

Trailblazer FAQ's – October 2014

Q: What are Trailblazers?

A: The Trailblazers are groups of employers working together to design the new Apprenticeship standards for occupations within their sectors and developing examples of the new system working in practice.

Q: Who is part of a Trailblazer?

A: Trailblazers are made up of the following groups/organisations:

- **Employers** lead on Trailblazers. It is important that they ensure the standards developed work for both large and small organisations.
- **Professional Bodies** play an important role to ensure that the learner completing a new Apprenticeship allows them to achieve professional registration, in occupations where this is available.
- **Training Providers** need to ensure that they are ready to deliver the new Apprenticeship standards and some Trailblazers may want to involve Training Providers in their discussions.
- **Awarding Organisations** – Trailblazers will want to engage and draw on the experience of the assessment experts as they develop the assessment approach.
- **SSC's** will be engaged with where appropriate.

Q: What is the role of SASE (Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England)?

A: Currently, SASE sets out the minimum requirements to be included in a recognised English Apprenticeship framework and compliance with SASE will be a statutory requirement of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act. This will be replaced fully by the new standards in 2017.

Q: Are all the sectors on the same timeframe?

A: No, not all sectors are on the same timeframe.

Q: What are the timelines for the new Apprenticeships to start delivery?

A: All the new Apprenticeships will be delivered from 2017.

Q: What will happen to the current Apprenticeships?

A: The current Apprenticeship framework (SASE) will remain until 2017 when the new standards designed by the Trailblazers will be fully implemented.

Q: Will there be Higher Apprenticeships moving forward?

A: Yes there continues to be government support for the development of Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4 and above). Pearson are committed to developing and expanding their Higher Apprenticeships.

Q: Will BTEC Apprenticeships still be recognised and valued by employers in the future?

A: Yes BTEC standards are developed in collaboration with employers to ensure they are relevant for industry. The BTEC suite of qualifications ranges from Level 1 to Level 6 and a number of employers use these to enable learners to progress in their sector.

Q: What is the role of FISSS?

A: The Federation for Industry Skills & Standards is the body which will be responsible for certificating the overarching Apprenticeship certificate.

Q: What is the current role of SSC's?

A: The SSC's role is currently to set the industry standards across sectors, and there is a specific SSC per industry. This involves developing the national occupational standards from which the NVQ is designed. Therefore they are an implicit part of the current Apprenticeship programme.

Q: What are the English and maths requirements?

A: It is the governments' ambition that by 2020 adults aged 19 and over and apprentices of all ages studying English and maths will be working towards the achievement of the new GCSEs, taking stepping stone qualifications where necessary.

Functional Skills will continue to be a part of the Apprenticeship completion requirements but we will continue to work with Apprenticeship providers to enable them to offer GCSEs to their apprentices.

Q: Can I still offer my learners Functional Skills within the Trailblazers?

A: Yes Functional Skills can be delivered within Apprenticeships, although we are watching Government policy closely on this.

Q: I have heard that most of the assessment is at the end of the Apprenticeship, what will this look like?

A: A synoptic end assessment is a requirement of the new standards and is expected to be weighted at two thirds. The assessment methodology may vary across the sectors, however, it will be determined by the Trailblazers and will then be set for each sector.

Q: What will an Apprentice receive if they leave their Apprenticeship before the end of their training?

A: It depends on what component part(s) of the Apprenticeship programme they have successfully completed (under the current SASE framework), and they will receive the relevant certificate. They will not however, receive the certificate for the overall Apprenticeship. Within the new framework standards it may vary according to sector and what formal qualifications make up the programme.

Q: Will the new apprenticeships involve qualifications?

A: Going forward the New Standard Apprenticeship may have a formal qualification or not, this again depends on what the Trailblazers agree forms the Apprenticeship for the sector.

Q: The Trailblazers are being designed by Employers, what is/will be the role of Colleges and Training Providers going forward?

A: Colleges and Providers will work with employers to deliver aspects of the Apprenticeship standards; this will depend on the individual standards and assessments for each occupation and sector and the services and support required by different employers of different sizes.

Q: How do Trailblazers and the next generation on BTECs link?

A: BTEC First and nationals have undergone redevelopment, and in some sectors still remain as the most appropriate Technical Certificate for delivery within the current Apprenticeship frameworks.

Q: What can I go to find out more information about Trailblazers?

A: To find out more information on Trailblazers visit:

Q: How can I get involved in the Trailblazers?

A: you can get involved with Trailblazers by contacting your regional account manager or by emailing wblfe@pearson.com