

Committee(s) Education Board	Dated: 25 May 2017
Subject: City of London Apprenticeships	Public
Report of: Education Board	For Information
Report author: Education and Training Strategy Director	

Summary

This report provides a progress update of the City of London's apprenticeship programme and ongoing delivery strategy.

- The objective is to recruit 100 apprentices.
- In the initial campaign there were 42 vacancies advertised and over 800 apprenticeship candidate responses were received.
- At the time of writing this report, 12 posts have been filled and candidates are starting the on-boarding process.
- A review of processes and procedures will be undertaken to develop the service for the next cohort of vacancies.
- Levy payments are able to be drawn down for the training of apprentices, which will cover the basic training costs.
- The City is providing extra support with funding for posts in recruitment selection, pastoral support and HR to ensure that all apprentices are properly supported to the end of their programme and into employment or higher level study/apprenticeships.

Recommendation(s)

- Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City of London Corporation is committed to delivering its first 100 apprenticeships across all its departments between April/May 2017 and March 2018.
2. The Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) will work with CoL's internal departments and the Skills Funding Agency to ensure that the City Of London Corporation is able to secure maximum benefits from its Levy Contributions.
3. There are four recruitment cohorts throughout the first twelve months of delivery. The recruitment for the first of its four recruitment cohort has recently closed. More than 800 potential apprentice candidate responses to the first recruitment campaign which advertised 42 internal vacancies.

4. The ASES team has successfully set up the systems needed to respond to the Digital payments. The team will be solely responsible for ensuring that the Individual Learning Records for each candidate is submitted on each planned and SFA agreed date.
5. The Recruitment/Selection and preparation for Training for the first group of COL apprentices has ensured that the following processes are firmly in place.
 - Discussions with recruitment managers and HR business partners accurately reflect the apprentice work activities, levels and training levels.
 - Recruitment and Selection process of apprentices is supported by the ASES delivery team. The final appointment decision remains the responsibility of the department line manager.
 - The initial eligibility checks are carried out by the delivery team.
 - The advertising and promoting job vacancies was supported by a number of local and national campaigns (the service was able to benefit from numerous campaigns promoting the national apprenticeship week).
 - Both internal and external preparation for training delivery for the first cohort has been secured.
 - More specialist support is being developed for those apprentices with Additional Learning Needs (ALS). In addition to this, ongoing additional support will be made available to those learners who have not secured the correct levels of Maths, English or ICT.
 - A series of 'stretch and challenge' learning options will be available to those apprentices who have gained low levels in the key skill areas.
 - The first of several support /Information Workshop for Line Managers has taken place.

Current Position

6. The initial recruitment selection and Onboarding of the April Cohort is planned to be completed by no later than May/June 2017. When this stage has been completed, the recruitment for the July/August 2017 cohort will begin.
7. The lessons learnt from the April recruitment /selection process will be analysed from the results of an evaluation of the complete processes and procedures used in the first cohort recruitment. The outcome of this evaluation will be used to further improve the Service processes and procedures.
8. Twelve apprentice job offers have been made so far. It is evident from the calibre of those candidates and others seen as part of the 'long listing' process that not only is there a need for ALS; some guidance is needed in certain areas of 'Life and Social Skills'. This level of guidance and support will form the Additional Support available to apprentices.
9. The service has intensified its promotional work with local academies, local schools and one to one discussions with parents. Many are keen to fully understand the apprenticeship delivery and achievements structures.

Proposals

10. The recruitment of some additional staff has recently taken place. The recruitment to the Section and Welfare post will take place in mid June 2017. In the meanwhile existing and agency staff is supporting the delivery of the service. All external Training arrangements to support the first cohort of apprentices is now firmly in place. The lead tutor to support the internal training arrangements is also in place.
11. The internal Onboarding activities are fully supported by the internal delivery team.
12. Line manager support is being developed. There has always been an understanding that support and some training will be available to cater for the needs of new managers, those who are engaging with the apprenticeship programme for the first time. The need for guidance in areas such as Safeguarding and how to respond to the Prevent Duty will be incorporated into Line Manager's training sessions.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

13. The apprenticeship programme has been designed to support the skills needs of individual departments. The request for different levels and types of apprentice skills will allow departments to continue to provide a high quality internal/external service.
14. The recruitment of level two and three apprentice's candidates to secure the COL targets will be achieved. There is however a need to respond to line manager's queries regarding recruiting apprentices at higher levels.

Implications

15. The training service will be funded via COL Levy payments. There is a need to a discussion about how best to maximise the use of the Levy funds. The rules supporting the expenditure of this fund dictates that Levy funding can largely be spent on approved and listed Training Standards (and some frameworks). The implication of this is that although a department may request a high level and expensive training programme, it may only be supported if it has been first approved by the Skills Funding Agency. It is however worth noting that the approved list of training standards/qualification is steadily increasing.
16. The strategy for monitoring progression of completing apprentices is now under discussion. The current arrangements of tracking apprentices for the first eighteen months following them completing their apprenticeship training course, is now under review. It is no longer sufficient to track apprentices when they complete and leave their apprenticeship training department, the service will put in place a programme for supporting individuals to secure their 'next step.' This process of coaching advising, CV preparation, application to FE or HE colleges will begin a minimum of three months before finally completing their apprenticeship.

Conclusion

17. The apprenticeship programme is an important training, education, skills and employment initiative. To ensure its ongoing success, it is important that this service is jointly shared with a wide range of external partners and employers. The link with local employers may be used to support post apprenticeship employment and with external delivery parents to communicate the levels of quality of delivery that must be delivered to apprentices.

Mark Emmerson

Chief Executive Officer, City of London Academies Trust
Education Strategy Director, City of London Corporation
T: 020 7332 1432
E: mark.emmerson@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Barbara Hamilton

Head of Adult Skills and Education, City of London Corporation
T: 020 7332 1755
E: barbara.hamilton@cityoflondon.gov.uk