

# APPRENTICESHIP CERTIFICATION

## Apprentice Declaration & Authorisation Form V2

Apprenticeship Certificates  
England

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk/certificates](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/certificates)

## GUIDANCE NOTES FOR COMPLETION OF FORM

### BACKGROUND

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 requires that apprentices must apply for their Apprenticeship completion certificate. However, in most cases, the application is carried out by a third party, at the specific request of the apprentice. The Universal Apprentice Declaration and Authorisation form must be completed and signed by both the apprentice and the third party facilitating the application, **BEFORE** the form is uploaded to the Apprenticeship Certificates England (ACE) system.

The apprentice must complete the form themselves but this should be done with the necessary support and guidance to ensure that they fully acknowledge and understand what they are declaring on the form and for what they are signing.

### APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT:

The requirement for an Apprenticeship Agreement between an employer and an apprentice, under the ASCL Act 2009 sections 32-36, came into force on the 6 April 2012. For all Apprenticeships commencing on or after 6th April 2012 the requirement to be employed under an Apprenticeship Agreement is a condition for completion of an Apprenticeship. Without it an Apprenticeship certificate cannot be issued.

As the Apprenticeship Agreement is an **employment contract**, it is made between the employer and the apprentice. The 2012/13 Funding Rules make it clear that an Apprenticeship Agreement must be in place and that providers have a responsibility to inform the apprentice's employer that such an agreement needs to be in place for the duration of the Apprenticeship. Apprenticeship Agreements must include a statement of the skill, trade or occupation for which the apprentice is being trained under the qualifying Apprenticeship framework.

However, it is **NOT** necessary for providers to acquire a copy of Apprenticeship Agreements or to upload a copy of the agreement to ACE. The only requirement is that the apprentice ticks to acknowledge the fact that, where applicable, an Apprenticeship Agreement was in place **OR** Alternative Completion Conditions apply.

The only circumstances where an Apprenticeship can be completed without an Apprenticeship Agreement being in place are covered by the specific occupations in a limited number of frameworks covered by the ***alternative completion conditions***. Apprentice redundancy is also covered under the alternative completion conditions.

**Alternative Completion Conditions** - There are a limited number of skills, trades and occupations that will be exempt through *alternative completion conditions*. Those that have been identified as exempt i.e. employment through receipt of a wage is not the norm within the sector are: -

- Sports designated as Olympic/Paralympic and Commonwealth Games (see Annex 2 SFA Funding Rules for the designated sports)
- Sea Fishing
- Occupations within the Creative Sector (see Annex 2 SFA Funding Rules for specific job roles)

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

- **Competency/Knowledge**  
The Apprenticeship framework document will specify which specific competency and knowledge qualifications are required (or combined qualification) to be undertaken and evidence of their achievement must be uploaded to ACE at the point of making an Apprenticeship completion certificate claim.
- **Transferable Skills**  
Many different industry sectors share the same skill sets. These core skills are transferable across sectors and are built into Apprenticeship frameworks to maximise flexibility and choice for employers and apprentices. They include:
  - Communication (English) (mandatory)
  - Application of numbers (Maths) (mandatory)
  - ICT – only where specified within a framework document

The Apprenticeship framework document will specify which skills, and at what level, an apprentice must achieve, or have achieved in order meet the requirements of the framework. For SASE frameworks achievements in Functional Skills, Key Skills (till Sept 2013) and some GCSE/A & AS Level equivalents are all acceptable. However please note that there are grading and time limit conditions attached to some of the alternative qualifications. The time limits are to be calculated according to the start date of the Apprenticeship i.e. the alternative qualification must have been achieved within 5 years of the start of the Apprenticeship (not the date of completion). When calculating qualifying dates, summer exams are valid to 31<sup>st</sup> August of the same year and winter exams are valid to 31<sup>st</sup> March of the following year.

There are no proxies for Functional Skills. For further information on acceptable alternatives to Functional Skills please visit The Alliance website <http://www.sscalliance.org>.

Please note that the final date for completion and certification of Key Skills is the **30 September 2013**, however, providers must check the final date for assessments with the Awarding Organisation as this date may be earlier depending on the specific qualification.

For legacy Blueprint frameworks the transferable skill requirements are Key Skills but there is a list of qualifications that can be used as proxies. For further information on Key Skill proxies please visit The

Alliance website – <http://www.sscalliance.org>. The Relaxation Rule for Key Skills means that exemptions claimed by proxy qualifications must be made no longer than **five years** from the date of award to the date of claim for certification of the Key Skill.

- **Employee Rights and Responsibilities - ERR (There are 9 national outcomes for SASE frameworks, Blueprint framework requirements are slightly different – please check specific framework requirements).**

Each Apprenticeship framework document will specify how the outcomes for Employee Rights and Responsibilities (ERR) are to be achieved and evidenced.

- Where ERR is clearly embedded within either the competency or knowledge qualifications being undertaken then the submission of the certificate for their achievement is sufficient evidence for ERR attainment and separate ERR evidence is **not** required to be uploaded to ACE.
- If ERR is achieved by a standalone, accredited ERR qualification then a copy of the achievement certificate must be presented as evidence and uploaded to ACE.
- If ERR is achieved, or supported, by completion of an ERR workbook then the achievement/declaration form within the workbook must be presented as evidence and uploaded to ACE.

**NB: The ERR declaration forms may vary in format between the different Certification Bodies.**

- **Personal Learning and Thinking Skills - PLTS (Only required for SASE frameworks. There are 6 PLTS outcomes).**

Each Apprenticeship framework document will specify how the outcomes for Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) are to be achieved and evidenced.

- Where PLTS is clearly embedded within either the competency or knowledge qualifications being undertaken then the submission of the certificate for their achievement is sufficient evidence for PLTS attainment and separate PLTS evidence is **not** required to be uploaded to ACE.
- If PLTS is achieved by a standalone, accredited PLTS qualification then a copy of the achievement certificate must be presented as evidence and uploaded to ACE.
- If PLTS is achieved, or supported, by completion of a PLTS workbook/mapping document then the achievement/declaration form within the workbook must be presented as evidence and uploaded to ACE.

**NB: The PLTS declaration forms may vary in format between the different Certification Bodies.**

### ***GUIDED LEARNING HOURS (GLH):***

Each Apprenticeship framework document will specify the recommended minimum number of Guided Learning Hours (GLH) that an apprentice must receive to complete the framework. On the declaration form the apprentice is required to indicate that they are satisfied that they have received at least the minimum levels of GLH for their framework. There is **NO** requirement to upload any further evidence to ACE e.g. a separate signed GLH declaration form.

**NB: for all Apprenticeship starts on, or after, 1/8/12 there is a 12 month minimum duration for all 16-18 year olds (NB: this can also include some 15 year olds where their birth date enables them to leave school prior to becoming 16) and 6mths for 19+ where there is clear evidence of relevant and recognised prior learning – this must be evidenced as part of the completion certificate claim. ACE will check the Apprenticeship duration and any that do not meet the new requirements will not be processed.**

### ***APPRENTICE SIGNATURE & DATE:***

Having completed the declaration on page 1 of the form, the apprentice must sign and date on page 2 and confirm that they wish to apply for their Apprenticeship Completion Certificate themselves **OR**, most commonly, that they authorise a third party to apply for the certificate on their behalf. **This is usually the training provider.**

- **Name & signature:**

The apprentice name must be in block capitals and include both the full first name and surname. The name entered on the form should exactly match the details that are uploaded to ACE. The name details on ACE are the ones which will appear on the Apprenticeship Certificate so please ensure that it is input to ACE correctly with no spelling mistakes and in the correct format (i.e. leading capitals).

The apprentice must sign the form themselves. Some electronic signatures can currently be accepted and we have future plans to extend this and also to include digital signatures. Please contact the ACE Support Team for advice on what is currently acceptable. [ace@sscalliance.org](mailto:ace@sscalliance.org) or 0844 573 2560.

- **Date:**

The Apprentice should sign and date the declaration form at the point where they are informed by their assessor/tutor that they have successfully completed all components of their framework. It is accepted that this will be **before** final achievement certificates for all the required components have been received or additional internal or external verification/moderation has been completed. The Apprentice is signing that, **“to the best of their knowledge”** they have satisfactorily completed all the requirements of their framework. The Apprentice will usually sign this form at the last meeting between themselves and assessor/tutor. The Apprentice is the first to sign and **date** the form. Theirs should always be the first date on the form.

### **THIRD PARTY CLAIMANT SIGNATURE & DATE:**

Once authorised by the apprentice, the third party claimant should complete the form with the relevant details.

- **Name & signature:**
  - Claimant Name – in block capitals and separate first name and surname.
  - Claimant Signature - Some electronic signatures can currently be accepted and we have future plans to extend this and also to include digital signatures. Please contact the ACE Support Team for advice on what is currently acceptable - [ace@sscalliance.org](mailto:ace@sscalliance.org) or 0844 573 2560.
  - Organisation Name
  - Claimant Type

- **Date:**

The third party claimant (usually the provider) **can't** make a completion certificate claim until they have all the acceptable evidence collated and ready to upload to ACE as the evidence part of the claim. Once this is available the claim can be submitted using ACE. At this point, the third party signs the declaration form and makes the certificate claim using ACE. The third party date on the form needs to be either **on or after the date the apprentice signed the form**. It doesn't matter if there is a gap between the date the apprentice signs and the date the third party signs the form. As long as the dates are sequential - with the provider one being the latter (or the same as apprentice one) then this is acceptable. We appreciate that there will be time gap between dates of signatures, whilst providers collect the required achievement evidence for each apprentice.

The evidence does not necessarily have to be actual completion certificates but it must be a robust form of evidence that is currently accepted by Certification Bodies. Please contact the ACE Support Team for advice on what types of evidence are currently acceptable – [ace@sscalliance.org](mailto:ace@sscalliance.org) or 0844 573 2560.

### **COMPLETION DATE FOR ACE:**

At the point of making a claim for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate you are required to enter a Completion Date within ACE. You should enter the last date of signing on the Apprentice Declaration and Authorisation Form. If the apprentice and third party claimant sign on the same date then use this date. If the third party claimant date is the latter then this is the one that should be entered to ACE. ). However, SFA and NAS have also confirmed that the ACE "Completion Date" can also be **after the last date of signing on the declaration form**.

The completion date in ACE is not directly related to any SFA funding timescales that you must adhere to. However, from the date of applying for an Apprenticeship Completion Certificate you have 3 months to produce the final certificate in order to qualify for the final SFA funding element.

The completion date that will appear on the apprentice's completion certificate will be the date that the completion certificate is **printed** by the Certification Body and not the completion date referred to above.

**NEXT STEPS .....**

Once the Apprentice Declaration & Authorisation form is fully completed, a copy **must** be uploaded to the appropriate field on the Evidence Tab within the apprentice's ACE record.

**If you have any additional questions regarding the use of this form then please contact the ACE support Team:**

**[ace@sscalliance.org](mailto:ace@sscalliance.org)**

**or**

**0844 573 2560**