK employers, those with an annual pay bill of more than £3 million, are liable to pay the levy. Employers in England who pay the levy will be able to get out more than they pay in, through a 10% top-up to their online accounts. An employer's pay bill is made up of the total amount of the employees' earnings that are subject to Class 1 National Insurance contributions, such as:

- Wages
- Bonuses
- Commissions
- Pension contributions

Employers paying the levy can use their transfers allowance to support the training and assessment cost of apprentices in other organisations. These employers are called sending employers.

Using their transfers allowance creates opportunities for sending employers to use their apprenticeship funding to support other employers. Sending employers can also benefit from this partnership: for example, by supporting their supply chain, industry sector or with charities and local communities they can support their corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals.

Employers receiving transferred apprenticeship funds are called receiving employers. These employers can be levy and non-levy paying employers.

What about non-levy paying employers?

Employers with a pay bill of less than £3 million a year will not need to pay the levy. At least 90% of non-levy paying employers' apprenticeship training and assessment costs in England will be paid for by the government. The government will ask these employers to make a 5% contribution to the cost, paid directly to the provider, and the government covers the rest. This cost will be spread over the lifetime of the apprenticeship.

The government is offering additional support to organisations with fewer than 50 employees by paying 100% of training and assessment costs for their apprentices aged 16-18 and for those aged 19-24 formerly in care or with a local authority education, health and care plan. The government will also pay employers, no matter what size, £1,000 for each 16-18 year old apprentice they employ.

Non-Levy Employer Funding

From 1st April 2021 all non-levy employers will be required to reserve funds for prospective apprentices undertaking the apprenticeship standard.

- Each employer who does not pay the Apprenticeship Levy can make up to 10 new reservations to fund new starts in the financial year
- The ESFA will monitor the number of reservations being made by employers and will keep this under review
- Each reservation is linked to an employer and their account. If a provider reserves the funds on behalf of the employer, the employer can still use this reservation with any provider
- Once a reservation has been made funds are guaranteed for that apprenticeship subject to the reservation being turned into a commitment & all other eligibility criteria being met as detailed in the Apprenticeship Funding Rules
- Expired and deleted reservations are not classed as active reservations & will therefore not count towards any reservation limits.

How to Apply

You must set up an apprenticeship service account to apply [CLICK HERE](#).

Before setting up an account you will need:

- An email address you have access to
- The Government Gateway login for your organisation (or you can use the accounts office reference number and employer PAYE scheme reference number if your annual pay bill is less than £3 million)
- Authority to add PAYE schemes to the account
- Authority to accept the employer agreement on behalf of your organisation.

Additional government funding support

Employers may not need to pay Employer Class 1 National Insurance Contributions (NICs) for apprentices under the age of 25 years old and following an approved UK government apprenticeship, on their earnings below £827 a week (£43,000 a year) [CLICK HERE](#).

The following incentives are available to employers who take on apprentices:

- £1,000 payment to both the employer and provider when they train a 16-18-year-old
- £1,000 payment to both the employer and provider when they train a 19-24-year-old who has previously been in care or who has a Local Authority Education, Health and Care Plan
- Employers with fewer than 50 people working for them will be able to train 16-18-year-old apprentices without making a contribution towards the costs of training. The government will pay 100% of the training costs for these individuals.

Incentive Payments for Hiring a New Apprentice

How to Apply

You can apply for the incentive payment after you add new apprentices to your apprenticeship service account.

When will you Receive Payment

- Payment cannot be made until you have verified your organisational and finance details.
- Payment is made in 2 equal instalments, the first payment after the apprentice has completed 90 days of their apprenticeship and the final payment following 365 days.
- This can take up to 3 months and you may be contacted to confirm your company details.

Link to Apprenticeship Funding Rules [CLICK HERE](#).

Disclaimer - Apprenticeship Funding Rules are set by the ESFA on behalf of government and are subject to changes and updates that BMet, as a provider, and employers are subject to. Always check you are working to the latest version of the Apprenticeship Funding Rules.



Key BMet contacts

BMet has a well-established and effective structure in place.

For management purposes, apprenticeships across the college are overseen by the Principal who manages the delivery operation including: vice principals (VP), curriculum directors (CD), departmental managers and employer responsive managers (ERM). The VP for External Development (BD) oversees commercial activities aligned to apprenticeship provision. The VP for Curriculum and Quality focuses on academic standards and quality of provision and the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) leads on finance, data, estates and IT.

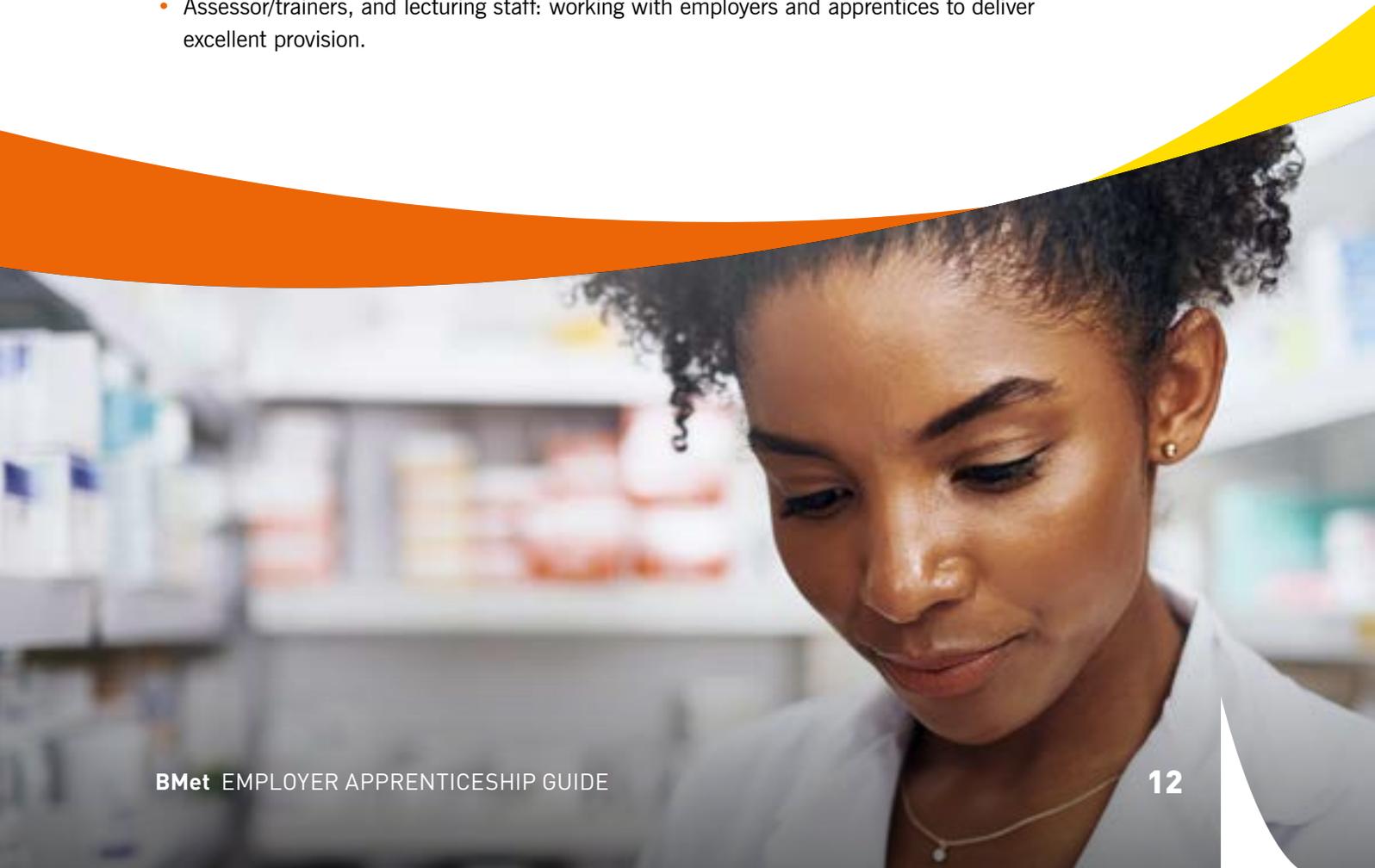
Day-to-day support for employer engagement and apprentice provision is provided through:

Business Development Team

- Internal Sales: employer support operating proactively and responsively to employer needs
- Business Development Advisers (BDA): supporting small and medium size employer needs
- Business Development Managers (BDM): supporting employer key accounts employer needs
- Apprenticeship Recruitment Team: supporting employer's recruitment of apprentices
- The Business Development Compliance Officer (Health and Safety and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion): working with employers to confirm the apprenticeship facilities and premises are clean, safe and well-managed environments.

Academic Team

- Employer Responsive Manager (ERM): managing and monitoring apprenticeship delivery to meet the employer and learner needs
- Assessor/trainers, and lecturing staff: working with employers and apprentices to deliver excellent provision.



Health and Safety

Introduction

BMet has a duty of care to ensure the safety of its students, not only while they are at college, but also while undertaking their apprenticeship or placement in a company. Therefore, we need to gain reassurance that they are being trained and placed in a clean, safe and well-managed environment.

Young persons (people less than 18 years of age) or vulnerable adults are particularly at risk due to their age, inexperience and their inability to recognise dangerous situations. Therefore, extra care is needed when placing these people in the work environment.

What do employers need to demonstrate?

The questions shown below will help you to check that management of health & safety within your business is in place before an apprenticeship programme starts.

- Does the business have a Health & Safety Policy?
- When was the Health & Safety Policy last reviewed?
- How is initial health and safety information, instruction and training given to new apprentices?
- Does the apprentice have a named supervisor?
- Are appropriate welfare facilities provided (toilets, washing, drinking, eating, changing, etc.)?
- Are there documented procedures in place for maintaining and testing firefighting equipment and for checking emergency escape routes/exits are free from obstructions?
- Are fire drills conducted regularly and documented?
- Are first aid arrangements in place?
- Are accidents recorded and monitored?
- Will the apprentice be using any hazardous substances and if so, have CoSHH (Control of Substances Hazardous to Health) assessments been conducted?
- Is there a procedure in place to manage work away from the provider's own premises?
- Is Employer's Liability Insurance and other insurance (e.g. Public Liability) current? – expiry date required
- Does the business have access to competent health and safety advice?
- Does the business review staff competence?
- How does the business consult with employees on health and safety matters?
- Are all significant risks highlighted through the risk assessments?
- What control measures have been put in place?
- Do the risk assessments consider young person's their age and/or their inexperience?
- Have the risk assessments taken into account any other special needs or circumstances such as a disability or health condition?
- How are apprentices informed of the findings?
- Are there any restrictions/prohibitions that apply to the apprentice and if so, what?
- Is machinery and equipment provided to the appropriate standards?
- Can the business evidence that machinery and equipment is maintained?

- Are guards and control measures in place for machinery?
- Will suitable personal protective equipment/clothing be provided?
- What health screening / surveillance, if any, is provided for employees?
- Is portable electrical equipment and the fixed wiring system periodically checked/inspected?

BMet Business Development Compliance Officer

BMet has a Business Development Compliance Officer who will complete the Health & Safety assessment and is in post to support employers through this process.

If you have any concerns, please contact the college Health and Safety Manager / Business Development Compliance Officer for advice. Any concerns raised may not necessarily mean that the apprentice programme cannot take place within the business; it could be that the college may be able to point the business to simple guidance to address the concern.



Employers guide to safeguarding

Context and scope

BMet has a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. Part of this responsibility is to work with others to safeguard children and vulnerable adults from all types of harm.

Definitions

Legislation defines children as those under 18 years old and those up to 25 with learning difficulties or disabilities. Vulnerable adults are defined as over 18, but for various reasons may not be able to care for themselves or protect themselves from being harmed or exploited.

Safeguarding concerns

Concerns may include:

- Abuse - physical/sexual/psychological/financial/ by neglect or omission
- Discrimination
- Radicalisation.

Employers

Employers providing any form of work related learning have the primary duty of care for students on placements or apprenticeships.

Responsibilities include:

- Assessing any risks to apprentices before placement begins, including welfare and safeguarding. This will include protecting them from harm in any setting where they may be most at risk, for example in 1:1 situations with an adult for long periods
- Providing appropriate induction, training and supervision for apprentices
- Looking after the welfare of apprentices on placement, including having suitable supporting procedures, including named contacts in case of emergencies
- Ensuring systems are in place to prevent unsuitable people working with apprentices.

Apprentices are designated as employees for the purposes of health & safety.

Reporting safeguarding concerns

If an apprentice 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 apprentice you have a duty to report concerns
- 3 Tell the apprentice you cannot promise confidentiality
- 4 Write down what the apprentice says in their own words

- 5 Email the college safeguarding leads as soon as possible
- 6 You will be asked to follow this up with a written report with details of the time, date and what happened

The college will then pass on the relevant information to its Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will decide how to follow up the report. The college will notify you of the outcome.

Any suspicions or allegations of abuse by an apprentice should be reported immediately to your college contact.

Further information on safeguarding can be found at: Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

CLICK HERE.

If you are worried or concerned about anything, please contact our designated safeguarding leads Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Kay Burton-Williams – 07779 328630

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Claire Harvey - 07545 100107

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Katie Dyer - 07734 365937

For safeguarding concerns outside of college hours including weekends please contact the Duty Director on 0121 503 8578

Further information on BMet's Key Safeguarding contacts **CLICK HERE.**



Employers guide to Prevent duty and British values

Context and scope

BMet has a legal responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all their students and to ensure that they operate within the law. The Prevent Duty is a government strategy and was introduced to safeguard communities against the threat of extremism, radicalisation and terrorism and for the promotion of British Values.

Duty of care: Section 26 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on educational establishments to have “due regard to the needs to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”. This is not about preventing apprentices from having political and religious views or concerns but supporting them to use or act on their views and concerns in a non-extremist way.

Definitions within the Prevent duty and British values

Ideology: A set of beliefs.

Extremism: Defined by the Government as “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs”.

Radicalisation: The process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies.

Terrorism: A violent act against people or property, designed to create fear and advance a political, religious or ideological cause.

British Values: British values are defined as democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different religions.

Concerns and identifying possible warning signs.

Signs of vulnerability may include:

- Loneliness or isolation
- Changes to a family situation/family tensions
- Poverty
- Political grievances
- Crime/anti-social behaviour.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Progressive changes in behaviour - such as significantly changing appearance, changing peer/friendship groups
- Argumentative and unwilling to listen
- Unwilling to engage with those of different race, religion, gender etc
- Accessing extremist material, showing sympathy to extremist views or behaviour.

Reporting concerns

If you are worried or concerned about your apprentice, please contact our designated safeguarding leads immediately.

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm:

Designated Safeguarding Lead

Kay Burton-Williams – 07779 328630

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Claire Harvey - 07545 100107

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For safeguarding concerns outside of college hours including weekends please contact the Duty Director on 0121 503 8578

Further information on BMet's Key safeguarding contacts [CLICK HERE](#).

Once we have investigated concerns, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine the most appropriate course of action and may refer to Channel.

What is Channel?

Channel is a programme that provides support to people who are identified as being vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism or extremism. It is a supportive approach and operates in the pre-criminal space. The programme uses a multiagency approach to protect vulnerable people by:

- Identifying individuals at risk
- Assessing the nature and extent of the risk
- Developing the most appropriate support plan for the individuals concerned.

Diversity and Inclusion for Employers – Working with BMet

Diversity and Inclusion is integral to BMet's organisational culture and success. It underpins our vision, values and goals enabling us to deliver a great experience for our students, employers and staff. We know that Diversity and Inclusion makes good business sense and of course ensures that we fulfil our legislative responsibilities. We look forward to working with you!

The following questions frame our discussion:

- Does the business have any Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policies or procedures in place?
- How is Equality, Diversity & Inclusion training, information and instruction given to new employees?
- If an employee wanted to report an incident of discrimination or harassment, what would they do and how would it be investigated/recorded?

You will know that employers and the providers of facilities, goods or services, have specific responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010). The Act protects people at work, in education and in the receipt of goods or services from discrimination, harassment, victimisation and covers the 'protected characteristics' of age, disability, gender reassignment, maternity & pregnancy, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion & belief, sex and sexual orientation. For your info and support:

The Business Case for Diversity and Inclusion

The most diverse companies are now more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability. [CLICK HERE](#).

Equality and Human Rights Commission

The EHRC has a good range of guidance documents and codes of practice for employers and service providers. [CLICK HERE](#).

Be Disability Confident

The Disability Confident scheme supports employers like you to make the most of the talents disabled people can bring to your workplace. [CLICK HERE](#) and join over 18,000 organisations that have signed up

Living Wage Accreditation

As well as being good for society, there are significant business benefits to paying the real Living Wage. Have you thought about becoming a Living Wage employer? [CLICK HERE](#).

Gender Pay Gaps

Are you required to report on gender pay gaps? Where a gender pay gap is noted do you have a plan in place to address inequalities? See what businesses are doing. Some organisations are monitoring ethnicity and disability pay gaps too! [CLICK HERE](#).

BMet's D&I work

BMet's new Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) four-year strategy continues the College's work to strengthen diversity and improve inclusion and belonging across the college and its local communities [CLICK HERE](#).

Guidance and Training

BMet can support with information, advice and guidance on a range of D&I and wellbeing matters including training on Unconscious Bias, LGBT+ and disability inclusion. Speak to your Business Development Compliance Officer.

Modern Slavery

Organisations with a turnover of £32 million are required to publish a Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement in line with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It's good practice for all organisations to be aware of modern day slavery especially in supply chains. [CLICK HERE](#).

End-Point Assessment for Apprenticeship Standards

All “Apprenticeship Standards” have end-point assessment. An apprentice undertaking an Apprenticeship Standard must pass their end-point assessment to achieve their apprenticeship.

Apprentices cannot undertake their end-point assessment if employer contributions have not been paid and/or the apprentice has not successfully completed the key elements of their apprenticeship programme – as listed in the appropriate assessment plan.

End-point assessment is not an additional cost to employers. The cost is included in the overall apprenticeship price.

The End-point Assessment Organisation must be selected from the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR) and a price agreed for the end-point assessment. Only those organisations listed on the APAR will be eligible to be funded.

BMet must enter into a contract with the End-Point Assessment Organisation selected by the employer and have a written agreement in place. The written agreement must set out the arrangements for sharing relevant information about the apprentice so end-point assessment and certification can take place, including arrangements for any re-sits, re-takes and payments.

BMet can support employers by providing information on End-point Assessment Organisations approved for the appropriate apprenticeship standard, facilitate meetings and provide information to help employers make informed decisions.

