

Apprenticeship Vacancies on line – Contract Clause 2010/11

We have stated pre and post launch of Apprenticeship Vacancies that it is our intention to make Apprenticeship Vacancies on-line a contractual requirement in provider contracts. Our intention is to introduce this from the 2010-11 year.

The wording in the contract will be as follows:

Apprenticeship vacancies

“Apprenticeship vacancies” (formerly the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service) means the website operated by THE COUNCIL which enables Learners to be matched to Apprenticeship opportunities

THE CONTRACTOR shall ensure that all Apprenticeship vacancies of which it becomes aware and which it has verified are advertised on the Apprenticeship vacancies website within 5 days save that THE CONTRACTOR shall not be required to advertise Apprenticeships where it is proposed that the Apprenticeship opportunity will be offered to a Learner who is already employed.

Once any vacancy advertised on the Apprenticeship vacancy website has been filled THE CONTRACTOR shall ensure that it enters on the Apprenticeship vacancy website the details of the successful and unsuccessful candidates to complete the vacancy.

THE CONTRACTOR must not approach any employer whose details appear on the Apprenticeship vacancy website with a view to seeking to persuade that employer to transfer the delivery of training to THE CONTRACTOR from another provider funded by THE COUNCIL. If THE COUNCIL is satisfied that THE CONTRACTOR has acted in breach of this clause it reserves the right to terminate this Contract and/or to refuse funding for the delivery of any training which has been transferred from another provider funded by THE COUNCIL.

Prior to making the system a contractual requirement, our strategy has been to ensure first that the system works and to also work with providers and employers to address any concerns.

Poaching – some providers have raised concern over the disclosure of the employer name on the vacancy. In such cases our approach has been to talk with providers to try and allay their concerns. In a few cases where a provider has really seen this as a major problem we have agreed to them describing the type of employer as opposed to the name.

The majority of vacancies on the system disclose the employer name. One of the main objectives of Apprenticeship Vacancies, is to use the name and reputation of local and national employers as a magnet for young people and their parents, to encourage them to choose an Apprenticeship.

In addition:

- There has been no evidence to date of employer poaching.
- David Way, the Deputy Chief Executive of the National Apprenticeship Service has had exploratory discussions with ALP about a protocol between its members to discourage poaching.
- The Chief executive of the National Apprenticeship Service (Simon Waugh) has publicly made clear that if a provider can show this has happened then the National Apprenticeship Service would take strong action with the provider concerned.

Conversions – some companies, in particular some of the large employers the National Employer Service deal with, recruit first to their organisation and then subsequently use Apprenticeships as the training framework. This can sometimes be after 6 or 12 months employment. It is therefore proposed to exclude “conversions” from the contractual clause.

Specialist providers – The problem that these providers face is that they already have the individual and so as soon as they find a vacancy the person is placed in it. We will be having discussions with such organisations to talk through how the system can be integrated with their approach.

Since the system went live:

- Over 100,000 people looking for an Apprenticeship have registered on it so far showing there is strong individual demand for such a service.
- Over 3,300 employers have actively posted vacancies on the system.
- Employers say that the system gives them a wider range of applicants, helping quality and diversity
- The system has worked 24/7 and been tested successfully to withstand hacking and major disruption.

In addition, headline feedback from three provider user groups and an interim evaluation research project points to the system being welcomed by both potential candidates and providers who are using the system.

Candidates appear to engage with the concept of finding and applying for apprenticeships through the system and were keen to know more. Providers are engaged with the concept of the system within their organisations and also the useful resource that the system provides for engaging potential candidates. Specific comments include:

- Positive for providers; the system provides a useful depository of information for recruitment and strategic purposes, transparency of service helps eliminate local provider competition, placing emphasis on the ultimate end user of employer and learner.
- The majority of providers felt that the process to input their profile and framework details was straightforward and easy to use.
- A number of providers found that the system made it easier for them to manage the applications that they received.
- Providers generally liked the alerts and felt that they gave them the prompts needed.
- The system overall has an intuitive feel, is easy to use and good for field based or remote workers.
- The number of new candidates being generated for providers is seen by some providers as a positive impact of the system.
- The service is viewed as a one-stop shop; stakeholders interviewed so far acknowledge that the system provides a central source for information and vacancies in one place.
- Visibility of the service; respondents appreciate the national brand, and a vehicle that promotes employers and providers.
- Positive for employers; the system enhances employer access to apprenticeships, and increases means to advertise and recruit.