

Business Administration Level 2: an essential Apprenticeship Standard for employers and apprentices

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to illustrate why the development of a Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship standard strongly supports the key objectives of the Apprenticeship Reform Programme:

- To meet the skills needs of employers
- To create progression for apprentices
- To widen participation and social mobility in apprenticeships
- To create more quality apprenticeships

2. Justification for standard development

Employer Support

One of the key fundamentals of the apprenticeship reforms is that new standards should be 'employer led' and 'meet the skills needs of employers'.

During the last six months more than 50 employers have registered their support for the development of this standard. These employers vary in size and represent a range of industry sectors (including public and private).

Many of these employers (and stakeholders) have outlined the reasons why they feel the development of this standard is imperative for their organisation (appendix I). Common themes include:

- Positive impact on staff recruitment and retention
- Enables entry and progression opportunities to a wide variety of roles (not just in Business Administration)
- Level 3 Business Administrator Apprenticeship too advanced / not fit for purpose for both existing staff and new entrants
- Lack of a Level 2 Business Admin route when the current framework is discontinued, will disadvantage young people and impact on social mobility

In addition, the NHS in England - in partnership with Health Education England and the Education and Skills Funding Agency - conducted their own study to establish how NHS Trusts aim to use their levy. The results were published in March 2018 and can be found in their report: The Apprenticeship Levy Study: NHS Trusts.

As the largest employer in the country, 175 NHS trusts contributed to this report and the main findings include:

- Virtually all NHS trusts in England (95%) plan to use their levy
- Most plan to spend their levy funds at a faster rate than employers outside the NHS
- Almost all trusts are frustrated at the inflexibility of current apprenticeship rules
- A large majority of trusts want to expand their apprenticeship programmes

Crucially, when asked which apprenticeship standards / frameworks NHS trusts planned to deploy, the leading response was Business and Administration (99%). This exceeded Nursing Degree Apprenticeships (84.5%), Healthcare Support (88.7%) and Management (83.5%).

The types of job role that employers feel this standard would be appropriate for includes Business Support Assistant; Administration Assistant; Secretarial Assistant; Receptionist, Secretary; Personal Assistant.

Valued by Apprentices

Historical data shows that the Business Administration apprenticeship frameworks are popular and highly valued by both apprentices and employers.

In the last three years data (published by DfE) more than 87k people have embarked on a Level 2 Business Administration framework. Many of these apprentices will have progressed to level 3 and beyond.

Business Administration L2 starts	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Under 19	14,580	14,480	12,550
19-24	11,080	9,940	8,240
25+	5,470	5,860	5,110
Total Business Administration L2 starts	31,130	30,280	25,900
Total Apprenticeship L2 starts	298,300	291,300	260,700
% of overall L2 starts on BA L2	10.40%	10.30%	9.90%

As you can see, Business Administration apprentices accounted for circa 10% of all level 2 framework starts in recent years.

	2016/17		
	Under 19	19-24	25+
Business Administration (BA) Level 2	12,550	8,240	5,110
All Intermediate Apprenticeships	78,500	71,400	110,700
% of overall L2 starts on BA L2	16%	11.5%	4.6%

When we look at this in more detail you can see how important the Business Administration Level 2 framework is to young people in particular.

For apprentices aged Under 19 Business Administration has historically been the most popular intermediate apprenticeship, accounting for 16% of all level 2 starts in 2016/17.

Progression opportunities and social mobility

There is no doubt that there will always be a need for good quality level 2 and 3 work-based learning programmes, especially with the Industrial Strategy and skills implications of Brexit.

Apprenticeships can play a key role in improving the life chances for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, providing solid lines of progression into sustainable employment. This has been illustrated in many of the employer statements included in this report (Appendix I).

Unfortunately, a number of the key drivers behind the apprenticeship reform programme have had the unintended consequence of negatively impacting the young and disadvantaged. These include:

- The equalisation of funding for apprentices of all ages leads to a greater number of older apprentices being selected.
- The compulsory employer contribution disincentivising organisations from taking on young and disadvantaged apprentices because additional work is required to support them.
- Levy paying employers using the levy to develop the skills of existing employees, leaving less opportunity to support the recruitment of young people.
- Removal of mandated nationally recognised qualifications from apprenticeship standards reduces the mobility of an apprentice.

We believe the popularity of a level 2 Business Administration standard with employers and apprentices will help address some of these concerns.

Youth Employment UK (YEUK) have provided a statement (Appendix II) to illustrate the challenges currently facing young people today.

Development of a high-quality apprenticeship standard

The apprenticeship standard development process enables employers to develop high-quality apprenticeship standards to meet their needs and skills requirements.

The duties that the group of employers represented by this report have identified are relevant to the Level 2 Business Administration role, and their associated learning hours, can be found in Appendix III.

3. Progress so far

In May 2018 two independent employer groups were combined with the objective of submitting an occupational profile for a Business Administration level 2 apprenticeship standard to the IfA. After some consideration, it was decided that the most appropriate title for the proposed standard was 'Business Support Assistant'.

East Sussex County Council took the role of lead employer, in a group made up of 20 public and private sector employers.

The group collated a list of 15 duties that they felt the role should consist of. As part of the initial process, the group took care to ensure:

- There isn't an apprenticeship suitable for this occupation in development
- That there isn't significant overlap with another apprenticeship standard
- There is sufficient off-the-job training to meet the 20% requirement

After a period of consultation, the group submitted the duties to the IfA for consideration.

On 20th July the IfA responded to say that they didn't believe we were 'quite ready to reach the proposal stage'. In summary, the reasons given for this feedback were:

- There was duplication in some of the duties we'd identified
- Some of the duties were too stretching for level 2
- Some of the off-the-job learning hours seemed disproportionate when compared to others
- There was some overlap with the Level 3 Business Administrator standard

Whilst disappointed with the overall result, the group were heartened by the feedback and the growing number of employers and other stakeholders taking an interest in the standard. It should be noted that two other trailblazer groups had tried previously to create this standard without success.

Based on the IfA feedback and the input of existing and new employers, the duties were updated and re-submitted to IfA on September 27th (Appendix III).

On the 22nd October the IfA responded to say that, whilst they recognised the significant effort put in to address their original concerns, they still had reservations about:

- The occupation and how it is defined to ensure it is stand-alone (including being distinct from the level 3)
- Some of the off-the-job hours allocated to proposed duties
- Overlap with level 3 duties

In contrast to the earlier feedback, the group did not feel that the concerns raised in response to the updated duties were justified.

It is at this point the employer group decided to work with key stakeholders to raise the public profile of this standard. To support this report and address some of the IfA feedback, we have also expanded on the duties to provide further justification for the 20% off-the-job learning (Appendix IIII).

APPENDIX I – Employer and stakeholder statements

Lucy Hunte
National Programme Manager – Apprenticeships
Health Education England

The NHS have successfully used the Business Administration Level 2 framework as an entry point into a wide variety of roles for many years now. In 15/16 there were 799 starts and in 16/17 we had 2541 starts.

In terms of social mobility we are concerned that if the framework is turned off with no replacement standard then we will be removing this route into the NHS for any candidate who does not have the literacy and numeracy levels required for the L3 standard and therefore severely limiting our future workforce supply.

The Level 2 Customer Service Practitioner standard is not a suitable alternative as these are predominately administrative roles and many may not be patient facing. The NHS have been doing a lot of work on career pathways and retention and removing the L2 limits the opportunity for these learners to progress and have successful long-term careers.

Caroline Bragg
Employability and Skills Strategy Manager
East Sussex County Council

Business Administration Level 2 is a key entry route into a number of departments at East Sussex County Council.

We have seen apprentices progress through the organisation from Level 2 to Level 3 and beyond, and in to a number of positions including Personal Assistants to Heads of Service, Support Officers in Adult Social Care and Procurement Management.

On speaking to individuals who have come through this route, many of them aged 16-24 when they started in the organisation, they needed the year at Level 2 to learn about the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for the job. Many have reiterated that they would not have been able to come in at Level 3. If this had been the case, the organisation would now be without these young talented and passionate individuals.

By not allowing a Level 2 Standard, the IfA is seeking to cut off a key entry route into the workplace, therefore stifling the social mobility of young people in to employment. Furthermore, it is not listening to business in what is meant to be an 'employer-led' system.

Rachel Shaw
Accreditation Manager
Thames Valley Police

Thames Valley Police has a variety of roles which provide transactional administration services. These roles have a distinct set of skills, behaviours and knowledge, which differ from the Business Administrator level 3 apprenticeship and are aligned to the requirements of a level 2 apprenticeship.

As detailed in the "occupational competence" column of the IFA's level descriptor document, a level 2 is "Occupational competence which involves the application of knowledge, skills, procedures and ideas in a significant range of varied work activities and contexts which are generally well defined. Some of the activities are complex or non-routine. Address straightforward problems" and a level 3 apprenticeship is "Occupational competence which involves the application of knowledge and understanding, skills and methods in a broad range of varied work activities, performed in a variety of contexts most of which are complex and non-routine. Address problems that, while well defined, may be complex and non-routine".

We have administration assistants who perform essential transactions, however they are mainly dealing with straightforward issues in defined contexts.

The lack of a level 2 Apprenticeship means that we may not be able to recruit Apprentices into these types of roles moving forward, which does not assist with social mobility as this level of Apprenticeship is an entry point into the occupation of an administrator.

It seems peculiar that the IFA will not accept the level 2 proposition, when there are other Apprenticeships in place that allow progression from one level of performing the occupation to another (e.g. the team leader level 3 and the operations/departmental manager level 5).

We would be grateful if the IFA would reconsider the proposal as we believe it to be reflective of the role of a level 2 administrator and we feel it is distinct from the requirements of the level 3 Business Administrator standard.

Gail Reilly
Apprenticeship Co-ordinator
North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust / Peterborough City Hospital

Level 2 in Business Administration is very important for our Apprentices at North West Anglia NHS Foundation Trust for roles such as:

- Audio Typist
- Secretarial Assistant (not Secretary or Medical Secretary, this is an assistant role)
- Receptionist
- Ward Clerk
- Admin Assistant (not Administrator, this is an assistant role)
- Clerical Support Worker

Level 3 includes a certain level of responsibility which a lot of the roles at this Trust do not lend themselves to. Without a Level 2 standard we would not be able to offer formal development to a large number of our administration staff. This Trust is passionate about developing all of our staff at all levels and this would not be possible without the option of the Level 2.

We are lucky that a large number of our staff work here on a long-term basis, therefore, there is a possibility that if when they start working and a Level 3 is their only option then there would not be any progression or development for them in their long careers with us.

We also offer entry level apprenticeships at aged 16 plus in a variety of administrative departments/roles enabling young people to take the first step to working within a healthcare environment. These opportunities enable them to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to be able to work within this type of environment. Without the opportunity to undertake Level 2 this would significantly impact on our ability to offer school/college leavers their first steps into working within the NHS.

Fay Gibbin
Chief Executive Officer
Busy Bees Training Academy

I'm writing to formalise my support of the Business Admin apprenticeship at level 2. As the largest childcare company in the UK we have a vast number of administrative roles across many of our departments.

Our ethos is to grow our own talent and support social mobility which is reflected in our commitment to taking on a high number of young people each year to grow and develop. The level 2 Business Admin apprenticeship is used as a starting point for our young and inexperienced members of staff

to develop the basic skills to perform within the role and used as the spring board to a career within the company.

One of the main drivers of the Apprenticeship Reforms was to put Employers in the driving seat ensuring that new standards are employer led and meet the skills needs of employers.

Steve Woolcock
Head of Employment Training and Skills ETS
Barnardo's

For more than 20 years Barnardo's has provided improved life chances for many young people by providing apprenticeship opportunities for Administration Assistant roles in services across England.

Barnardo's commitment to provide these positions has been extremely valuable. The apprentices we have employed have demonstrated increased confidence and self-esteem and an ability to maintain independent living by buying accommodation or sustaining tenancy agreements. These benefits cannot be underestimated for young people and their social mobility.

Without exception, the starting point for these young people on their apprenticeship journey was the Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship. This was the without doubt the most appropriate level, given the apprentices learning needs, social needs and prior attainment.

Many of our apprentices have since progressed to higher learning, very often Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeships. Progress was successful and efficient, untapping potential and leading to real career progression; something outlined in Parliaments Education Committees Apprenticeships Ladder of Opportunity Report.

The best example to support this model can be found in the Data Team that supports all Business Lines across Barnardo's. This team is led by an Apprentice that commenced on level 2 and includes four colleagues who are also ex-apprentices that have followed the same pathway - from level 2 up to and including level 4 apprenticeships.

Since the introduction of the reforms we have seen a significant reduction of young people aged 16-24 commencing employment and apprenticeships across Barnardo's. Most importantly, in the absence of a level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship standard, there have been no starts in administrative roles.

This does not help the hardest to reach, young and disadvantaged progress into positive futures, something that is one of Barnardo's strategic outcomes as we seek to become a more diverse organisation with a staff group that represents the communities that we serve.

Tim Edwards
Director of Business Development
PM Training / Aspire Housing

L2 business administration is an entry level role within organisations, it prepares learners well in developing office skills to take on a variety of roles which are essential to the efficient functioning of many different businesses.

There is a range of learning required that would not be acquired through general exposure including management of resources, prioritisation, customer service, data protection, data processing, team work etc the structure of the apprenticeship with a balance of on the job and off the job training prepares the learner well and ensures they can progress effectively – typically we see over 90% retention, post completion.

Often as their first step in employment, following completion of their apprenticeship learners go on to progress to higher levels through their career in their organisation and specialise appropriately.

Finally, we work in areas of high disadvantage, L2 occupations provide opportunities for many young people to progress to successful careers; to obstruct this process where business administration has been a cornerstone, would deny social mobility to a high proportion of these learners.

Joanne Budd
Workforce Development Consultant
Medway Council

I would like to add Medway Council's voice to this proposal as we have utilised the Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship framework for many years and believe that this will definitely still be relevant and required for the workplace post-2020, when frameworks cease to be available.

The benefits for young people undertaking their first work role, utilising a Level 2 Business Administration apprenticeship, should not be underestimated. Many young people do not know which area of profession or specialism they wish to pursue as a career and can feel pressured by their schools to make such a decision, leading to their enrolment on college and/or university programmes that they quickly drop out from.

The Business Administration apprenticeship has afforded young people the opportunity to undertake their first work role while developing professional employability and transferable skills. During this time they have also learned what it is to be an effective employee and gained an insight into lots of different specialist areas of work within their organisations, which can inspire their professional career pathway choices for the future.

We believe there will be a significant hole in apprenticeship programme provision if a Level 2 Business Administrator standard is not developed, which could have a detrimental impact on the Government's drive to ensure that apprenticeships continue to offer 16-18 year olds a generic entry into the wider workplace.

Robert Brooks
Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

A level 2 business administration apprenticeship is used by Moorfields Eye Hospital (MEH) for all of our entry level administration roles; it provides us with an opportunity to diversify our workforce and attract talent who ordinarily would not have the skills, knowledge or behaviours required to work in an experienced hire role.

The reason why we utilise a level 2 as well as a level 3 apprenticeship is that we have a hierarchical administration structure with administrative roles at varying bands, from 2-5. These roles vary in complexity and technical requirements, with Band 2 being the least complex and band 5 being most complex.

For an agency to say that all administrators operate at level 3 is not only very wrong but wildly insulting to what is a varied and complex professional area. We also feel that not having a level 2 business administration apprenticeship severely damages social mobility and the widening participation agenda within the NHS.

Kate Brady
Apprenticeship & Placements Officer
Portsmouth County Council

For cities like Portsmouth that have high levels of deprivation and low achievements rates in schools it is imperative that this apprenticeship and other level 2 apprenticeships are developed by employers and agreed by the IfA. Business Support level 2 is an extremely important route into work for young people who have no experience of working in an office. It allows apprentices to gain basic skills from how to write an email to communicating effectively with colleagues and sets the

apprentice up with the skills, knowledge and behaviour to allow them progress onto a level 3 programme.

Without this apprenticeship a significant number of young people across England will not have the opportunity to gain employment in an office environment because they do not have the grades to complete a level 3 or they do not have basic office experience to be successfully recruited. This will have a detrimental impact on those young people lives who already struggle to find jobs because of their grades but who excel in the workplace when given the chance.

For us, as a council the level 2 business administration apprenticeship is the first rung on the ladder to a career in local government and we would be extremely disappointed if a new Business Support standard isn't allowed to be developed.

Ceri Sawyer
Apprentice Co-ordinator
Cheshire Constabulary HQ

I'm really pleased to discover that work is being done to develop a Business Admin Level 2 standard.

To put this into context for you, Cheshire Constabulary has for a number of years (pre-levy) run a Business Administration Level 2 Apprenticeship, it is a successful scheme aimed at providing young people with little or no work experience an entry route into the organisation – this would previously have been difficult due to our recruitment processes and the nature of the work that we do. Whilst with us apprentices receive support to apply for other roles (internal and external) and gain valuable work experience along with a qualification.

The L2 is, for us, an introduction to the world of work, young people do not leave school with the skills required in the work place. We feel that the 12 months at L2 gives them the basics of office work, use of Outlook, note taking, attending meetings etc. as well as standards of behaviour and how to conduct oneself.

I understand that apprenticeships are about upskilling but feel that to go straight to a L3, where the standard includes such requirements as Project Management is too much of a step for those we hope to recruit to the position. Changing to a L3 would mean that we would need to change the entry requirements and therefore exclude some of the people our scheme is aimed at.

Sophie Rowson
Learning and Development Officer
Bournemouth Borough Council

As an employer, we see the level 2 Business Admin apprenticeship as a vital entry level apprenticeship for anyone looking for their first step into paid work and apprenticeships.

Removing the level 2 apprenticeship would remove valuable opportunities for anyone who might not meet the requirements of the level 3 apprenticeship and would prevent many people from entering the workplace that a level 2 would offer. Many of our level 2 business admin apprentices have successfully progressed on to level 3 and beyond and are a valuable part of our workforce.

As an employer, we have worked hard to break down as many barriers to employment as possible and to encourage and enable those who may find it harder to get into the workplace. By retaining a level 2 apprenticeship this will undoubtedly help us to continue to attract candidates, to “grow our own” and to improve social mobility.

Jill Partington
Apprenticeship Manager
North Lancs Training Group

Employers and educationalists understand knowledge is generative i.e. the more you know the easier it is to learn, and everyone must learn the basics of a particular topic before they can progress onto learning more challenging topics.

Whilst employers have welcomed the introduction of a Level 3 Business Administrator standard and we understand the need to stretch and challenge learners the reality is that direct entry onto level 3 as opposed to undertaking a level 2 first for the vast majority of first time entrants, in particular school leavers, will be too onerous and could lead to employers and apprentices becoming disillusioned with the Level 3 Standard. Most other Standards will have a level 2 so why should Business Admin be any different?

Since 2000 4165 persons have enrolled on a Business Administration Intermediate Level 2 Apprenticeship and 1550 on the Advanced Level 3 Apprenticeship via NLTG. In our experience, based on the 1669 different employers whom have engaged with the Business Admin Level 2 qualification over this time period, employer demand has predominantly required Apprentices to undertake the Level 2 before progressing onto a Level 3.

Surely the longevity and breadth of such employer demand, which in NLTG experience is as strong as ever for Business Administration Apprenticeships, is indisputable attestation as the need for a level 2 Standard to be developed and approved prior to the expiry of Level 2 Framework in December 2021.

North Lancs Training Group therefore strongly advocate the need for a Level 2 Standard in Business Administration to be developed.

Siobhan Clarke
HR Advisor – Apprenticeships Lead
Southampton City Council

When working on our traineeship programmes and work experience programmes that support all our residents to get in to work, but especially those who are NEET or former looked after children/care givers, the level 2 business administration qualification gives us a fantastic stepping stone or next step for those who are truly committed to getting in to work. For some, the jump to level 3 is just too high and unachievable.

This gives them a great opportunity to get real-life experience and allows them to demonstrate and develop their skills on-the-job as well as off-the-job. The flexible apprenticeship structures allows those who struggled in a classroom the same opportunities and learnings as those who flourish in that environment.

Without the Level 2 qualification, we are isolating and restricting many people from being able to enter the world of work due to a lack of qualifications or experience. This flies in the face of the whole purpose behind apprenticeships.

Clare Aspden
Apprenticeship Lead
University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

For our large NHS Trust the BA level 2 is an important entry level apprenticeship, which allows us to recruit from our local area, particularly targeting those from a none traditional academic background, and demonstrates our continued delivery and support of widening participation.

Our BA level 3 is popular, but we need this additional entry level to attract those hard to recruit roles, where turnover can be a challenge. If the L2 was available this would mean apprentices are with us for 12 months and able to potentially experience their first development role within the NHS.

From my experience of other employers nationally and locally there is definitely a demand for the level 2 business administration apprenticeship, and as a large employer and levy payer we are keen to support the implementation of the L2 standard without a doubt.

Rosie Ross
Quality Director
Key Training

Key Training has worked within the Business and Administration Sector delivering Apprenticeship and recruiting 16-18 year olds in to their first job successfully for over 30 years.

Since August 2014 to July 2017 – we have matched 1671 16-18 year olds into a vacancy with an employer who wanted them to undertake a Business Administration Level 2 qualification/framework. (success rate 76% 16/17)

We work with both SME and larger employers as they want to recruit young people and develop them in their businesses and as a starting point in their career administration basic skills are vital. Understanding the fundamentals allows to develop a work ethic, attention to fine detail and creates knowledge and skills that will transfer across the sector. Our 'Talent Match' service ensures that over 85% of these roles are sustainable as young people remain in these job once they complete the Level 2.

David Knox
Apprenticeship and Employer Engagement Officer
The Education People

The offer of a level 2 business administration apprenticeship within the local authority provides a suitable opportunity for a variety of people who are unable to consider a level 3 apprenticeship. The business administration level 2 would give a sound grounding in the necessary skills required to provide administrative support to any employer. As the level 3 would move the starting point for most learners this would have a negative impact of employers looking to recruit new staff to this area of expertise.

Joanne Hauffe
Learning and Development Nurse / Widening Participation Lead
Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

As an organisation we have been employing apprentices since 2011.

There are many departments in the trust, specifically patient access who have employed many apprentices since 2015.

In 2017 we employed 11 apprentices and so far in 2018 we have employed 7 and are currently advertising for a further 3 posts.

The nature of the work they carry out matches the learning outcomes identified in the business administration level 2 framework. They do not complete the variety of work that would enable them to complete the level 3 standard.

Nicky White
Apprenticeship Manager
Solent NHS Trust

As an organisation we strongly support the development of a Business Administration level 2 standard.

This standard is vital to our organisation, last year we employed 15 apprentices as new to the organisation then proceeding to be employed as band 2 or even Band 3.

This is certainly a standard which we need for our band 2 workforce and any support we can be to this please let us know. These apprentices would struggle to come in straight to level 3. Work behaviours, professionalism are big parts that we have to address.

Lynne Rimmer
Apprenticeship Adviser
Brighton & Hove City Council

The business admin level 2 is an important entry level qualification to the organisation as it will support those more general roles that do not offer the opportunity for learning at Level 3 but might support roles of a lower level.

It will also positively support the diversity and inclusivity agenda for social mobility and ensure those with additional needs have the opportunity to study business admin and offer a progression route from Level 2 up to Level 3.

Julie Fearn
Operations Manager, Apprenticeships,
Nova Training

Nova Training pride itself on having 28 centres across some of the most deprived parts of England and we have the ability to support some of the hardest to reach individuals. Business Admin accounts for our second largest cohort of learners, next to Motor vehicle. Motor Vehicle numbers it should be noted have 5 pathways whereas we only use one for BA at levels 2 and 3.

Our learners come from diverse communities and many are low achievers at school, are disadvantaged socially and include a small but growing proportion who are on EHC Plans and LAC. We have a learner who joined our High Needs provision and progressed well enough in an office environment to be able to take and achieve an apprenticeship in BA at L2, albeit with her functional skills at E3 due to her learning difficulties. Another learner completed BA2 and Level 3 and eventually she also successfully completed management L3 and is now working towards L5. Had there been no framework available at level 2 to meet the low starting point for these people then they wouldn't have been able to progress through the routes and levels to achievement.

We strongly agree that many learners use the broad spectrum of skills, knowledge and behaviours in the Business Admin apprenticeship as a springboard to higher levels of competence and that by removing this vital opportunity for learners to begin a career through vocational education and skills development, we are disadvantaging our young people and adults.

Michelle Flegg
HR & OD Strategy & Commissioning Officer
Kent County Council

I think the Business Administration level 2 is a really good entry point for learners who are coming straight from school with very little or no experience of a working environment.

It is a good progression development opportunity for anyone who might have joined us for work experience.

It is our most utilised apprenticeship for both new and existing staff and creates a good knowledge base for development to Level 3.

Lynn Hansell
Head of Business Management (Education)
Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust

The Level 2 as a standard is very important for Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust. 75% of our new apprentices start on the current Level 2 Framework and it has been very useful in helping our young apprentices gain the knowledge and skills they need to work successfully in our organisation.

Portsmouth is an area with some very low educational achievement (average reading age of 8) and therefore a lot of these young people would struggle to start straight on a Level 3 qualification.

Gill Clark
Learning Advisor|Apprenticeships and eLearning|
East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

The view at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust, is that there is a substantial requirement to retain Business Administration Level 2. The achievement of an Apprenticeship relies on the role a person is working within to support success.

Many employees work in roles where a level 3 could not be achieved, and therefore, the decision to remove the level 2, will leave some roles disadvantaged. Linking this to the functional skills requirements, there is also a case to consider where staff do not have the capability to achieve a level 2 which would then be a barrier to completing the level 3 apprenticeship.

The development of our staff at all levels is vitally important to ensure we address skills gaps and support continuing development. We want to continue offering opportunities to all staff, but feel this would prove difficult as outlined above for some of our employees in certain roles and at lower pay bands.

Christine Hansford
Strategic Manager (Apprenticeships)
Hampshire County Council

It would be short sighted to under estimate the value of the L2 Business Administration Apprenticeship as a first stage into work for many young people. This apprenticeship affords the opportunity to develop work skills, experience and confidence to move into other apprenticeships or roles. Here at HCC we have a long history of employing L2 Business Administration Apprentices and progressing them through to rewarding careers within the authority. This would be very difficult without the grounding this apprenticeship provides.

Business Administration L2 has been the main progression route for our very successful Traineeship programme. Without this standard we are limited where we can employ and progress these young people, affecting social mobility and their earning potential.

We firmly believe that this standard is essential and not having it in place will have a detrimental effect on our employing, retaining and progressing young people.

APPENDIX II – Social Mobility Statement

Laura-Jane Rawlings

Chief Executive

Youth Employment UK (YEUK)

Secretariat of the All-Party Political Group (APPG) for Youth Employment

Young people as a group are almost three times more likely to be unemployed than any other age group, just under 800,000 young people are not in education, employment or training (NEET) (See linked data source). Youth unemployment is a complex issue and there are some compounding structural issues that have meant a stagnation in the reduction of NEETS over the last two years. This government made a commitment to have zero youth unemployment and the apprenticeship reforms were cited to play a key role in that and in improving the life chances of those young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Young people continue to tell us that they struggle with the transition between education and employment, in our 2018 Youth Voice Census only 54% of respondents felt that the education services offered matched their learning style with the vast majority only being told about and pushed through academic routes. For 54% of respondents the highest level of education received was to GCSE level, commentary provided shows young people disengaging with a system that doesn't seem to offer something for them.

Young people told us that they want to work, that they value the experience and training given in apprenticeships and they see apprenticeships as a great platform to build their career. We also see this in the fact that more than 300,000 young people have utilised our free online skills and careers information this year alone: Young people want to work.

This reaffirms the pressing need to maintain and indeed encourage apprenticeships at level 2 across all sectors and roles. Youth Employment UK believes that level 2 opportunities will allow the creation of high-quality entry-level opportunities that will benefit those young people from disadvantaged groups.

It is important that employers understand how to recruit, train and support young people from disadvantaged groups, alongside the right apprenticeship pathway young people can flourish and achieve their potential.

Without these routes into work it is unclear where these young people will find the opportunity to fulfil their potential. The unintended consequences of the Apprenticeship Levy is the reduction in level 2 apprenticeships. We do not believe that it is due to lack of business demand but due to funding pressures and the influence of higher funded apprenticeships. The IfA and government need to understand the role it plays in the social mobility agenda alongside its role to create an equal and high-quality skills system for the future of all.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/bulletins/youngpeoplenotineducationemploymentortrainingneet/august2018>

APPENDIX III – Duties submitted to IfA (September 2018)

BUSINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Duties, related work and behaviour and hours of learning

Proposed duties	Areas of work/understanding/behaviour	Hours of learning
Organising, supporting and co-ordinating business activities, under direction, to meet agreed targets	Organising, supporting and co-ordinating meetings (7), travel and accommodation (10), diary systems (7), mail services (7), research activities (21).	52 (13%)
Collaborating with others within the organisation to achieve positive work outcomes	Carrying out team working (14), developing and maintaining working relationships (10) and 'buddying' a colleague (10).	34 (8%)
Preparing and distributing business data and documents to support the achievement of agreed work outcomes	Using software packages (21) to input and present data (14) and to support the development of reports and business documentation both electronically and paper-based (21).	56 (14%)
Use a range of effective communication and interpersonal skills to reflect the 'culture' of the organisation	Using verbal, non-verbal and written communication (10) and communicate electronically using e-mails (10) and social media (28) using the appropriate tone and voice for the audience	48 (12%)
Carrying out work activities to support the work of the organisation	Maintaining stock and stationery supplies (10), using office equipment appropriately (10) and using telephone systems (7).	27 (7%)
Carrying out work activities in line with in-house requirements and wider business etiquette	Promoting professionalism and the organisation's image (10), conforming to organisational style and language (14), Inspiring others, being a role model (14) and promoting diversity, equality and inclusion in the workplace (10).	48 (12%)
Knowing who/how to escalate a problem to ensure work targets are successfully achieved.	Recognising and understanding their boundaries of responsibilities (10).	10 (2%)
Understanding the organisation	Understanding their organisational structure and the inter-relationship of functions within their organisation (21), knowing employer rights and responsibilities (14) and knowing the purpose of the business and what 'brand promise' means (14).	49 (12%)
Supporting the management of information in line with organisational requirements	Carrying out photocopying, shredding, scanning, gathering, storing (7), filing, archiving, retrieving, updating and collating information (7). Understanding commercial confidentiality and security requirements (4)	18 (5%)

Interacting with internal and external customers in a professional manner to meet their needs and expectations	Carrying out front line duties (7), understanding customer needs (4) and delivering customer service (21)	32 (8%)
Displaying personal responsibilities within their business environment	Following health, safety and security (including GDPR), improving their performance, supporting colleagues, practicing self-motivation and time management, being reliable in attendance, displaying punctuality, having a positive attitude to colleagues and respect for others (14), seeking feedback, undergoing CPD and practicing self-reflection and self-improvement (14)	28 (7%)

Total hours of off-the-job training (OTJT) 402

The OTJT for this standard has been based on the following assumptions:

- Apprentices will be able to reach the gateway after a minimum of 12 months on-programme.
- Apprentices in this job role will typically have an eight-hour working day with a one-hour lunch break (35 hours a week x 52 weeks = 1820 hours).
- Apprentices will typically receive circa four weeks holiday per year (140 hours) plus eight bank holidays (56 hours).
- 20% OTJT would be $1820 - 206 \times 0.2 = \mathbf{323 \text{ hours minimum}}$.

**Appendix III – Expanded Duties
BUSINESS SUPPORT ASSISTANT**

Duties, related work and behaviour and hours of learning

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Organising, supporting and co-ordinating business activities, under direction, to meet agreed targets	Organising, supporting and co-ordinating meetings	The access, health, safety and security requirements relating to meetings; how to set up the resources needed for a meeting; the responsibilities of the meeting chair and meeting secretary; the difference between formal and informal meetings; the legal implications of formal meetings; the purpose of different types of minutes and other meeting records; the legal requirements of formal minutes; organisational conventions for producing minutes.	7
	Travel and accommodation	The budgetary or policy constraints relating to business travel or accommodation; the financial arrangements relating to business travel or accommodation; how to make arrangements for visas and related foreign travel documentation; the procedures for obtaining or exchanging foreign currency and identifying different suppliers that are capable of delivering the services required within budget.	10
	Diary systems	The importance of keeping diary systems up to date; the basis on which bookings and changes are prioritised; constraints relating to making bookings for people or facilities; the types of problems that can occur when managing diaries; how to respond to changes in a way that balances and meets the needs of those involved and the requirements of confidentiality.	7
	Mail services	How to deal with “junk” mail; what to do in the event of	7

	Research activities	<p>problems arising when dealing with incoming or outgoing mail; how to operate a franking machine; how to prepare packages for distribution; organisational policies and procedures on mail handling; security and the use of courier services; the process for reporting suspicious or damaged items in accordance with organisational procedures.</p> <p>The main stages in the research process; contribute to scoping research; the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods; validity and reliability in the research process; how to use sources of current and archived business information; organisational conventions and formats for presenting research reports; the organisational policy for acknowledging sources of information; ways in which ethics can affect the conduct and use of research.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>52 (13%)</p>
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Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Collaborating with others within the organisation to achieve positive work outcomes	Carrying out team working	The purpose of different types of teams and the stages of team development and behaviour; team role theory and how it is used in team building and Leadership; typical reasons for organisational change and the importance of accepting change positively; the potential impact on a team of negative responses to change; factors that affect the level of motivation of team members; techniques that can be used to motivate team members and how having motivated staff affects an organisation.	14
	Developing and maintaining working relationships	The contribution of colleagues to the achievement of team objectives; how to treat colleagues with respect,	10

	'Buddying' a colleague	<p>fairness and courtesy; the importance of fulfilling agreements made with colleagues; how to provide support and constructive feedback to colleagues; the importance of taking others' viewpoints into account when making decisions and taking ownership of problems within own level of authority; how to take action to minimise disruption to business activities within their own level of authority; how to resolve problems within their own level of authority and agreed contribution.</p> <p>What is expected of a buddy; techniques used to give positive feedback and constructive criticism; techniques used to establish rapport with a buddy; how to plan to buddy a colleague and how to support a buddy colleague carrying out work activities.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>34 (8%)</p>
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Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Using digital skills to prepare and distribute business data and documents to support the achievement of agreed work outcomes	Using digital software packages	How to select and use a range of software tools to compose and format information for the purpose of word processing, presentation, spreadsheet, e-mail, website and bespoke operations.	21
	Inputting and presenting data using digital skills	How to input relevant information accurately so that it is ready for processing; how to select and use appropriate techniques to link and combine information of different forms or from different sources; how to respond appropriately to data entry error messages; what functions to apply to structure and layout information effectively; how to select and use appropriate structures and/or layouts to organise information; how to apply local and/or legal guidelines and conventions for the storage and use of data where	14

	Using social media to communicate ensuring the appropriate tone and voice for the audience	<p>stay safe and respect others when using e-mail; how to use an address book to organise contact information; how to use email software tools and techniques to automate responses; how to archive e-mail messages, including attachments; how to organise, store and archive e-mail messages effectively.</p> <p>Common social networking sites; how to create an online identity; ways in which social networks can be accessed; how to encourage endorsements and positive feedback from others; how to use hashtags, tagging, sharing, blogs and blogging; the guidelines and ethical considerations concerning the use of social networks; how to choose secure passwords and set appropriate privacy levels for social media accounts; the risks of using social networks and how to recognise and avoid common online scams.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>48 (12%)</p>
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Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Carrying out work activities to support the work of the organisation	Maintaining stock and stationery supplies	Organisational policies; procedures and levels of authority in maintaining supplies; how to carry out a stock check of stationery; the types of problems that may occur with deliveries and stock items; how to deal with problems that occur with deliveries and stock items; the factors to take into account when ordering stationery; the benefits and limitations of different potential suppliers against organisational requirements; how to calculate quantities of stationery and supplies to be ordered; how to dispose of or recycle waste.	10
	Using office equipment appropriately	Organisational policies, procedures and levels of authority in maintaining office equipment; how to use	10

	Using telephone systems	<p>different types of office equipment; the manufacturer's and organisational instructions to be used when operating equipment; the types of equipment faults likely to be experienced and the correct way of dealing with these.</p> <p>How a caller's experiences affect their view of an organisation, organisational standards and procedures for communicating on the telephone; organisational standards and procedures when making and receiving telephone calls; organisational fault reporting procedures; security and data protection procedures when using a telephone system; the information to be given out when transferring calls; taking or leaving messages; organisational guidelines for deleting voicemail messages.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>27 (7%)</p>
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Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Carrying out work activities in line with in-house requirements and wider business etiquette	Promoting professionalism and the organisation's image	Contribute to own specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound (SMART) objectives that align with business needs; how to measure progress and achievement with line manager; how to complete tasks to agreed timescales and quality standards; how to report problems beyond own level of competence and authority to the appropriate person; actions needed to be taken to resolve any problems with personal performance; how to plan and manage workloads and priorities using time management tools and techniques; distractions that are likely to limit the effective management of time and the achievement of objectives; how to achieve an acceptable "work-life balance".	17

	Conforming to organisational style and language	Organisational style and language requirements; how to apply organisational style and language to documents, presentations, electronic information and channels of communication.	14
	Inspiring others, being a role model	The behaviours and attitudes that show a commitment to the fulfilment of the organisation's vision and the expression of its values; the action to be taken to ensure that own colleagues understand their role in the achievement of the organisation's objectives; secure the on-going commitment of own colleagues to fulfil the organisation's visions and values.	7
	Promoting diversity, equality and inclusion in the workplace	The concept of 'equality and diversity' and the legal requirements for equality of opportunity; organisational standards and expectations for equality and diversity and context in the workplace; how organisational policies on equality and diversity translate into day to day activity in the workplace; own responsibilities for equality and diversity in the workplace and the behaviours that support equality; diversity and inclusion in the workplace.	10
			48 (12%)

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Knowing who/how to escalate a problem to ensure work targets are successfully achieved.	Recognising and understanding their boundaries of responsibilities.	The level and limit of authority regarding a range of problems such as financial, administrative and work-related; the reporting structure within an organisation; the type and scope of actions that can be taken to minimise disruption to business activities; the process and stages needed to resolve problems within their agreed contribution.	10 10 (2%)

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Understanding the organisation	Understanding their organisational structure and the inter-relationship of functions within their organisation.	Differences between the private sector, public sector and voluntary sector; the functions of different organisational structures; features of different types of legal structures for organisations; the internal and external influences on organisations.	21
	Knowing employer rights and responsibilities.	The employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities that affect their own role; implications of contracts of service, of different types of employment status, for health and safety, for equality and diversity, of wrongful dismissal, unfair dismissal and redundancy; the impact of human rights legislation on the employment relationship; an employer's expectations for employees' standards of personal presentation, punctuality and behaviour; the procedures and documentation that protect relationships with employees; sources of information and advice on employment rights and responsibilities.	14
	Knowing the purpose of the business and what 'brand promise' means	The purpose of the business and the characteristics of different business markets; the organisation's core values and how they link to the service culture; the organisation's internal policies and procedures and how these affect their job role; the legal obligations of a business and the value of a brand to an organisation.	14
	49 (12%)		

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Supporting the management of information in line with organisational requirements	Carrying out photocopying activities.	Organisational policies, procedures and levels of authority in maintaining photocopying equipment; manufacturer's and organisational instructions when operating photocopying equipment; equipment faults likely to be experienced and the correct way of dealing with these; procedures to keep waste to a minimum; making sure that photocopying equipment conforms with health and safety requirements; to whom to report problems that cannot be resolved.	4
	Carrying out the shredding, scanning, gathering, storing, filing, archiving, retrieving, updating and collating of information	Systems and procedures for storing and retrieving information; legal and organisational requirements for information security and retention; how to create filing systems to facilitate information identification and retrieval; different search techniques to locate and retrieve information; the types of information found in business organisations; features of different types of systems used for storage and retrieval of information; the legal requirements for storing business information.	10
	Understanding commercial confidentiality and security requirements	Organisational procedures for the storage, security and confidentiality of information (including GDPR), the legal requirements of confidentiality, data protection and system security and the impact of legal and organisational security and confidentiality requirements for the design and implementation of an information system.	4
	18 (5%)		

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Interacting with internal and external customers in a professional manner to meet their needs and expectations	Carrying out front line duties	The distinctions between internal and external customers; different types of customers and their expectations; how to adapt own style to build customer rapport; different questioning skills, including listening and responding in a way that builds customer rapport.	7
	Understanding customer needs	Different needs and priorities of customers; the relationship between customers' needs and expectations and customer satisfaction; balancing promises made to customers with the needs of an organisation.	4
	Delivering customer service	Managing customers' expectations; how to behave in a way that meets customers' expectations; techniques that can be used to put customers at ease and gain their trust; how to follow up actions and keep promises when delivering customer service; organisational standards of presentation and behaviour when providing customer service; how to adapt their own behaviour to meet customers' needs or expectations; how to respond to customers' requests in line with organisational guidelines and organisational policies and procedures; legal and ethical requirements when providing customer service.	21
			32 (8%)

Proposed duties	Related work activities	Knowledge requirements	Total hours of learning
Displaying personal responsibilities within their business environment	Following health, safety and security (including GDPR), improving their performance, supporting colleagues, practicing self-motivation and time management, being reliable in attendance,	Health and safety responsibilities of employers; own responsibilities for health and safety and data protection in the business environment; occupational health and safety guidelines to be followed when using	14

	<p>displaying punctuality, having a positive attitude to colleagues and respect for others</p> <p>Seeking feedback, undergoing CPD and practicing self-reflection and self-improvement (14)</p>	<p>a keyboard and visual display unit; how to plan and manage workloads and priorities using time management tools and techniques; how to minimise distractions that are likely to limit the effective management of time and the achievement of objectives; how to treat colleagues with respect, fairness and courtesy; how to fulfil agreements made with colleagues; how to provide support and constructive feedback to colleagues.</p> <p>Organisational policies relating to personal development; potential business benefits of personal development; own preferred learning style and development needs from analyses of the role; personal and team objectives; how to use feedback from others to identify their own development needs and agree a development plan that specifies actions, methods, resources, timescales and review mechanisms; different formal development opportunities that are consistent with business needs; informal learning opportunities that contribute to the achievement of personal development objectives; how to review progress against agreed objectives and amend plans accordingly; the benefits of achieving an acceptable “work-life balance.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>28 (7%)</p>
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Total hours of off-the-job training (OTJT) 402

The OTJT for this standard has been based on the following assumptions:

- Apprentices will be able to reach the gateway after a minimum of 12 months on-programme.
- Apprentices in this job role will typically have an eight-hour working day with a one-hour lunch break (35 hours a week x 52 weeks = 1820 hours).
- Apprentices will typically receive circa four weeks holiday per year (140 hours) plus eight bank holidays (56 hours).
- 20% OTJT would be $1820 - 206 \times 0.2 = \mathbf{323 \text{ hours minimum}}$.