

Code of Good Practice for New Zealand Apprenticeships

Introduction to New Zealand Apprenticeships

New Zealand Apprenticeships are formal work-based training programmes leading to careers in a range of vocations and replaced the Modern Apprenticeships scheme in 2014. New Zealand Apprenticeships are open to anyone aged 16 years and over.

There are many benefits to becoming or employing an apprentice. New Zealand Apprenticeships offer people the opportunity to train while working and offer employers the opportunity to employ people whose skills and knowledge develop over time.

The three parties to a New Zealand Apprenticeship

There are three parties to a New Zealand Apprenticeship - the apprentice, employer and industry training organisation. Each has unique responsibilities. The responsibilities of the apprentice are to work and learn. The responsibilities of the employer are to train and support the apprentice. The responsibilities of the industry training organisation are to facilitate the training, and support both the apprentice and the employer throughout the apprenticeship.

The framework for New Zealand Apprenticeships

The Industry Training and Apprenticeship Act 1992 sets out the framework for apprenticeship training and the obligations of those involved.

The key components of a New Zealand Apprenticeship are:

- being employed in an industry,
- completing a relevant level 4 qualification of at least 120 credits, and
- meeting any regulatory requirements of the occupation.

Every New Zealand Apprenticeship must have a training agreement. A training agreement is a formal arrangement between the employer and the apprentice and forms part of the apprentice's employment agreement.

In addition to the training agreement, every New Zealand Apprenticeship must have a training plan. A training plan sets out the details of the training to be undertaken. The components of a training plan are:

- the qualification to be achieved,
- the required standards and/or competencies to achieve the qualification,
- other key skills the apprentice may require,
- the training process, delivery modes and assessment arrangements,
- the key milestones, achievement targets and goals, and
- a regular review and reporting framework.

All three parties must agree to the training plan. The training plan is not part of the employment agreement.

All three parties are expected to comply with this Code of Good Practice.

The principles for New Zealand Apprenticeships

The principles for New Zealand Apprenticeships have been developed through input from apprentices, employers and industry training organisations.

These principles are commitment, collaboration and communication. All parties should be committed to the successful completion of the apprenticeship, and pro-actively collaborate and communicate with each other to achieve this.

Underpinning these principles are good practices expected of the apprentice, employer and industry training organisation in meeting their responsibilities.

Good practice for an apprentice is to:

Be informed

The prospective apprentice finds out as much as possible about the occupation and the training required before pursuing a New Zealand Apprenticeship. Getting some work experience and talking to people already in the industry are good ways of understanding the work environment and future opportunities once qualified. It is important that an apprentice is realistic about what their chosen vocation involves, and carefully considers whether that career is right for them.

Be a good employee

A good employee is aware of and meets the responsibilities and requirements of the employment agreement. The apprentice works safely, is professional, looks after workplace property and resources, respects fellow employees and the employer's customers. Apprentices should also understand their rights as an employee.

Be an active and committed learner

The apprentice understands the requirements of the training plan and makes every effort to successfully complete it. The apprentice is also committed to the training required off-the-job, including any off-site and out-of-hours study.

Communicate clearly

The apprentice communicates clearly and openly with their employer, industry training organisation and any training providers. Good communication ensures the employer and industry training organisation become aware of any problems or concerns the apprentice has with their training.

Good practice for an employer is to:

Be informed

The employer finds out what employing an apprentice involves and what the employer's obligations to training are. Only employers who are able to commit to supporting an apprentice for the duration of their training should consider employing an apprentice. Talking to other employers who have apprentices and the industry training organisation will help clarify what is required.

Be a good employer

A good employer complies with all relevant employment, health and safety, privacy and human rights legislation. A good employer provides an adequate induction into the job, appropriate supervision and a safe working environment for the apprentice.

Ensure active and effective training and mentoring

The employer ensures the apprentice is actively and effectively taught while on-the-job so that the apprentice progressively builds up skills and knowledge and off-the-job training is reinforced. The employer also ensures that over time the apprentice's work covers the breadth and depth of skills and experience needed to complete the apprenticeship and become work competent. The employer could liaise with other employers and the industry training organisation to achieve this.

The employer (in collaboration with the industry training organisation) also ensures the apprentice is mentored, particularly in the initial period of the apprenticeship. Mentoring may take different forms but should always include supportive and positive relationships which are focused on the development of the apprentice and the successful completion of the training plan.

Support access to off-the-job training

The employer supports the apprentice to attend off-the-job training. The type and timing of off-the-job training is detailed in the training plan and the employer takes this into account when scheduling work and making other commitments. The employer works with the apprentice and industry training organisation to resolve any issues that might arise with off-the-job training requirements.

Support the industry training organisation's access to the apprentice

The employer ensures the industry training organisation has reasonable access to the apprentice. The industry training organisation will require face-to-face meetings with the apprentice at certain times and will communicate in other ways with them throughout the apprenticeship. The employer works with the industry training organisation to help overcome any difficulties with access.

Communicate clearly

The employer communicates clearly to the apprentice and encourages the apprentice to communicate by creating a supportive environment. The employer is clear about the requirements of the employment agreement, responsibilities for tools, training fees and other associated training costs such as travel. On-going communication with the apprentice throughout the apprenticeship improves relationships and supports the training.

Clear and open communication with the industry training organisation is equally important. Good communication builds better connections and understanding across all parties. It also means issues may be averted and problems resolved earlier.

Good practice for an industry training organisation is to:

Provide potential apprentices and employers with good information

The industry training organisation makes information on apprenticeships readily available to employers and prospective apprentices. The information includes advice that apprentices under the age of 18 years should seek independent advice before beginning the apprenticeship.

The information refers to the obligations and expectations of all parties to an apprenticeship. The industry training organisation helps prospective apprentices and employers decide if an apprenticeship is right for them. The industry training organisation ensures all parties are aware of this Code of Good Practice.

Develop a training plan in collaboration with the apprentice and employer

The industry training organisation works with the apprentice and the employer to develop a training plan for the apprenticeship. The training plan ensures the apprentice can complete the required qualification for the occupation. The training plan is also based on a comprehensive training needs analysis of the apprentice, recognition of prior learning and may include the development of other key skills.

Support the implementation of the training plan

The industry training organisation supports the implementation of the training plan through the provision of resources, arrangements for on-the-job assessments and facilitating off-the-job training. The industry training organisation monitors and reports on the apprentice's progress against the training plan on a regular basis to both the apprentice and employer. Where possible the industry training organisation provides assistance to the apprentice and the employer to overcome any barriers to training.

Support the apprentice

The industry training organisation ensures the apprentice receives appropriate pastoral and educational support. As pastoral support needs change during the apprenticeship, the industry training organisation ensures the support is responsive to the apprentice's needs.

Support the employer

The industry training organisation supports the employer through guidance, information, resources and other services as appropriate. Support from the industry training organisation is tailored according to the capabilities of the employer to support their apprentice.

Communicate clearly

The industry training organisation ensures it communicates well with both the employer and the apprentice so all parties are up-to-date with the progress against the training plan and any changes to the training plan. Communication is relatively frequent, informative and constructive.

Provide further support to the apprentice

In the event that the apprentice cannot continue their training with their employer, the industry training organisation makes reasonable endeavours to find another employer for the apprentice.

Further information

Organisations funded directly to train New Zealand Apprentices

Organisations that are funded directly to train New Zealand Apprentices must meet the responsibilities of industry training organisations as well as those of employers. Organisations must ensure they have the capability to train and support apprentices before seeking funding for apprenticeship training through the Direct Funding Scheme. The support provided to the apprentice must be at least comparable to that provided by the relevant industry training organisation.

Resolving training problems

All parties have an obligation to work together to resolve problems related to the training plan. In the event that a problem cannot be resolved and there is no prior agreement about a resolution process, the Tertiary Education Commission will appoint an independent mediator who is acceptable to all parties.

Resolving employment problems

Industry training organisations should not become involved in discussions about employment agreements or advocate for either the employer or apprentice in a disciplinary situation or an employment dispute.

Industry training organisations should provide employers and apprentices with useful and timely information on how to get authoritative advice on employment relations issues from an appropriate source. They should not provide this type of advice themselves.

For further information and advice contact the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment for employment relations issues (www.mbie.govt.nz) and WorkSafe NZ for health and safety issues (www.business.govt.nz/worksafe).

New Zealand's industry training organisations

Construction and Infrastructure: Building and Construction ITO Connexis The Skills Organisation	Primary Industries: Primary ITO	Service Industries: ServiceIQ Hairdressing and Beauty ITO	Social and Community Services: Careerforce Skills Active Aotearoa	Manufacturing and Technology: Competenz MITO NZ Marine and Composite ITO
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