

Local Taxation and Benefits- Non-statutory (Wales)

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Local Taxation and Benefits- Non-statutory (Wales)

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Framework summary

Local Taxation and Benefits- Non-statutory

Local Taxation and Benefits

Pathways for this framework at level 3 include:

Pathway 1: Local Taxation and Benefits

Competence qualifications available to this pathway:

N/A

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway:

N/A

Combined qualifications available to this pathway:

B1 - Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation and Benefits

This pathway also contains information on:

- Employee rights and responsibilities
- Essential skills

Framework information

Information on the Publishing Authority for this framework:

Instructus

The Apprenticeship sector for occupations in air conditioning, building services engineering, business and administration, cleaning, customer service, digital/information technology, electro technical, electrical and electronic servicing, enterprise and business support, facilities management, heating and ventilating, housing, human resources and recruitment, industrial relations, leadership and management, marketing and sales (also includes contact centres and third sector), plumbing, property and refrigeration.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Issue number: 1 | This framework includes: |
| Framework ID: FR00754 | Level 3 |
| Date this framework is to be reviewed by: 30/04/2013 | This framework is for use in: Wales |

Short description

This is a brand new apprenticeship for the local taxation and benefits sector. The apprenticeship is at Level 3 and is the entry point into the sector. Local taxation and benefits are administered by Local Authorities in Wales which includes District Councils and Unitary Authorities. There are a growing number of private companies who are contracted to provide benefit services to local councils. Job titles are local government revenues officer and local government benefits officer. This apprenticeship is intended to attract new people into the sector from local communities, to offer a career route and to upskill existing staff.

Contact information

Proposer of this framework

This framework is published by Asset Skills on a non-statutory basis prior to the designation of issuing authorities for Wales

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Purpose of this framework

Summary of the purpose of the framework

Apprentices who work in Revenues and Benefits administration contribute positively to the well-being of their communities. Schools, the police, street cleaning and local social services rely on the efficient collection of local revenues and the less well off in society rely on the efficient administration of Housing and Council tax benefit.

Local Revenues and Benefits are administered by Local Authorities in Wales which includes District councils and Unitary Authorities. There are a growing number of private companies who are contracted to provide benefit services to local councils. There may be possibilities to work for local Housing Associations and Citizens Advice Bureau offering advice on benefits. This is a new apprenticeship at Level 3 and the entry point into the sector.

Local Government employs 10,000 within the Benefits sector and 10,000 within the Local Taxation sector. Some local authorities find it difficult to recruit experienced staff who are prepared to travel and rely on agency staff which can be expensive. In addition to this there can be problems in recruiting First Line Managers and Senior Managers who have the right skills. There is a need to 'home grow' local talent.

The challenges facing the sector are as follows:

- Legislation – the need to keep up to date with constant changes to benefit and revenue legislation
- Maintaining high levels of service with reduced budgets
- Detecting fraudulent claims and overpayments – this has become a big focus for Local Authorities and resources have had to be diverted to this area
- Ensuring local people, including businesses, are aware of their entitlements
- Front line customer service skills to meet customer demands

The future competences which are required are as follows:

- Management & Leadership – being able to implement organisational and culture change, coaching and supporting staff with legislative changes
- Using specialist in-house ICT systems
- Investigative and analytic skills to detect fraud
- Skills and knowledge – understanding and implementing changes in legislation and avoiding and spotting errors in calculations.

The above information was sourced from the Asset Skills/IRRV employer survey, March 2010.

The apprenticeship will help to bring younger people into the sector to allow career progression and to assist with hard to fill vacancies.

Employers have been involved in the design of the qualifications in the framework which will develop the critical skills required within the sector. The Framework has been developed to meet the skills priorities for Wales and the requirements of the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales.

Aims and objectives of this framework (Wales)

The aim of the apprenticeship is to attract new people into the sector, especially from local communities.

The objectives are as follows:

- Attract new people from under-represented groups into the sector.
- Make revenue and benefits a career of choice for people new to the sector
- Provide an entry route for a career in revenue and benefits at Level 3 into Level 4 jobs and higher, through further education and training, leading to professional status.
- Provide a progression route for Customer Service and Business Admin Foundation apprentices.

Entry conditions for this framework

Employers are looking to attract applicants from a wide range of backgrounds and experience, some of whom may have had experience, paid or unpaid, within the sector. Applicants will be expected to have basic literacy and numeracy skills on which this apprenticeship will build, be willing to work as part of a team, recognise and appreciate diversity and to communicate with a wide range of customers.

Training providers and employers will use initial assessment to ensure that applicants have a fair opportunity to demonstrate their ability and to tailor programmes to meet individual needs, recognising prior qualifications and experience.

As a guide, applicants may come from a range of routes including:

- achieved any of the Essential Skills Wales
- achieved the Welsh Baccalaureate in Public Services
- achieved a Foundation apprenticeship in Business Administration, Customer Service or Housing
- academic qualification(s) such as one or more GCSEs. AS or A levels

RULES TO AVOID REPEATING QUALIFICATIONS

Processes exist to make sure that applicants with prior knowledge, qualifications and experience are not disadvantaged by having to repeat learning. Training providers and awarding organisations will be able to advise on the current rules for accrediting prior learning and recognising prior experience. Refer to the on and off the job training section for guidance about prior attainment and achievement. In the meantime, this is a short summary:

There are no relaxations or proxies for any qualifications specified in a framework in SASW, however, providers are encouraged to identify additional on-the-job training programmes that customise the learning to the new workplace.

1. Essential Skills.

- If applicants already have GCSEs in English, Maths and/or Information and Communications Technology (ICT) they still have to do the Essential Skills Wales at the relevant level as these are new qualifications and proxies do not exist.
- Up to the 31 August 2011, if applicants already have achieved Key Skills at the relevant level, they will not have to do the relevant Essential Skills Wales (ESW), however,

apprentices can be encouraged to complete ESW at a higher level if appropriate.

2. Prior experience

Applicants already working in the sector will be able to have their prior experience recognised by the Awarding Organisation and this will count towards the integrated units within the Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation and Benefits.

Information and Communications Technology (ICT)

Following consultation with employers it was decided that generic ICT Essential Skills were too broad to accommodate the requirements of the job roles. Employers will train apprentices to use specialist and in-house software systems.

Level 3

Title for this framework at level 3

Local Taxation and Benefits

Pathways for this framework at level 3

Pathway 1: Local Taxation and Benefits

Level 3, Pathway 1: Local Taxation and Benefits

Description of this pathway

57 credits

Entry requirements for this pathway in addition to the framework entry requirements

There are no additional requirements other than the general entry conditions.

| Job title(s) | Job role(s) |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Local Government Revenues Officer | Duties will include: calculating rents, council tax and business rates; sending bills and issuing reminders; collecting and processing payments; dealing with enquiries face-to-face, by letter or by phone; recovering arrears of rent or council tax. |
| Local Government Benefits Officer | Duties will include: assessing whether people are entitled to housing and council tax benefits; communicating with other government agencies; dealing with enquiries face-to-face, by letter or by phone; recovering overpayments of benefit. |
| Local Government Revenue and Benefits Officer | Duties will include a combination of the above including dealing with enquiries face-to-face, by letter or by phone, recovering arrears or overpayments. |

Qualifications

Competence qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

Knowledge qualifications available to this pathway

N/A

Combined qualifications available to this pathway

| B1 - Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation and Benefits | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|--|
| No. | Ref no. | Awarding organisation | Credit value | Guided learning hours | UCAS points value | Total qualification time | |
| B1a | 600/1738/7 | IRRV | 45 | 224 | | | |

Relationship between competence and knowledge qualifications

If an apprentice follows the Revenues route within the main qualification, they will achieve a total of 21 knowledge credits and 24 competency credits. The following knowledge units will be mandatory:

- Understand the law relating to local taxation, valuation and billing (6 credits)
- Understand the law relating to local taxation, enforcement and recovery (4 credits)
- Understand the general principles of housing and council tax benefit (5 credits)
- Understand the administration of Local Taxation and Benefit Services or Understand the law and principles of detecting fraud (both 6 credits)

If an apprentice follows the Benefits route within the main qualification, they will achieve a total of 21 knowledge credits and 24 competency credits. The following knowledge units will be mandatory:

- Understand the law relating to routine Housing and Council Tax Benefit cases (6 credits)
- Understand the law relating to non-routine Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit cases (4 credits)
- Understand the general principles of Local Taxation (5 credits)
- Understand the administration of Local Taxation and Benefit Services or Understand the law and principles of detecting fraud (both 6 credits)

If an apprentice follows the Generic route within the main qualification, they will achieve a total of 18 knowledge credits and 27 competency credits. The following knowledge units will be mandatory:

- Understand the law relating to local taxation, valuation and billing (6 credits)
- Understand the law relating to routine Housing and Council Tax Benefit cases (6 credits)
- Understand the administration of Local Taxation and Benefit Services or Understand the law and principles of detecting fraud (both 6 credits)

Transferable skills (Wales)

Essential skills (Wales)

| Subject | Minimum Level |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Communication | N/A |
| Application of numbers | N/A |
| ICT/Digital literacy | N/A |

For a full list of available proxies for starts on or after 14th October 2016 please see section 35 of the current [SASW](#).

Progression routes into and from this pathway

Progression into this Level 3 Apprenticeship

Applicants will come from a variety of routes which may include any of the following:

- Previous experience in a customer/business admin orientated environment
- Level 2 Foundation Apprenticeship in Customer Services, Business Administration or Housing
- GCSE/AS or A Levels
- Welsh Baccalaurate in Public Services
- Work experience, paid or unpaid

Progression from this apprenticeship

- Level 5 IRRV Diploma in Revenues, Benefits and Valuation
- Professional progression through membership of the IRRV
- Promotion to senior roles such as team leader, first line manager and investigative benefit fraud
- Progression to HND and Foundation degrees in Local Government administration.

For more information on foundation degrees please visit:

<http://fd.ucas.com/CourseSearch/.aspx>

For more information about the professional organisation, IRRV, please visit:

<http://www.irrv.net/HOME/>

UCAS points for this pathway:

(No requirement specified)

Employee rights and responsibilities

All Apprentices MUST receive an induction to the workplace and to the Apprenticeship programme.

ERR will be delivered through a workbook which will ensure that the Apprentice knows and understands each of the nine national outcomes for ERR as follows:

1. the range of employer and employee statutory rights and responsibilities under employment law and that employment rights can be affected by other legislation as well. This should cover the apprentice's rights and responsibilities under the Disability Discrimination Act, other relevant equalities legislation and health and safety, together with the duties of employers.
2. procedures and documentation which recognises and protects their relationship with their employer, including health and safety and equality and diversity training as part of the apprenticeship.
3. the range of sources and information and advice available to them on their employment rights and responsibilities, including Access to Work and Additional Learning Support
4. the role played by their occupation in their organisation and industry.
5. has an informed view of the types of career pathways that are open to them.
6. the types of representative bodies and understands their relevance to their industry and organisation and the main roles and responsibilities.
7. where and how to get information and advice on their industry, occupation, training and career.
8. can describe and work within their organisation's principles and codes of practice.
9. can recognise and form a view on issues of public concern that affect their organisation and industry.

RECOGNITION OF ERR:

Asset Skills has developed an ERR workbook which meets the above nine requirements. This workbook is mandatory and it is intended to be completed during induction. The workbook must be assessed and must be signed off by the apprentice, the training provider and the employer. The workbook must be retained in the apprentice's portfolio for quality assurance purposes. The sign off sheet, back page of the workbook, must be submitted to the certification authority in order to obtain the final apprenticeship certificate.

The workbook can be downloaded at:

<http://www.assetskills.org/Wales/SectorPriorityFund/LocalTaxationandBenefitsWales.aspx>

Additional employer requirements

(No requirement specified)

The remaining sections apply to all levels and pathways within this framework.

How equality and diversity will be met

Within the sector there are three levels of staff which are Administration , Team leaders and Managers. In terms of age profile young people , aged 18-25, represent 18% of the workforce and are concentrated in the administration category. Female staff constitute 60% of the workforce in administration , but this reduces to 30% in the team leader section and 10% in the managerial section. These figures would indicate that insufficient women are progressing to the higher levels.

20% of the workforce is from an ethnic background made up as follows:

Black/Caribbean (10%)

Asian (5%)

Chinese (3%)

Other (2%)

1% of the sector is disabled which is below the UK average . These figures have been sourced from the IRRV and reflect membership figures.

These figures would indicate that insufficient women are entering the higher levels of the sector and that disabled people are under-represented.

The sector is taking the following steps to rectify the gender imbalance and to recruit disabled staff:

- Raising awareness in schools about local taxation and benefits as a career through job profiles cards and career progression pathway information
- Use of non stereotypical images on the careers website and materials
- Case studies for the sector which present under-represented groups as an important part of the local taxation and benefits workforce

Employers and the professional organisation IRRV will encourage apprentices to progress onto FE or through the professional route. To promote more diversity amongst the workforce, to tackle worklessness and to raise social mobility the sector intends to recruit apprentices from amongst its local communities.

Training providers and employers MUST comply with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that applicants are not discriminated against in terms of entry to and promotion within, the Industry, using the 9 protected characteristics of :

1. Age

2. Disability
3. Gender
4. Gender reassignment
5. Marriage and civil partnerships
6. Pregnancy and maternity
7. Race
8. Religion and Belief
9. Sexual orientation

Asset Skills will monitor take up and achievement of all Apprenticeships through its Housing Employer Group and continue to take steps to address any barriers to take up and achievement as part of our Sector Qualifications Strategy.

On and off the job training (Wales)

Summary of on- and off-the-job training

Job roles within Local taxation and Benefits require a through level of technical competency and knowledge, which will be undertaken through work-based training practice and experience.

The total number of hours for this apprenticeship is: 346

This figure includes training time for the integrated qualification, Essential Skills Wales , ERR induction and hours for mentoring/progress reviews. It is envisaged that the framework will take 12 months to complete.

In Wales there is an additional facility to recognise prior achievement of both knowledge and skills. The balance of recognition will be based on the training providers initial assessment. Training hours delivered under an apprenticeship agreement may vary depending on the previous experience and attainment of the apprentice. The amount of off and on-the-job training required to complete the apprenticeship under the apprenticeship agreement may then be reduced accordingly, provided the total number of hours for this framework can be verified for apprenticeship certification. (see below for more details). The time limit for previous attainment has been set at three years prior to applying for apprenticeship certification.

Off-the-job training

Off-the-job training is defined as time for learning activities away from normal work duties.

Off-the-job training may include any activity where an apprentice receives any form of instruction, tuition, assessment or progress reviews. For illustration (but not exclusively) private study, coaching, mentoring, e-learning, distance learning or classroom training may count as off-the-job training, provided it is carried out during paid work time.

For this framework the amount of off-the-job training is 176 which includes training for the knowledge QCF units and Essential Skills Wales. Depending on the delivery model of the training provider it can also include the Wider Key Skill - Improving Own Learning and Performance and ERR induction and training.

How this requirement will be met

Off-the-job training needs to:

- be planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and tutor, mentor or manager
- allow access as and when required by and apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager
- be delivered during contracted working hours
- be delivered through one or more of the following methods listed above

Off-the-job training must be formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records.

Evidence for off-the-job training will include:

- Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation and Benefits certificate
- Essential Skills Wales certificates
- ERR Workbook sign off sheet
- Improving Own Learning and Performance certificate

Previous attainment

Where a learner enters an apprenticeship agreement having previously attained parts or all of the relevant qualifications, this prior learning needs to be recognised using either QCF credit transfer for achievements within the QCF; or through recording or exemptions for certificated learning outside of the QCF, for example Principal Learning qualifications. For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within three years of applying for the Apprenticeship Certificate.

Previous experience

Where a learner enters an apprenticeship agreement with previous work-related experience, this prior learning needs to be recognized (see QCF Guidance on Claiming credit for further details). To count towards apprenticeship certification, previous experience must be recorded using the appropriate Awarding Organisation's "QCF recognition of Prior Learning" procedures and the hours recorded may then count towards the off-the-job hours required to complete the apprenticeship.

On-the-job training

On-the-job training is defined as skills, knowledge and competence gained within normal work duties. Depending on the training providers delivery model it could include Essential Skills Wales, the Wider Key Skill of Improving Own Learning and Performance and ERR induction and training.

For this framework the amount of on-the-job training is 170

Examples of on-the job training could include:

- coaching and mentoring
- job shadowing
- company updates on policy and procedures, including induction
- instructions, briefings and guidance given whilst on-the-job
- workplace observations

How this requirement will be met

On-the-job training needs to be:

- planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and tutor, mentor or manager
- Allow access as and when required by and apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager
- delivered during contracted working hours
- formally recorded, either in a diary, workbook, portfolio, or be verified by attendance records.

Evidence for on-the-job training will include:

- Level 3 Diploma in Local Taxation and Benefits certificate
- ERR workbook sign off sheet
- Essential Skills Wales certificates
- Improving Own Learning and Performance certificate

Previous attainment and experience

Where a learner enters an apprenticeship agreement having previously attained or acquired the appropriate competencies this prior learning needs to be recognised and documented using the relevant QCF credit transfer, QCF exemption or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedures (same as off-the-job above). The amount of on-the-job training required to complete the apprenticeship under the apprenticeship agreement may then be reduced

accordingly, provided the number of on-the-job hours for this framework can be verified for apprenticeship certification.

Apprentices who commence training under a new apprenticeship agreement with a new employer may bring a range of prior experience with them. When an apprentice can claim a substantial proportion of hours towards the on-the-job framework total through prior learning acquired from previous employment or other vocational programmes, then the apprentice's learning programme should include 'customisation.' Training providers are encouraged to identify additional on-the-job training programmes that customise the learning to the new workplace. Customisation programmes may include selecting appropriate units from QCF qualifications, or relevant units recognised as Quality Assured Lifelong Learning (QALL) through a CQFW recognised body, or follow Essential Skills at a level higher than that specified in the framework and other competency-based qualifications/units relevant to the workplace.

The training provider must have transparent APL procedures in place to evidence the level of APL recognition.

For apprentices who have already achieved the relevant qualifications, they must have been certificated within three years from the date of application for the Foundation and Apprenticeship Certificate or have been continuously employed in the industry for eighteen months.

Essential employability skills (Wales)

Essential employability skills

(No requirement specified)

apprenticeship
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For more information visit
www.afo.sscalliance.org