

# NCG Apprenticeship Policy



<b><u>Policy Title</u></b>	<b>NCG Apprenticeship Policy</b>	
<b><u>Policy Category</u></b>	Complaint	
<b><u>Owner</u></b>	Adrian Pegg – Assistant Director Quality (TLA)	
<b><u>Group Executive Lead</u></b>	Steve Wallis – Executive Director, Quality	
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<b><u>Considered By</u></b>	Executive and QA Leads	
<b><u>Approved By</u></b>	Executive Board	
<b><u>Date Approved</u></b>	September 2019	
<b><u>Equality Impact Assessment</u></b>	The implementation of this policy is not considered to have a negative impact on protected characteristics	
<b><u>Freedom of Information</u></b>	This document will be publically available through the Groups Publication Scheme.	
<b><u>Review Date</u></b>	July 2021	
<b><u>Policy Summary</u></b>	The policy sets out the requirements for NCG's apprenticeship provision in all Divisions regardless of scope and scale. It builds upon the Institute for Apprenticeships' definitions and core principles in defining a non-negotiable standard for implementation by senior leadership teams.	
<b><u>Applicability of Policy</u></b>	<b><u>Consultation Undertaken</u></b>	<b><u>Applicable To</u></b>
Carlisle College	Yes	Yes
Group Services	Yes	Yes
Intraining	Yes	Yes
Kidderminster College	Yes	Yes
Lewisham College	Yes	Yes
Newcastle College	Yes	Yes
Newcastle Sixth Form College	Yes	No
Rathbone Training	Yes	Yes
Southwark College	Yes	Yes
West Lancashire College	Yes	Yes
<b><u>Changes to Earlier Versions</u></b>		
<b><u>Previous Approval Date</u></b>	<b><u>Summarise Changes Made Here</u></b>	
20th September 2018	Update to new policy format. Changes to annex B – unplaced learners procedure (redundancy)	
<b><u>Linked Documents</u></b>		
<b><u>Document Title</u></b>		
NCG Malpractice Policy	Applies to all staff that have a teaching, learning or assessment role or are involved in the associated supporting services.	
NCG Unified Tutorial, Progress and Attainment Policy	It is the responsibility of Divisional leaders to ensure that a designated course lead/tutor is appointed to manage the learner journey for a defined course(s) or programme.	
Disclosure Policy		

## NCG Apprenticeship Policy

### 1. Scope and Purpose of Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for NCG's apprenticeship provision in all Divisions regardless of scope and scale. It builds upon the Institute for Apprenticeships' definitions and core principles in defining a non-negotiable standard for implementation by Divisional senior leadership teams.

The term **apprentice** is used in its widest sense and includes all apprentices whether on frameworks or standards, regardless of sector and level.

The term **teacher** is used to describe all teaching and training staff, including teachers, lecturers, instructors, skills trainers, learning support practitioners and coaches.

The term **Delivery Team** refers to the wider group of staff involved in the apprentices training – i.e. a collection of **teachers** and **business support staff**.

**Divisional Head** relates to the Principals and Managing Director of Rathbone/Intraining.

### 2. Policy Statement

#### 2.1. Definition of an apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a job with training to recognised industry standards – specifically it will follow the apprenticeship specification in either a **framework** or **standard** format. It should be concerned with entry to a **recognised occupation**, and involve a substantial programme of **on and off-the-job training**. In the case of a **standard**, the apprentice's occupational competence should be tested by an **independent, end point assessment**.

Recent apprenticeships are entirely **employer-led** – this refers to both design and procurement. Employers now set the standards, create the demand for apprentices to meet their skills needs, part fund the apprenticeship (directly or indirectly through the **Levy**) and are responsible for employing and training the apprentice. The needs of the apprentice are equally important: to achieve competence in a skilled occupation, which is transferable and secures long term earnings potential, greater employment security and the capability to progress in the workplace.

**Not all employer-based training is an apprenticeship.** Work experience, short duration training for a job, attending a course on-site, or assessing and certificating an employee who is already working competently in their occupation, are all positive forms of learning and/or accreditation at work **but**

**they are not apprenticeships. NCG** pledge support to **delivering only** apprenticeships that **provide substantial new skills and knowledge**, and in doing so set out this **Framework for Apprenticeship Quality**.

### 2.2. NCG Apprenticeships

NCG Apprenticeships will be built upon an agreed partnership, formalised within an **Apprenticeship Agreement and Commitment Statement** including:

- An **employer** with the intention and capability of employing the apprentice to completion of their training and end-point assessment and securing their longer term future.
- An **apprentice** who is motivated to learn and work diligently to complete their apprenticeship.
- Training and support delivered by the **Group's Divisions** and a small number of **trusted partners** who are aligned to the principles of this framework.

### 2.3. The Requirement for off-the-Job training

- **NCG apprenticeships** will provide entry to a recognised occupation which can be transferred to other relevant employers and is sufficiently skilled to require employment and training of at least a year's duration.
- **At least 20% of the off the job training will take place within contracted hours (less annual leave).**
- **NCG apprenticeships** will follow either a defined and approved framework or standard as approved by SASE and now the Institute for Apprenticeships. The specification will define the occupation in terms of the responsibilities and tasks involved and the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to achieve competence.
- **NCG teachers** will apply the **12 key TLA principles (naturally occurring indicators)**, articulated in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy.

### 2.4. The requirement for the Apprenticeship to be a job

- Employment in a **job** with legal and contractually acceptable terms and conditions.
- The job role, together with the off the job training, provides opportunities to cover the **full occupational profile** and learning all of the skills, knowledge and behaviours required.

### 2.5. The Training Programme

- The training programme must be sufficiently challenging to stretch the apprentice and be delivered with the active involvement of the employer(s), which uses a range of **effective on and off the job training methods** as well as work itself.
- The workplace must be **motivating and supportive** with coaching and mentoring support for the apprentice and continuous assessment of progress; NCG apprenticeship must not be placed in a workplace that does not offer sufficient scope to acquire new knowledge, skills and personal development required of the apprentice framework or standard.
- **An extended period of on and off the job training** which develops not only the knowledge and skills required but also the additional transferable skills which allow an apprentice to deal with new employers, situations, problems and equipment. For frameworks this will be at least a twelve-month duration with a minimum of 20% of the contracted time (less annual leave) in off-the-job training and for standards the period will be no less than 15 months to take into account 'gateway' period.

### 2.6. End-point Assessment and Certification – Standards only

- **NCG apprentices** will understand the **requirements of assessment** at the **very start** of their programme (whether it be competency or knowledge based) and where and how they will be assessed (extending to end-point assessment).
- NCG Divisions will enter into appropriate arrangements with the end point assessment provider through a **service level agreement** to **deliver** the assessment.
- NCG apprenticeships will ensure that the appropriate level of **English and maths**, any **digital skills** required and other specified components of the Apprenticeship, signed off by the employer, are achieved prior to end-point assessment, or in the case of frameworks, apprenticeship certification.

### 2.7. NCG Quality Indicators

**NCG** will adopt the **Institute for Apprenticeships' Quality Statement** as a reference point for our work on apprenticeships and we expect all stakeholder to consider the following when testing the feasibility and suitability of an apprenticeship contract or programme. Apprenticeships will meet the **skills needs of employers and apprentices** by reflecting the range of occupations and skill levels in our diverse economy. NCG will measure this by:

1. Assurance that all apprentices have **access to high quality off-the-job training** in line with expectations; apprenticeship courses must be validated against this non-negotiable requirement.
2. The percentage of high quality apprenticeships delivered for 16-23 year-olds; particularly those progressing from study programmes and at the Level 3 and higher level.
3. The robustness of the **initial and ongoing assessment** of the apprentice's skills and knowledge prior learning and the job role, against the framework or standard.
4. The **development of maths and English skills for all apprentices**, and the development of **digital skills** where applicable.
5. The **quality** of training and progress review in developing **new skills and knowledge**.
6. The **quality of assessment** and **feedback** to apprentices to support their further development.
7. **Retention** rates over the planned duration of the apprenticeship.
8. The **achievement rates** of apprentices within planned timescales.
9. **The destinations** of apprentices remaining employment in the apprenticeship occupation (with the training employer or with a different employer). This will typically be at least 2 terms for a positive destination.
10. The extent to which apprentices know how to keep **themselves safe**, including risks from **radicalisation and** their knowledge associated with the **common values in modern Britain**.

### 2.8. Accountability and Compliance

**Accountability** for adherence to this framework rests with the Divisional Head; Divisional Heads will ensure that internal control policies provide **internal assurance** that this policy is fully embedded; local board members must seek further assurance that this is the case.

Collective **responsibility** rests with staff at all levels – specifically the, senior management team, operation management team, employer partners and all staff with a teaching or training role within the organisation.

**Group assurance** will be based on the **Annual Group QA Risk Assessment** and will take the form of desk and field-based review of practice. This will extend to a review of apprenticeship planning, and delivery methods, apprentice and staff forums, observation of practice (visits to the workplace

and off-the-job training – including subcontractors), review of adherence to relevant policies and procedures and. The **Annual Group QA Risk Assessment** will be finalised and communicated by November to Divisional Heads and their performance/quality deputies and complete by June the same academic year.

### 2.9. Apprenticeship Terms and Conditions

#### 2.9.1. The Learning Plan

All apprentices will have a written Learning Plan specific to the apprenticeship framework standard to which they are contracted. The document is crucial to the administration process and are the basis for ensuring the programme is appropriate, legal, consistent and personalised. The apprenticeship agreement is a written statement displaying the employer's duty as meeting the Employment Rights Act 1996.

Apprenticeships follow set learning guidelines outlined within either a framework or standard based on both practical and academic skills. Apprentices will be required to attend both off-the-job training and the workplace to attain these goals. Attendance patterns will vary considerably depending on the sector and employer requirements which must be agreed with the employer before programme commencement. Apprentices are required to complete all elements of the apprenticeship specification (whether framework or standard) to achieve the apprenticeship framework; in most cases this will incorporate.

- Skills training – or competency/vocational training - incorporating a specified qualification in some frameworks and standards.
- Academic or theory training – incorporating a specified qualification in some frameworks and standards.
- Training and learning in mathematics – to a defined level, usually level 2, but with aspiration of at least GCSE grade 9-4.
- Training and learning in English – to a defined level, usually level 2, but an aspiration of at least GCSE grade 9-4.
- Digital skills were specified - incorporating a specified qualification in some frameworks and standards.
- Training and competencies associated with personal, social and employer-related skills.

### 2.9.2. Apprenticeship wage and hours of employment

GOV.UK provides regular guidance on the statutory apprenticeship wage. A minimum wage is in place for apprentices aged 16–18 and additionally for 19 year olds engaged in the first year of an apprenticeship.

The training period for an apprentice must not be less than 12 months.

Apprentices must be in paid employment for at least 30 hours per week. If the apprentices work fewer than 30 hours a week then the expected duration of the apprenticeship on the ILR (pro rata) must take account of this. Apprentices must be paid for off-the-job training away from the workplace as part of their normal, paid hours. The mode of which will be defined in the learning plan and will usually be day/block release or evening study. Apprentices who attend off-the-job training in hours that exceed their contracted hours must be paid in full. There are additional restrictions for apprentices aged

It is the responsibility of staff engaging with employers to ensure that the advice they provide to employer and prospective apprentices is accurate; support in providing such information should be provided by specialist staff where required. GOV.UK has comprehensive information relating to the employment of apprenticeships and post regular updates for training providers, employers and apprentices.

[www.gov.uk/](http://www.gov.uk/) [search apprenticeships].

### 2.9.3. Validation and approval of NCG Apprenticeships

All apprenticeship will be formally validated by the division in line with existing arrangements which must be approved by a senior manager with delegated responsibility and the appropriate records maintained.

- The basis for approval [employer demand, Local market intelligence, links to agreed strategy].
- The framework revision or apprenticeship standard reference.
- The relevant components [skills and knowledge, qualifications, English, mathematics, digital skills, personal development and employer-related].
- Associated funding bands and discounts for agreed prior learning.

Divisional senior leaders must ensure that apprenticeship programme design facilitate progression for learners completing study programmes or courses for adults. Secondly senior leaders will assure themselves, wherever possible, that apprentices have progression to further and

higher training or sustainable employment destinations once completing the programme.

Apprentices may start at any time during the academic year and divisional leaders will specify entry points throughout the year to facilitate enrolment outside the traditional academic cycle. Students transferring from mainstream courses will require authorization from a delegated senior management to minimize unintended disruption to their planned learning.

### **2.9.4. Securing apprenticeship opportunities**

All Group staff are encouraged to take an active role in the process of securing apprenticeship opportunities with high quality employers; this is consistent with the 'ownership' and 'valuing our people' core values. This can simply be achieved by a referral to the Divisions employer-facing teams.

The process of securing the Divisions vacancies will be led by a designated senior leader against agreed strategies and curriculum priorities.

The sectors in which the division operates apprenticeships is driven by local strategy, develop in partnership with local board members, devolved sub-regional authorities, labor market intelligence and employer partners and influential business clusters.

### **2.9.5. Apprenticeship Recruitment**

Apprentices are usually recruited by one of the following methods:

- Employer pledge and targeted recruitment using the Divisions expertise and resource
- Employer recruitment (directly through their own processes)
- Conversions from study programme or adult provision following successful work placement

The role of the employer is crucial to the process and will require consultation, and in most cases, participation at all stages of the recruitment process.

The recruitment process is tailored to suit individual employer requirements, although a number of consistent features are present in the recruitment process:

- Confirmation of the apprenticeship type (sector, level, standard, framework).
- Confirmation of the skills and knowledge required, both at the start and end of the apprenticeship.
- Promotion of the vacancy by Divisional recruiting teams (business services or similar) through the find an apprenticeship microsite of gov.uk <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>
- Initial Assessment of English and mathematics.
- Skills and knowledge testing (for example skill-scan, skills-audit, trade-tests, questionnaire, scrutiny of prior learning).
- Pre-Interview and suitability screening.
- Communication of provisional / firm offers of employment.

### 2.9.6. Enrolment

The bespoke nature of apprenticeship recruitment will ensure that enrolment is ongoing throughout the academic year although periods of particularly high activity are June-August [for progressing apprentices] and August-October [for new apprenticeship starts].

It is the responsibility of the employer-facing teams that information collated is accurate and timely and complies with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

### 2.9.7. Apprenticeship Induction

Apprentices require a specific induction due to the additional complexities associated with employment legislation, health and safety in the workplace and the specific policies that relate to apprenticeship training.

Designated delivery teams and associated teachers will ensure that the learning plan fields and associated evidence is completed at the point of enrolment and documented in the learning plan and first review. This will include as a minimum:

- Health, safety, insurance and welfare compliance assurance
- Learner review
- Assessment of competency
- Overview of Apprenticeship rights and responsibilities
- A check and record of GCSE results / prior attainment

- Overview of the relevant programme
- Introduction to training and teaching staff
- Introduction to the provider, including a tour/familiarisation of training facilities
- A timetable or course plan
- Arranges for regular progress review of skills and knowledge
- Access to personal services, including IAG, progress
- Safeguarding and Prevent training with explicit contextual examples
- Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment
- Regulations relating to health, safety and equalities
- Accident reporting
- Reinforce any employer expectations / procedures

### **2.9.8. Compliance & Learner Review**

All Divisions will comply with relevant legislation to ensure the health, safety and welfare of apprentices in employment. The Division will use only competent persons to assess the Health & Safety suitability of all external learning locations prior to any work based learning taking place. This is a legal duty arising from the Health & Safety at Work 1974 Act and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The compliance will be recorded formally and stored for compliance monitoring.

If the employer is new to the Division or if any elements of the employer file have expired, then designated Health & Safety professional or delivery team (where qualified) will make the necessary arrangements to ensure the employer premises is appropriately vetted and processed.

**At no time should an apprentice be placed with an employer if the employer file is incomplete. In doing, so the member of staff would place the apprentice, employer, Division and Group at risk. This would be deemed by the Group to be grossly-negligent.**

Where appropriate, DBS checks will be carried out prior to commencement of the apprenticeship start – the requirements for this will be set out in divisional procedure and will be mandatory for all apprentices aged 16-18 and vulnerable adults in placement where they are likely to be supervised and have primary contact with a single person,

rather than team of persons. Additional legal requirements are in place for sectors such as health and education which will be followed at all times.

**At no time should an apprentice be placed with an employer if the disclosure process is required and has not been followed. In doing, so the member of staff would place the apprentice, employer, Division and Group at risk. This would be deemed by the Group to be grossly-negligent.**

Delivery Teams will ensure that apprentices receive a formal induction in the workplace in addition to the College induction. This will be noted on the Learning Plan.

The content of the induction will vary depending on the nature of employment and organisation but as a minimum must contain:

- Specific health and safety arrangements, including prohibitions if applicable.
- Company specific policies and procedures.
- Details relating to wage, terms and conditions.
- The job role and expectations.
- Details of supervision and key personnel.
- Arrangements progress review, including format and timescales.
- Clear instruction with regard to safeguarding and Prevent.

Apprentices must be reviewed by an assessor or academic member staff every 4 to 6 weeks - the learner review cycle should be personalised, hence some apprentices who require additional support should be visited more regularly. As a guide the following review cycle should be adhered to:

Within

- 2 weeks [following the employer induction] – to focus on settling, well-being, initial assessment, prior skills and knowledge
- 6 weeks - internal census ahead of qualifying period – to check suitability, well-being, realign targets and first progress check

Division Heads must assure that they have a process in place to effectively monitor health & safety compliance, employer liability insurance, DBS clearance and learner review.

### **2.9.9. The Apprenticeship Review Team (ART)**

With a significant number of apprentices following different frameworks and standards in locations throughout the region and sometimes the Country, it is important that the Division adopts a formal process for the ongoing coordination, review and evaluation of the provision.

Senior leaders must implement a process by which key operation managers provide assurance that apprentice progress is understood and coordinated. In doing so a senior manager will have delegated to chair the Apprenticeship Review Team (ART). This will be a formal monthly meeting held in all Divisions regardless of scale for all key business, delivery and data managers. The terms of reference of the team will be:

- Ensure the Division is fully compliant in terms of Health and Safety and Safeguarding in relation to apprenticeship provision.
- Monitor apprenticeship contractual compliance in terms of apprenticeship administration including initial assessment, learning support, progress review and timely claim of achievement, unplaced learners, exams, data capture.
- Receive and interrogate team progress reports on matters associated with success.
- Receive and interrogate business team reports on matters associated with employment opportunities/recruitments of apprentices.
- Inform the team of strategic initiatives and developments that are likely to impact on the Divisional provision in the short and medium term.
- Prepare for continuous improvement review, internal business assurance visits and external audit and receive reports for the purpose of development and continuous improvement.

### **2.9.10. Completion and claiming the apprenticeship framework**

It is the responsibility of the Divisions to report achievement, only after obtaining apprenticeship certification (ACE) or end-point assessment results in line with prescribed local procedures. This is to ensure frameworks are claimed as 'timely' and that the apprentice subsequently receives their apprenticeship certificate and formally completes the training. The Apprenticeship Programme Team will follow this closely and action non-certification.

### **2.9.11. Unplaced Learner Procedure**

It is the responsibility of the designated tutor/trainer to notify apprenticeship administration with regard to apprentices that have become unplaced. This will be recorded formally and will feature on the Apprenticeship Review Team agenda.

Additional responsibility, providing there is commitment from the apprentice, is to provide ongoing interventions with tangible outcomes to support the apprentice [see Annex B].

Apprentices who are made redundant through no fault of their own within 6 months of their expected end date can complete their apprenticeship framework without a new placement/employment.

### **3. Linked Policies**

- NCG Single Safeguarding Policy
- NCG Attendance Management Policy
- NCG Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy

### **4. Linked Procedures**

NCG Apprenticeships Standard Operating Procedure

### **5. Equal Opportunities Statement**

An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed by each Division. This policy may be subject to review following Equality Impact Assessment by the Divisions.

### **6. Location and Access to the Policy**

The Apprenticeship Policy is located as follows:

- NCG 2.0 Intranet: Group Quality Assurance

### **7. Person Responsible for the Policy**

- Assistant Director of Quality – Group Services

### Annex A – Typical Roles & Responsibilities

#### Divisional Leadership Team

- Responsible for developing the apprenticeship offer in line with strategic priorities.
- Implementing procedures to maintain compliance to health and safety, wellbeing and safeguarding.
- Maintaining compliance with the key aspects of this policy.
- Make arrangements so that the progress of apprentices is comprehensively understood.
- Monitoring the contract profile and ensuring remedial measures are in place to achieve agreed performance metrics.

#### Head of Department

- Responsible for leading the delivery teams to ensure provision and resources are in place to meet the apprenticeships recruitment targets.
- Develop, implement and monitor a training programme that is in line with standard and framework requirements.
- Ensure the department delivers high quality teaching, training and learning in the class, laboratory, applied learning workshop/salons/kitchens to ensure the employer receives the value for money.
- Liaise with the administrative support to ensure apprenticeship contracts are set-up and claimed in a timely and effective way.
- Liaise with employer-facing staff on matters associated with recruitment, transitions, IAGC, learning support pastoral care through Progress Reviews and tutorial.
- Maintain consistent and current communication channels with employer partners and ensure frequent, informal reports are provided as good practice.
- Monitor the quality of provision and intervene where provision is seen to be less-than-standard for the division.

#### Head of Employer-facing Team

- Ensure the apprenticeship revision is coordinated across the division with regard to statutory duties relating to health & safety and contractual obligation relating to learner reviews and high quality, timely assessment.
- Provide leadership to the employer-facing team; offer assurance that contractual requirements are regularly met, that efficiencies between

employer-focused staff are achieved and provide support to departmental managers on matters associated with assessment.

- Have a proactive role on matters associated with quality assurance relating to apprenticeship practice with the aim of improving outcomes.

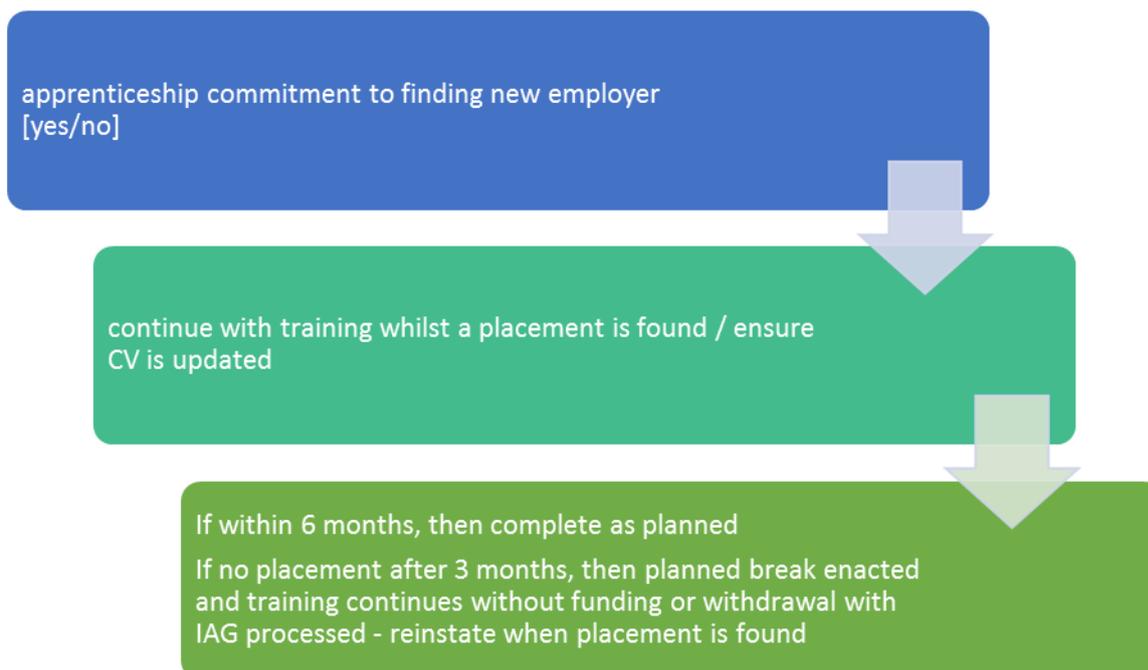
### **Apprenticeship Administration**

- Working with employer-facing and training staff to ensure that all systems and records are compliant with contract and quality procedures.
- The team is encouraged to be proactive and ensure close links with exams and with departmental delivery staff is maintained.
- The team is responsible for ensuring management reports and financial information to the senior leadership team is accurate and timely.

### **Delivery Staff (including tutors, teachers, skills trainers, instructors, assessors, learning support)**

- Responsible for monitoring attendance, progress review, course management, initial disciplinary actions, reporting achievements and progressions to intended destinations. It is the responsibility of the Delivery Team and associated teacher to ensure that the Learning Plan is regularly reviewed and updated by members of the Delivery Team.

## Annex B – Unplaced Learners Procedure (Redundancy)



### Stage 1 – up to 3 months

- Ongoing interventions with tangible outcomes to support apprentice–documented via progress reviews.
- Delegated Administrator(s) to be notified of new employer and appropriate compliance checks completed.
- Agenda item at Apprenticeship Programme Team or equivalent college committee.
- If a learner has lost their job by any means other than redundancy, they will be withdrawn unless mitigation can be provided to the accountable senior manager in the college – this may, for example, include a case for unfair dismissal.

### Stage 2 – end of 3 months [Delegated Administrator(s) to set-up monthly milestone markers for tracking purposes and review]

- A formal decision is required whether or not the apprentice is transferred to FE, another provider, a 'break in learning (if appropriate) or is withdrawn
- Agenda item for Apprenticeship Review Team or equivalent college committee
- Apprenticeship Administrator informed – progress review maintained for currency.