

RISE

Retrofit information,
support & expertise

Advice Pack

Apprenticeships in retrofit for the supply chain

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www.riseretrofit.org.uk

Overview

The domestic retrofit industry is rapidly expanding in response to the growing demand for energy-efficient homes. As the UK works towards achieving its climate goals, including net-zero emissions by 2050, the need to improve the energy performance of existing homes is more urgent than ever. This creates a massive opportunity for businesses operating within the retrofit sector.

A key part of this opportunity lies in the recruitment and training of apprentices. By bringing people into the sector, companies can ensure a steady pipeline of talent to meet current and future demand for skilled retrofit workers. This advice pack is designed to guide businesses in the retrofit supply chain on the benefits of apprenticeships and how they can successfully integrate talent into their workforce.

Why apprenticeships can benefit the retrofit supply chain

As the retrofit industry grows, the need for a skilled workforce becomes even more critical. Apprentices are integral to ensuring that businesses can meet the demand for qualified professionals, and here's why:

Eagerness to learn and fresh perspectives

Apprentices are often eager to build a career and develop practical skills. Their enthusiasm and fresh perspectives can introduce new ways of thinking, improving efficiency and innovation within the business. They are highly adaptable and eager to embrace new technologies, which is particularly beneficial in the constantly evolving field of retrofit.

Long-term investment and loyalty

Apprenticeships foster long-term loyalty. By investing in the development of workers, businesses are creating a future talent pool that is likely to stay with the company for years. These apprentices develop a strong connection to the company and often progress into key roles, creating a stable and experienced workforce.

Specialised skills in retrofit technologies

Through accredited training programmes, apprentices can gain specific skills in retrofit technologies such as insulation, ventilation, and renewable energy systems. This ensures that the workforce is highly skilled in the latest industry standards and technologies, enabling businesses to meet emerging retrofit requirements and comply with future building regulations.

Benefits of hiring apprentices

Investing in apprentices not only supports the workforce but also brings numerous benefits to the business:

Tackling skills shortages

The retrofit sector is currently facing a significant skills gap, with demand for qualified professionals outstripping supply. By hiring apprentices, businesses can help address this shortage and ensure they have the skilled workers they need to meet growing demand.

Cost-effective growth

Training apprentices is a cost-effective way to grow your workforce. The UK government offers generous funding and support for businesses that take on apprentices, significantly reducing the cost of training. In some cases, employers may also be eligible for additional incentives, such as apprenticeship levy funding or regional grants.

Future-proofing your business

The retrofit industry is constantly evolving, with new technologies, standards, and regulations emerging regularly. By hiring apprentices and investing in their development, businesses ensure that they have a skilled workforce capable of adapting to future changes. This helps companies stay competitive and compliant with upcoming regulations, such as the introduction of higher energy efficiency standards for homes.

Building reputation and supporting sustainability

Supporting apprenticeships demonstrates a commitment to both the local community and sustainability. It shows that your business is forward-thinking, invested in tackling climate change, and committed to creating jobs and development opportunities for the next generation. This positive reputation can enhance your brand image and attract new customers who value social responsibility.

How to attract and support talent?

Attracting and retaining apprentices requires a proactive approach. Here are some strategies businesses can use to successfully integrate apprentices into their workforce:

Promote retrofit careers

People who are passionate about sustainability may be more inclined to pursue a career in retrofit if they are made aware of the available opportunities. Practical examples include:

- Speak at career fairs, schools, colleges and universities

- Host an open day or open doors event so prospective applicants can get an insight into the specific field
- Consider having an information page on your website or a flyer with more information
- Get case studies or testimonials from current apprentices
- Have a partnership with a qualification body in the field
- Advertise and promote your organisation
- Set up referrals or signposting trigger points

Offer Structured Training and Support

Partnering with recognised apprenticeship schemes and providing access to structured training is key to ensuring apprentices succeed. Consider aligning with training providers offering retrofit-specific qualifications, such as Level 2 or Level 3 diplomas in energy efficiency or building services. This provides apprentices with the skills and certifications they need to work effectively within the industry.

Create a Positive Work Environment

Creating a supportive and inclusive environment is essential for apprentice retention. Assigning mentors, providing hands-on experience, and ensuring apprentices are involved in meaningful projects are all ways to help apprentices thrive. A positive environment encourages apprentices to stay committed to their training and helps them develop the practical skills necessary for a successful career.

Provide Career Progression Opportunities

Offering clear pathways for career development can also attract talent. When apprentices see a clear path from entry-level positions to advanced roles, they are more likely to remain with the company long-term. Consider developing internal training schemes or promoting from within, which can provide valuable growth opportunities for apprentices.

Example progression areas:

- Project management
- Data analysis
- Technical expertise
- Resident engagement management
- Install management
- Contract management
- Procurement professional

- Anti-fraud specialist
- Asset management

Qualification areas

Careers in retrofit require a wide range of qualifications and expertise. There are specific technology and trade related qualifications that are needed for the design, specification, installation and maintenance of energy efficiency measures and renewable technologies, which are not covered in this advice pack.

Instead, the qualification areas below are provided as examples of areas where apprenticeship qualifications can support career development.

Project management

- Project Fundamentals Qualification
- Project Management Qualification

Technical building knowledge

- Domestic Energy Assessor (DEA)
- Level 3 Retrofit Advice Course
- Level 4 Domestic Retrofit Assessment
- Level 5 Retrofit Coordination and Risk management

General energy awareness

- Understanding Domestic Retrofit Level 2
- City & Guilds Energy Awareness, Level 3 award

Resident focused

- Understanding Domestic Retrofit Level 2
- City & Guilds Fuel Debt Advice in the Community, Level 2 award
- City & Guilds Energy Awareness, Level 3 award

Heritage retrofit

- Level 3 Award in Energy Efficiency for Older and Traditional Building

Useful links

UK Government Apprenticeships site connecting people with ambition to businesses with vision: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/#>



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