

Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)

Guidance

BIS | Department for Business
Innovation & Skills



National
Apprenticeship
Service



Introduction**ASCL Ref**

<p>1. The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act introduces the <i>Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE)</i>. The <i>SASE</i> sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English Apprenticeship framework. The Issuing Authorities, designated by the Secretary of State, are responsible for ensuring that only those Apprenticeship frameworks which comply with the <i>SASE</i> are issued as recognised English Apprenticeship frameworks.</p>	Section 13
<p>2. As the certifying authority in England, the Chief Executive of Skills Funding will issue an Apprenticeship certificate only where the standard completion conditions or alternative completion conditions of a recognised English Apprenticeship framework have been met.</p>	Section 3
<p>3. Compliance with the <i>SASE</i> will be a statutory requirement of the ASCL Act. Issuing Authorities must ensure that recognised English Apprenticeship frameworks comply with the <i>SASE</i> by 6th April 2011. The ASCL Act provides a duty on Issuing Authorities to have regard to guidance on the <i>SASE</i> issued by the Secretary of State. This is the first version of the <i>SASE Guidance</i> and is issued on a non-statutory basis. The final version of the <i>SASE Guidance</i> will be available in October 2010. The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will work with the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils to develop a handbook of non-statutory good practice in the development of frameworks. Issuing Authorities should take this opportunity to begin converting and developing Apprenticeship frameworks to meet the requirements of the <i>SASE</i>.</p>	Section 13
<p>4. From 6th April 2011 there will be no new Apprenticeship starts against frameworks which do not comply with the <i>SASE</i>. To ensure that apprentices can complete Apprenticeships started against existing frameworks prior to April 2011, the Secretary of State will allow for existing frameworks to be treated as Apprenticeship frameworks issued under the ASCL Act.</p>	Section 17

<p>5. In Wales the ASCL Act introduces the <i>Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW)</i> and, wherever possible, we will seek consistency between the specifications for the two countries.</p>	<p>Section 18</p>
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Issuing Authority

<p>6. The Secretary of State will designate a body to issue recognised English Apprenticeship frameworks for a particular sector. In most cases in England, the Issuing Authority will be a licensed Sector Skills Council (SSC). Exceptionally the Secretary of State may designate another body as the Issuing Authority.</p>	<p>Section 13 (1)</p>
<p>7. An Apprenticeship framework must only be issued by the Issuing Authority designated by the Secretary of State to issue the framework. The framework must specify the skill, trade or occupation to which it relates.</p>	<p>Section 13 (2)</p>
<p>8. The Issuing Authority must only issue frameworks which comply with the <i>SASE</i>. The Issuing Authority must have regard to the <i>SASE Guidance</i>.</p>	<p>Section 13 (3)</p>
<p>9. The Issuing Authority will work with employers in the sector and other relevant partners such as Standard Setting Bodies (SSBs) to develop Apprenticeship frameworks and to support Apprenticeship growth. Issuing Authorities will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue frameworks which comply with the <i>SASE</i> and will maintain their currency; • Notify the Chief Executive of Skills Funding of the issue or withdrawal of a framework and any changes to a framework; • Promote framework standards for the sector which go beyond the minimum requirements of the <i>SASE</i>; and • Promote coherence in the range of Apprenticeship frameworks within their sector. 	<p>Section 13 Section 15</p>

<p>10. Anyone who wishes to develop an Apprenticeship framework will submit a draft framework to the relevant Issuing Authority. The draft framework will set out the qualifications and units to be completed and any other requirements of the <i>SASE</i>. The Issuing Authority may require the framework developer to provide information or evidence, relevant to the <i>SASE</i> requirements, to support the draft framework. The Issuing Authority will work with the framework developer to complete the framework and to ensure that it complies with the <i>SASE</i>. The SSC Alliance has developed templates and guidance, and is developing an electronic system, to support the development and issuing of frameworks. Following submission of a draft framework, the Issuing Authority will notify the framework developer within ten working days if the framework does not comply with the <i>SASE</i> and therefore cannot be issued. The Issuing Authority must give the framework developer reasons for its decision.</p>	<p>Section 16</p>
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Apprenticeship Frameworks: General

<p>11. Apprenticeship frameworks must consist of a minimum of 37 credits on the QCF (except where a Higher Apprenticeship framework specifies a Foundation degree or HND or HNC for which there is no QCF credit value). The framework developer, in consultation with the Issuing Authority, will decide the balance of credits. However, there must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 10 credits achieved through a competence based qualification or competence element of an integrated qualification, which specifically relates to the occupation or job role, and is based on the National Occupational Standards (NOS) from the employment sector for which the framework is designed; and • A minimum of 10 credits from a knowledge-based qualification or knowledge element of an integrated qualification, at the same overall level of the framework, and which provides the technical skills and knowledge/ understanding of the theoretical concepts specifically relating to the occupation or job role. The knowledge qualification/element must equip the apprentice with knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market. 	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>
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Qualifications – Competence and Knowledge

<p>12. Apprenticeships consist of a competence element and a knowledge element which, for the majority of existing Apprenticeship frameworks, have had separate 'competence' and 'knowledge' qualifications. Whilst historically these were known as NVQs and technical certificates, framework developers are not confined to these qualifications. Furthermore, the QCF has brought increased opportunity for combining units from qualifications which were previously separate. The <i>SASE</i> allows for the elements to be combined in a single integrated qualification should SSCs and employers want this. The <i>SASE</i> defines the competence element as the practical competencies required for a specific occupation or job role. The knowledge element is defined as the technical skills and theory specifically relating to the occupation or job role, together with the knowledge and understanding of the industry and its market.</p>	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>
<p>13. Where the knowledge and competence elements are combined and accredited as a single integrated qualification, the two elements must be separately identified and separately assessed. It is important to retain this distinctiveness between the two elements to ensure that apprentices not only demonstrate the competence to do the job, but also develop the underpinning technical skills, knowledge and understanding of the wider industry and market. This distinction between the competence and knowledge elements allows for individuals to gain credit towards an Apprenticeship through prior participation in other programmes (eg Train to Gain which focuses on competence-based qualifications or Diplomas where additional/specialist knowledge may well include the knowledge elements of an Apprenticeship).</p>	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>

<p>14. Where an Apprenticeship framework includes separate competence and knowledge qualifications, the competence qualification must be nominated as the 'Competencies Qualification'. Where there is an integrated qualification, this will be the 'Competencies Qualification'. Under the standard completion conditions of the ASCL Act, this is the qualification which must be completed while the apprentice is working under an Apprenticeship Agreement. Under the alternative completion conditions (to be set out in regulations), the 'Competencies Qualification' may be completed prior to working under an Apprenticeship Agreement. It is important that the 'Competencies Qualification' is, or includes, the competence elements as these are the skills which are practised and refined during the course of normal work activities, on employers' premises, using their tools and with real pressures and customers.</p>	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>
<p>15. An Apprenticeship framework may allow for a choice of qualifications by including a range of different competence, knowledge and integrated qualifications that may be chosen. Different apprentices may be suited to different types of qualifications, all of which must fulfil the requirements set out in the previous paragraphs.</p>	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>
<p>16. Unless the knowledge and/or competence requirements are specified through a Foundation degree or HND or HNC, an Apprenticeship framework must specify that the method of assessment of the competence and knowledge qualifications (or of the integrated competence/knowledge qualification) will be determined by the relevant Issuing Authority, subject to regulation by Ofqual. Assessment of the knowledge qualification or element must be externally verified.</p>	<p>Section 27 (2)</p>

Functional Skills

<p>17. Functional skills have been developed to provide young people and adults with the core, transferable skills they need to help them adapt and learn through their working life and in a changing economy. Functional Skills qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT will be available from September 2010 and will replace key skills in all Apprenticeship frameworks by that date. From September 2010 Level 2 Apprenticeship frameworks will require the apprentice to gain Functional Skills qualifications in mathematics and English at a minimum of Level 1. However, the Issuing Authority, in consultation with employers in the sector and relevant partners, should be proactive in considering the scope to go beyond this minimum and to set the threshold at Level 2. Apprenticeship frameworks at Level 3 and above must require apprentices to gain Functional Skills qualifications in mathematics and English at Level 2.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>18. The Issuing Authority, in consultation with employers in the sector and other relevant partners, should determine whether Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is directly relevant to effective performance in either the particular occupation or the sector. Where ICT is directly relevant either to the occupation or to the sector, the Apprenticeship framework must specify that the apprentice is to attain a Functional Skills qualification in ICT at a minimum of Level 1 for a Level 2 Apprenticeship, or at Level 2 for an Advanced or Higher Apprenticeship. Where ICT is not directly relevant to the occupation and sector, there is no minimum requirement. However, the Issuing Authority is encouraged to consider adding ICT to their frameworks in recognition of the increasing importance of ICT as a transferable employability skill.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>

<p>19. To promote progression, where an individual has achieved Functional Skills qualifications at Level 1 in either mathematics, English or ICT (if the framework requires this) or has the relevant key skill/proxy qualification prior to starting a Level 2 Apprenticeship, the employer may allow the individual to study for a Functional Skills qualification at Level 2 as part of the Apprenticeship framework. Under current funding arrangements young people up to age 19 have an entitlement to support for a course of study until they have gained Functional Skills qualifications at Level 2 in English, mathematics and ICT. The intention is that from 2013 this will become a legal entitlement. Adults aged 19 and over may also be funded to attain Functional Skills qualifications at Level 2. The Issuing Authority must actively encourage employers to allow the individual (particularly young people up to age 19) to progress to Functional Skills at Level 2 as part of the Apprenticeship framework.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>20. Our aim is that, in the longer term, Functional Skills qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT at Level 2 should be a requirement for all Apprenticeships. We therefore plan to work with SSCs to evaluate the impact that these requirements would have on Apprenticeship starts, completions and costs. In the light of findings from the evaluation, we will consider the case for all frameworks to include Functional Skills qualifications in English, mathematics and ICT at Level 2 by 2016.</p>	<p>Non Statutory</p>
<p>21. Key Skills qualifications in Application of Number, Communication and ICT (together with their acknowledged proxy qualifications) achieved at the equivalent level required by the framework, within the previous five years and before September 2012, will satisfy the requirement for Functional Skills until 2016. However, see previous paragraphs regarding progression to Functional Skills at Level 2.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>

Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR)

<p>22. An Apprenticeship framework must specify the outcomes which an apprentice is to achieve in the rights and responsibilities of employees in their current occupation and those occupation(s) to which the framework leads. An Apprenticeship framework must be designed to support achievement of the ERR national outcomes set out below. Achievement of ERR outcomes must be based on evidence that is subject to quality assurance.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>23. ERR must be formally assessed. However, there is flexibility for the Issuing Authority and framework developers to determine the method of assessment and whether it should be accredited. ERR must be explicitly identified and clearly signposted within the Apprenticeship framework.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>24. The course of training in ERR must be designed so that the apprentice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows and understands the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under Employment Law and that employment rights can be affected by other legislation as well. This should cover the apprentice’s rights and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, other relevant equalities legislation and Health & Safety, together with the responsibilities and duties of employers; • knows and understands the procedures and documentation in their organisation which recognise and protect their relationship with their employer. Health & Safety and Equality & Diversity training must be an integral part of the apprentice’s learning programme; • knows and understands the range of sources of information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities. Details of Access to Work and Additional Learning Support must be included in the programme; • understands the role played by their occupation within their organisation and industry; • has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them; 	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • knows the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to their industry and organisation, and their main roles and responsibilities; • knows where and how to get information and advice on their industry, occupation, training and career; • can describe and work within their organisation’s principles and codes of practice; • recognises and can form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry. 	
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Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)

<p>25. Frameworks must specify the outcomes which an apprentice is to achieve in the six PLTS listed below and how they are to be evidenced. Achievement of PLTS must be based on evidence that is subject to quality assurance. The six PLTS and their outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent enquiry – apprentices can process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes; • Creative thinking – apprentices think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value; • Reflective learning – apprentices evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning; • Team working – apprentices work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes; 	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self management – apprentices organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities; • Effective participation – apprentices actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves. 	
<p>26. PLTS must be formally assessed. However, there is flexibility for the Issuing Authority and framework developer to determine the method of delivery and assessment, how and where PLTS will be located in the framework and whether PLTS should be accredited. The location of PLTS within an Apprenticeship framework must be explicitly identified and clearly signposted. The Issuing Authority, in consultation with employers in the sector and other relevant partners, will determine the extent, level and location of PLTS within frameworks. Where PLTS are referenced to NOS, maximum flexibility must be allowed in the interpretation of the NOS to avoid discrimination against those with a learning difficulty. For example, care should be taken to ensure that interpretation of references to “speaking and listening” are inclusive, as far as possible, of those with speech and hearing difficulties.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>

27. An Apprenticeship framework must specify the manner in which an apprentice's performance against PLTS is to be assessed and recognised. This may be through formative assessment and/or through formal summative assessment. Whichever method(s) is chosen, assessment and recognition of PLTS must be in line with the principles set out below:

Assessment

- The nature of the PLTS assessment must be manageable for apprentices and training providers;
- Formative assessment may be used to provide feedback on an apprentice's performance in the PLTS;
- Summative assessment must be used to determine achievement of PLTS within component accredited qualifications;
- Any particular and/or additional sector requirements for assessing PLTS must be developed as part of the process for planning and designing Apprenticeship frameworks.

Recognition

- PLTS achievement must be formally recognised. How best to recognise PLTS achievement should be part of the Apprenticeship planning process and parameters identified and agreed between the SSC or other issuing authority, employers, SSBs, other relevant sector bodies and, where appropriate, Awarding Organisations;
- The recognition process must be relevant and meaningful to the apprentice;
- Recognition of PLTS must be based on evidence that is subject to quality assurance.

Section 27 (1)

Guided Learning Hours (GLH)

<p>28. To comply with the Education and Skills Act 2008 and the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA), Apprenticeship frameworks must include a minimum of 280 GLH per year. The framework must be flexible enough to allow apprentices with mental or physical health conditions, and who may not have a standard working pattern, to complete the required number of GLH within contracted working hours.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>29. Apprenticeship frameworks will include guided learning which encourages and enables the apprentice to develop the technical skills of the job and to develop their knowledge of theoretical concepts across a range of contexts and the wider market. This type of guided learning will be delivered away from the immediate pressures of the job. It may be delivered in the workplace, or away from the workplace in a college or training provider premises. It is referred to in the <i>SASE</i> as “off the job” guided learning.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>30. The framework will also include guided learning which encourages and enables the apprentice to demonstrate practical job-related skills and to practise and apply these skills in the context of the job. This type of learning will be delivered in the workplace and through practical experience of doing the job. It is referred to in the <i>SASE</i> as “on the job” guided learning.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>31. The balance of on and off the job guided learning will vary depending on the nature of the framework. The balance will be determined by the framework developer in consultation with the Issuing Authority. However, to ensure a reasonable balance in all cases, the proportion of off the job GLH must be at least 30% of the total annual GLH or be at a minimum of 100 GLH delivered off the job per year, whichever is the greater. All GLH specified in the framework must be delivered within contracted working hours.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>

<p>32. An Apprenticeship framework must specify that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GLH achieve clear and specific outcomes which contribute directly to the successful achievement of the framework and that this may include accredited and non-accredited elements of the framework; • GLH are planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager; • GLH allows access as and when required by the apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager; • GLH are delivered during contracted working hours; • GLH are delivered through one or more of the following methods: individual and group teaching; e-learning; distance learning; coaching; mentoring; feedback and assessment; collaborative/networked learning with peers; guided study. 	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>
<p>33. An Apprenticeship framework must specify that, under standard completion conditions, GLH must be completed while working under an Apprenticeship Agreement. An Apprenticeship framework may specify that, under the alternative completion conditions, GLH may be completed in relation to accredited components of the framework achieved prior to working under an Apprenticeship Agreement.</p>	<p>Section 27 (1)</p>



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