

# Employer Guide to the Footwear Manufacturer Apprenticeship Standard





## APPRENTICESHIP in Footwear Manufacturing

### A guide for Employers

What it is, how it works and the financials:

The apprenticeship standard can be found here

[www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/footwear-manufacturer](http://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/footwear-manufacturer) (just three pages) and is a must read if you are thinking of starting an apprenticeship programme for this standard.

### Introduction

Autumn 2018 saw the launch of the new, entry level, nationally accredited Footwear Manufacturer apprenticeship standard. The development of this standard was led by Loake Brothers, and facilitated by the British Footwear Association. The Trailblazer firms were New Balance, Hotter, Church, Dr Martens, Bill Bird Shoes, Crockett & Jones, Trickers, International Dance Shoes, Gaziano & Girling and Cheaney.

The standard is designed to offer an attractive entry point to new entrants and reflects the multi-skilled manufacturing approach required for the C21st. High quality apprenticeships will upskill existing staff and attract new entrants to our globally respected industry.

Despite the title, this apprenticeship can be used by hand craft firms. It is designed to work for all types of footwear companies.

### What is it?

The Footwear Manufacturer apprenticeship standard is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of manufacturers and makers both large and small and of all construction types, with the full understanding that a) not all the processes outlined will be undertaken in every firm, b) the processes outlined in the skills section are the 'grandfather' processes under which many other processes sit. This why there is a statement saying 'which may include' in the skills section.

The standard covers in headline the training and learning experiences the apprentice will need to undertake during their year with you. Broadly speaking, the 'SKILLS' part is 'doing' – on the job. The Knowledge and Understanding parts form the learning – off the job. Your appointed training provider has the responsibility to ensure all learning is evidenced.

All apprentices must have 20% 'off the job' training. This does not necessarily mean on site at a college. The induction, briefings, shadowing and supervision you would run through with any new employee all count but must be evidenced by your Training Provider. Larger employers or those with experience in supporting apprentices, often deliver some of the formal training which of course reduces the training costs.

The 20% off the job training does not have to be a day a week. Some industries and training providers work with block learning for example, off the job for a week every six – or utilising online learning as alternatives. Your chosen training provider will help you to create a programme that works.



Your apprentice will be an employee, subject to the same recruitment criteria and employment conditions as other employees. They can be of any age. Following appropriate inductions, your apprentice can be put to work in the same way as any other entry level employee, undertaking the same tasks as any other new entrant.

All Apprentices must now be tested at the end of their apprenticeship to prove their competence

The End Test: The manufacturers in the Trailblazer group decided on the following end point test process;

The employer and Training Provider agree the apprentice meets the entry criteria for the end test including the maths and English requirement. The employer chooses and informs an end point assessment organisation to undertake the test. BFA is currently planning to undertake this element of the programme. There will be others to choose from. Your training provider will be able to help.

The test consists of three elements:

- Multiple choice Q&A. Each apprentice will answer 30 questions chosen from a bank of questions developed by the End Point Assessment organisation (their job is simply to run, mark and report the end test) The apprentices must pass this test to progress to the next two stages.
- Observation on three processes undertaken ideally at the employers premises (so the apprentice is familiar with the equipment) The employer will inform the end point assessor on which range of processes the apprentice could be tested (in accordance with the assessment plan), and what the required quality and speed tolerances are. The assessor will choose the three to be tested, and inform employer and apprentice.
- Q&A with the assessor to test knowledge and understanding of the programme to pre-determined, measurable, questions.

How does the scheme work? – just 5 steps ..

You decide you have an opening for an apprentice footwear manufacturer. Do consider your in-house capacity to support a new entrant. Most training providers recruit for Autumn or sometimes January starts. Some colleges are able to support very small cohorts, although most will need 4-8 apprentices across a number of firms to make the scheme viable. Do ask your preferred college to contact the BFA training manager if they need further support. Members can call BFA for advice.

1. You find an Approved Apprentice Training provider.

A good relationship with a training provider will pay dividends. Approved providers offer good all round support and advice. You will discuss things like programming the training / premises visits to ensure the programme is met AND fits with your timing. These days, training providers don't just work locally so you can look broader afield than before.



At the time of writing (Autumn/winter 2018) you may want to try the following; Many of the larger firms are concentrated around Northamptonshire.

Northampton College: [yvette.whitcombe@northamptoncollege.ac.uk](mailto:yvette.whitcombe@northamptoncollege.ac.uk)

North West England: [adrian.roscoe@westlancs.ac.uk](mailto:adrian.roscoe@westlancs.ac.uk)

South West England: Bridgewater College are recording interest. Further details will follow when available (Dave Alexander)

London : Capel Manor college are recording interest. Further details will follow when available (David Boyer).

## 2. Advertise your apprenticeship opportunity and recruit.

In addition to your efforts there is a national register of apprenticeship vacancies which all registered providers will use. Many training providers (assuming the overall cohort size is large enough) will be happy to support efforts here through their college's regular apprenticeship recruitment events. The BFA's role is promote the broad idea of apprenticeships in industry and promote the career options this represents for new entrants.

## 3. Make an apprenticeship agreement

You must sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice. This gives details of what you agree to do for the apprentice, including: how long you'll employ them for, the training you'll give them, their working conditions and the qualifications they are working towards. You can write your own apprentice agreement or download an apprenticeship agreement template. Your training provider can advise.

## 4. Commitment statement

You must also sign a commitment statement with your apprentice and the training organisation (who will be able to help you). It must include the planned content and schedule for training, what is expected and offered by the employer, the training organisation and the apprentice, how to resolve queries or complaints.

## 5. Start the engagement.

### The Financials (basics)

All apprentices of any age may be paid the National Apprenticeship Wage of £3.70 / hour (including the training time) for the first year of their apprenticeship, then national minimum / living wage applies. This figure may be OK for a young person living at home but you might want to consider this wage rate would not appeal to older apprentices in many parts of the country or where there is competition for labour. Many employers offer not only a higher salary but offer great add-ons to employment, so make sure you promote any health, childcare or affinity schemes for employees that you have. The apprentice is paid for a full week which includes the off the job training.

The government will pay for most of the apprenticeship training. The amount you get depends on whether you pay the apprenticeship levy or not. You pay the levy if you're an employer with a pay bill over £3 million each year.



As a levy payer, you have a digital account which is the mechanism for paying for training from the levy. Only national accredited apprenticeships, like our Footwear Manufacturer can be paid for via the Levy.

Most of our members do not pay the levy, so you will pay 10% towards the cost of training and assessing your apprentice. You need to agree a payment schedule with the training provider and pay them directly. The government will pay the rest (90%) up to the funding band maximum, again, directly to the training organisation. The funding cap for the Footwear Manufacturer apprenticeship has been set at £5,000 (at maximum) to include the end point test which is around 15% of the total.

You could be eligible for extra funding depending on both your and your apprentice's circumstances. Some areas of the country run occasional schemes to support micro employers (under 10 employees) or SMEs to take on an apprentice. Such schemes are usually distributed through Local Enterprise Partnerships. Apprentices under 19 receive extra support. Your training provider is your best point of contact on this as schemes vary across the country.

The Apprenticeship Standard and Assessment plan can be found here <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/footwear-manufacturer/> If you are a BFA member and have any questions about this process, contact [jayne.west@britishfootwearassociation.co.uk](mailto:jayne.west@britishfootwearassociation.co.uk)

