

EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Vocational Training Services Care Sector Ltd (VTS) is committed to providing a high-quality apprenticeship delivery service throughout Essex and into the surrounding counties.

Integral to the success of our operations is the relationships we have with our Employers. We pride ourselves on providing an individual, personalised service to our employers and learners, where we get to know and understand them and can respond quickly and flexibly as needs arise. Each tutor will have their own allocated employers to look after and will be the day-to-day liaison person who will meet regularly with them, deliver apprenticeship training to their employees and deal with any minor issues which arise. Employer relationships will be closely overseen by the Quality and Operations manager who will deal with any issues which cannot be resolved by the tutor. The Director/CEO retains overall responsibility for managing relationships with employers and for dealing with any unresolved issues.

With a well-established portfolio of trusted employers, our aim is to continue to engage and work closely with them to provide a service which meets their needs and that of their employees (our learners), whilst fulfilling the wider regional and national objectives specified by our LEP and central Government. We will also work determinedly to engage new employers with whom we can establish positive working relationships.

In order to achieve this aim, we will:

1 Ensure that employers understand apprenticeships

We will provide information for employers to aid their understanding of what an apprenticeship is, the government incentives available and how apprentices can benefit their businesses. We will:

- Provide an employer handbook, regularly updated as necessary.
- Host information events throughout the year for existing and prospective new employers
- Be readily available to answer any queries promptly
- Ensure that information on our website is current and regularly updated
- Signpost employers to the IFA and .GOV websites where they can find more information
- Encourage employer participation in events such as the National Apprenticeship Week
- Provide a monthly emailed newsletter, keeping employers up to date with all news.

2 Encourage Employers to use the Recruit an Apprentice government portal

Our handbook informs employers of the free recruitment service available to them. Additionally, our Marketing team who manages the service, will regularly liaise with employers to encourage their participation. When visiting their learners & employers, our tutors will encourage the use of the service in order to address any staffing requirements. Our introductory meetings with prospective new employers will actively promote use of this service.

3 Use various methods of engagement to reach employers throughout Essex

We will use our well-established presence throughout Essex to continue to reach out to employers, both existing and new, in order to offer our apprenticeship delivery services. We will attend industry days, forums, sector specific events, employer open days, breakfast meetings etc. to engage with employers from the sectors in which we deliver. We will ensure that we remain

well informed and aware of relevant events within our area which will give us the opportunity to engage with employers. We will utilise social media and our website to advertise our services and we will also adopt GDPR compliant marketing methods to reach out to employers across Essex. We will continue to deliver apprenticeship standards and Diplomas from levels 2 – 5 in the following areas:

- Adult Social Care
- Healthcare Services
- Childcare & Education
- Leadership & Management

4 Work flexibly with employers to meet theirs and the apprentice's needs

We will work closely with our employers to develop individual training plans for apprentices which are adapted to suit both their working environment and the apprenticeship requirements. In particular we will:

- Have regular meetings with employers to ensure we understand their businesses and how apprenticeship training can fit into and enhance their operations. We will discuss the apprenticeship requirements and work together to plan how apprenticeships will be delivered within the context of their setting.
- Apply this approach to individual tailoring of training plans for each apprentice, adapting the model agreed with the employer to suit the apprentice's own circumstances
- Involve the employer in the regular study sessions, review meetings, observations and assessments of the apprentice to ensure they are fully engaged in every apprentice's learning & progression
- Encourage the employer to support the apprentice with the planning and implementation of the 'off the job' learning
- Ensure that each apprentice has a workplace 'mentor' who can be our point of liaison with that employer and who can take responsibility for ensuring that the apprentice is fully supported in every aspect of their on-the-job training
- Meet regularly with the employer outside of the meetings involving the learners, to discuss any concerns which may arise regarding an individual learner, or our apprenticeship delivery in general. We will ensure that we take seriously any issues raised by the employers and we will be prepared to make adaptations as appropriate.

5 Ensure effective communication & Employer satisfaction

We will strive to establish and maintain excellent communication channels between us and our employers and seek to ensure their satisfaction with our service. In particular we will:

- Ensure that our employers know our business structure, who is their day-to-day point of contact with us, and who they can contact if any issues are not resolved.
- Establish their preferred contact methods, record and act on them accordingly.
- Regularly seek employer feedback through 1:1 meetings and surveys in order to gauge their satisfaction
- Collate satisfaction/complaints data to arrive at meaningful conclusions, being prepared to take any responsive actions as necessary
- Invite the Employer to attend a more formal contract review meeting annually, with one of the Directors.