

**THE NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP
SERVICE**

FEBRUARY MARKETING CAMPAIGN

GUIDE TO BROKERS

Version 2 (January 2009)

CONTENTS PAGE

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) Field Force
4. Apprenticeships Vacancy Matching Service (AVMS)
5. The Employer Journey
6. Data
7. Marketing/Communications
 - Handling campaign/Other leads
8. Review Arrangements
9. CPD
10. Appendices
 - Appendix 1 – Apprenticeship Fact Sheet/Provider Prospectus
 - Appendix 2 - Employer Service Manager lead areas
 - Appendix 3 – Useful websites

1. Introduction

This document aims:

- To clarify the required referral channels for employers;
- To clarify the required communication channels between NAS and Business Link.
- Help Brokers promote the NAS and apprenticeships more confidently.
- Once you have read this pack you should be able to:
 - Understand what NAS is, how it operates and provide a broad awareness of features/benefits and funding/eligibility guidelines.
 - Understand the referral protocols and therefore be able to ensure employer needs are met appropriately.

This document is not intended:

- To act as a marketing tool for visits to employers.
- To provide Brokers with a detailed guide to NAS, funding and provider infrastructure.

After reading through the protocols, you may find that you have some outstanding questions. In this case, you should contact your local Employer Services Manager. (contact details attached at Appendix 2).

2. Background

In February 2008 World Class Apprenticeships set out the government's ambitions for Apprenticeships and outlined plans for a new delivery system to boost the number of Apprenticeships in England to achieve the challenging targets identified in Leitch. 400,000 Apprentices in learning are required by 2020.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) will provide an end to end service for Apprenticeships that will include a Vacancy Matching Service (VMS) for employers and a NAS field force that will take employers from initial Apprenticeship interest, through recruitment to completion and then to progression. The Service will be launched nationally in April 2009.

An Apprenticeships vacancy matching service (AVMS) has been introduced to assist Providers/Employers in filling new vacancies.

3. NAS Field Force (Employer Services Team)

The role of the Employer Services team is to ensure that where an employer has expressed an interest in starting an Apprentice that they are able to do so within a timely and smooth process. It is a service providing end to end support to employers - engaging with them to identify and address barriers (sometimes perceived) and to identify training providers.

The end aim is to:

- increase the awareness of the benefits of Apprenticeships and therefore improve their overall profile and,
- increase the number of Apprenticeships nationally.

Current national policy proposes the following market segmentation from 1 April 2009:

Employer size	Engagement type
5000 plus employees	National Employer Service
250 - 4999 employees	National Apprenticeship Service
249 or less employees	Skills Brokerage

Any variations within these guidelines, specifically for SMEs, will be agreed within the region.

4. Apprenticeships Vacancy Matching Service(AVMS)

The web-based apprenticeship vacancy matching service offers:

- Quality assured Apprenticeship recruitment process at no cost to the employer
- National profile of Apprenticeship opportunities
- Access to 'My Apprenticeship Space' where links and relevant information can be saved in one area for ease of access
- Allow links to employers' own recruitment websites
- Candidate application details can be exported to enable sifting and integration with existing HR systems.

5. The Employer Journey

Employer finds out about Apprenticeships through the marketing campaign and requests further information either via the www.apprenticeships.org.uk website or the national enquiry number.

Enquiries are allocated through Broadsystem to the appropriate region based on postcode and will be picked up, as leads, by a member of the Employer Services Team in the local area.

The leads will be allocated by email (to be confirmed) to Brokers via Employer Service Managers within 48 hours according to location and within the agreed market segmentation.

In essence the vast majority of SME leads will be forwarded by the employer services team to Brokers, via the Business Link Enquiry Teams, on the day of receipt

(There will be occasions when a joint visit from NAS/Skills Broker will be appropriate, e.g. where there is the potential for Train to Gain/L&M activity as well as possible Apprenticeships.)

LSC/Business Link agreement is that Leads referred to the Skills Brokerage Team will be contacted within 2 working days of the referral.

Actions/Feedback from referral will be provided to the referring Employer Services Manager within 5 working days of the intervention by the Brokerage Service.

As an interim arrangement this will be by Email and would cover, as a minimum:

- Company Name
- Contact name
- No. employees
- Sector
- Date of initial contact by Broker
- Note of initial conversation
- Date of first meeting with Company
- Note of outcome of meeting
- Next steps (including opportunities for Apprenticeships and Train to Gain activity)

In the longer term E-Partner Access will be provided to Employer Services Manager in order that they can track progress directly

To note

Other leads will be generated from different sources and it is planned to use these guidelines for each of these. e.g:

- Other website(s)
- marketing literature or campaign
- referrals from providers / other partners-agencies

6. Data

Both organisations have stand alone contact management systems and we will work together regionally and sub regionally to determine how each system might support each others activity/tracking.

7. Marketing/Communications

A national marketing campaign fronted by Sir Alan Sugar will take place in February 2009 to link with national Apprenticeship Week (23 – 27 February 2009). We anticipate 500 enquiries will be generated regionally from the

campaign with the vast majority of these being directed to the Skills Brokers (through either the Northern or Southern Zone Enquiry Teams dependent upon Employer location), over a 6-10 week period.

8. Review Arrangements

A steering group has been established to review progress; for BL the representatives will be:

Ian Exworthy, Rhona Hope, Paul Gaunt, Leanne Lidstone

For the LSC the representatives will be:

Mark Howard, Gina Dickenson, Lucy Richards, George Elliot

The group will meet on a monthly basis.

To support the steering group it is anticipated that Employer Services Managers will attend Broker Team meetings to give regular updates on local progress and consider opportunities for joint working.

9. CPD

Enquiry Teams

Work has taken place with Business Link enquiries teams to provide information on the new system and this will be on-going as details of proposed pilots/trials/redundancy support become available.

Skills Brokers

Information will continue to be shared with Skills Broker colleagues through on-going attendance at local team meetings; this information together with updates/changes is also available on the Skills Broker website

Other Brokers

Plans will be developed to support other generalist Brokers after the campaign.

10. Further Information

Appendix 1 – Key facts Sheet/Apprenticeship Prospectus(by sub region)

Appendix 2 – List of ESMs and contact details

Appendix 3 – List of useful websites

A list of Frequently Asked Questions will be made available shortly on the apprenticeship website at www.apprenticeships.org For more detailed information please access the Broker website or contact your local Employer Services Manager.