



Department
for Education

Publishing public sector apprenticeships data

Guidance for public sector bodies

May 2023

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About this guidance

This is guidance from the Department for Education for public bodies who employ 250 or more staff and were previously in scope of the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target 2017-2022. Public sector bodies should have regard to this guidance when considering how they report their annual apprenticeships data.

The data collected will be published annually to support transparency and external accountability, and to help maintain the momentum public sector bodies have built up.

Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for:

- All public bodies with 250 or more staff in England as of 31 March each year, who were previously in scope of the Public Sector Apprenticeship Target 2017-2022.
- This includes schools, multi academy trusts, local authorities, central government and arms-length bodies, NHS organisations, the armed forces, and emergency services, together with anyone else who may have been in scope.

Interpreting those in scope

Almost all public bodies with 250 or more staff in England will be in-scope of this guidance. The number of staff working for a public body is determined by its headcount on 31 March each year, the day before the reporting period beginning 1 April. For example, the headcount on 31 March 2022 would be for the period 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023.

A public body with 250 or more staff working for it on that date will be subject to this guidance for that coming year.

Primary legislation defines a public body as:

- A public authority; or
- A body or other person that is not a public authority but has functions of a public nature and is funded wholly or partly from public funds.

Out of scope of this guidance are the BBC, Channel Four, The House of Commons and House of Lords and the Post Office Ltd., as well as all their associated subsidiaries, charities (excluding academy trusts and multi academy trusts), FE colleges, Universities, housing associations, housing trusts, independent schools, and financial bodies which are partly state-owned (such as RBS).

Interpreting 'ordinarily work' in England

Data returns should only include apprentices who ordinarily work in England. Whether an apprentice ordinarily works in England is determined by a number of factors, but generally the determining factor is where the apprentice is based.

An apprentice ordinarily works in England if they spend at least 50% of their working hours in England over the duration of the apprenticeship.

Providing returns

Bodies in scope should provide an annual return to the Department for Education by 31 May each year. Cabinet Office will also monitor the returns from Civil Service departments as part of performance management.

Content

Bodies in scope should provide the information set out below. Where the Council/Local Authority (LA) is the employer for schools, this information can be set out separately within their return.

Data returns

The data return includes several figures which will enable the Government, the public, and wider stakeholders to understand each body's headcount and the number of apprentices they employ.

The information required is:

Your employees:

- The number of employees in England that work for the body on 31 March, prior to and at the end of the period (i.e. 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023).
- The number of new employees who started working for you in England between 1 April and 31 March

Your apprentices:

- The number of apprentices in England who work for the body on 31 March, prior to and at the end of the period (i.e. 31 March 2022 and 31 March 2023).
- The number of apprentices whose apprenticeship agreement started between 1 April and 31 March

In calculating their headcount public bodies should include the following staff, as at 31 March:

- those members of staff on the body's payroll, including apprentices, on whose behalf the public body makes National Insurance Contributions. This will include:
 - permanent members of staff;
 - members of staff who have a fixed-term contract;
 - those who work full-time as well as those who work part-time;
- other members of staff who are not described above who have a fixed-term contract;
- staff who are on maternity, paternity or adoption leave;
- staff who are on sick-leave or any type of extended paid leave;

- apprentices employed by the public body through an Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA); or
- employees on secondment or loan only if your organisation is paying for the majority (more than 50 per cent) or all of their wages.

They should not include:

- those who are employed through employment agencies;
- those who are working on a zero-hour contract;
- bank staff;
- employees in sub-contracted organisations who are not paid directly from the payroll; or
- those on career breaks.

Format

Most bodies will send their data returns to the Department for Education through their Apprenticeship Service account. You should make sure you are registered on the Apprenticeship Service to submit your annual return. If you are unsure how to do this, please contact Apprenticeship Service Support on 0800 015 0600 or email helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk.

The Civil Service and Armed Forces will not send their returns through the Apprenticeship Service. An electronic mailbox has been set up for the receipt of returns from these bodies. For the form to complete please contact apprenticeship.publicsector@education.gov.uk.

The reporting period

The reporting period runs from 1 April to 31 March each year and data will be measured as a total between those dates. Public sector bodies should send data on apprenticeship starts, the number of apprentices and organisation headcount to the department annually where they are in scope of this guidance.

However, it is important to note that there may be cases where a public body is not within scope. This will be the case if a body's headcount falls below 250 on 31 March, the day before the reporting period – for example, if headcount was 230 on 31 March 2022, the public body would not be in scope for the 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 period.

Reports will be due within two months of the end of the reporting period. This is known as the response period and during this time each body should send their data to the Department for Education. The deadline for this return will be 31 May each year.



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