



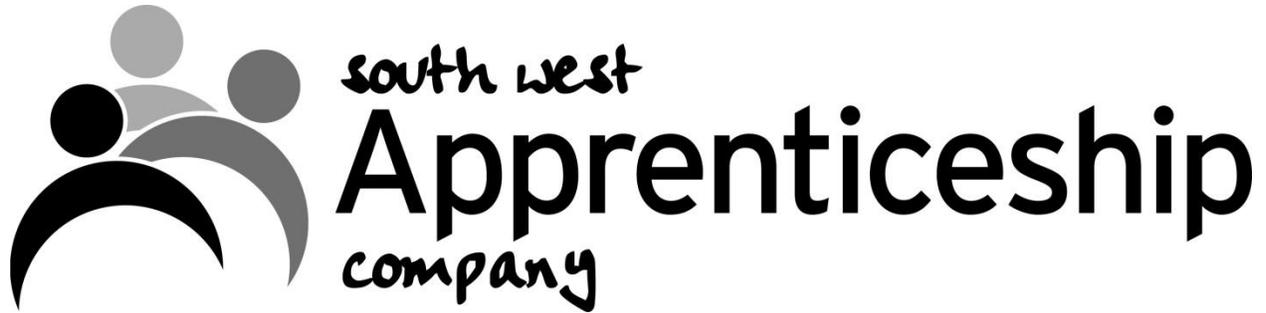
south west

Apprenticeship

company

APPRENTICE HANDBOOK

Apprentice Name:



SECTION ONE: ABOUT SWAC

Welcome to the South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd (SWAC).

As a SWAC apprentice you are about to enter your chosen career with a whole team of people to help and support you as you progress. A SWAC Apprenticeship is a perfect blend of work and study. It will give you new challenges and develop your confidence and abilities.

You will learn 'on the job' with your Host Organisation, building up practical knowledge and skills and at the same time you'll also be paid! What's more a SWAC Apprenticeship is safe and flexible. If things don't work out, we can arrange for you to move to a different Host Organisation so you stay on track - it's like an Apprenticeship 'safety net'

In this handbook you will find all the information you need to know about your SWAC Apprenticeship. We hope it will help you to make a success of your placement and clear up any things you might be confused about. We are here to fix any problems and your LAM (Learner Account Manager) will provide support to ensure your Apprenticeship runs smoothly. The contact details for your individual LAM are shown in this handbook on page 6.

Good Luck!



Who's who...?

SWAC

The South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd (SWAC) is your employer. Your wages will be paid directly by us and we are here to support you if you have any problems during your Apprenticeship.

We are also the link between you, your training provider and your Host Organisation.

The Host Organisation

All SWAC apprentices are placed with a Host Organisation. Your Host Organisation is there to provide you with all the necessary work experience you need to gain essential skills.

Your Host Organisation is responsible for your day to day management and you are expected to abide by their rules and regulations.

The Training Provider

All Apprenticeships are delivered by a Training Provider. SWAC will agree with the Host Organisation which Training Provider or College is the best option for your individual Apprenticeship.

Your Training Provider will deliver the training element of your Apprenticeship either at College or in your workplace.

The Learner Account Manager (LAM)

Every SWAC apprentice gets assigned a Learner Account Manager (LAM). The role of your LAM is to provide guidance and support to you before, during and at the end of your Apprenticeship.

Your LAM will be your main point of contact and the person you should go to if you have any problems with your Apprenticeship.



Responsibilities

My Responsibilities

As a SWAC Apprentice you are expected to:

- ✓ Fully commit to all aspects of your Apprenticeship
- ✓ Behave appropriately in the workplace and follow the SWAC standards set out in your apprentice contract and this handbook
- ✓ Follow instructions that are given to you by your Host Organisation
- ✓ Dress suitably and arrive on time
- ✓ Behave in a way that does not put yourself or anyone else in any danger
- ✓ Comply with any policies put in place by your Host Organisation
- ✓ Contact your LAM if you have any problems
- ✓ Stay enthusiastic and be prepared!



Your Host Organisation's Responsibilities

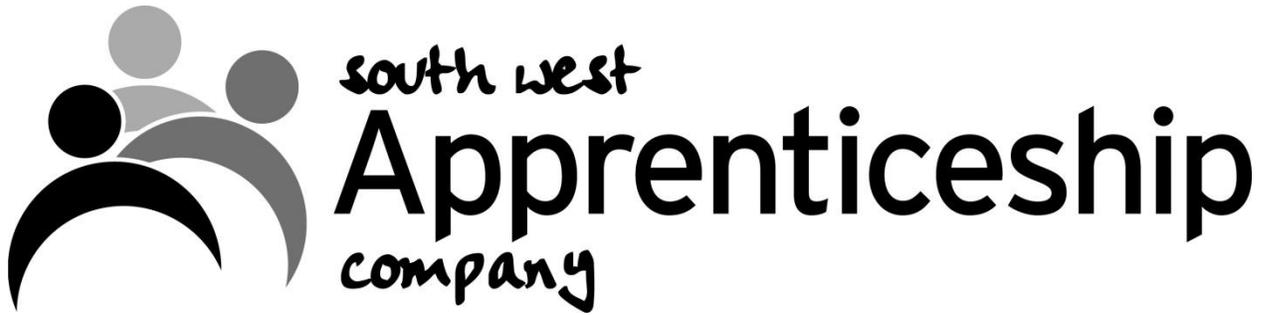
Your Host Organisation is responsible for your day to day management and the work based learning aspects of your course. They are expected to:

- ✓ Ensure the workplace is a safe environment for you to work in. For instance, explaining how to use equipment properly or making sure there are no unnecessary hazards
- ✓ Supervise you on a day to day basis, providing support to help you reach your individual objectives and achieve your qualification
- ✓ Allow you time off to attend College as required
- ✓ Provide any equipment you might need for protection within the workplace
- ✓ Offer support and encouragement!!

Your LAM's Responsibilities

Your LAM is there to support you throughout your Apprenticeship. They will:

- ✓ Hold regular sessions with you where they will offer you help, advice and monitor your individual progression
- ✓ Create an individual **Personal Development Plan** to help you achieve your objectives
- ✓ Ensure you are clear about your responsibilities as an apprentice
- ✓ Provide you with a full induction to the South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd and monitor Health and Safety within the Host Organisation



SECTION TWO: ABOUT YOUR APPRENTICESHIP

Your Apprenticeship

You have signed an Apprenticeship Agreement with the South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd which covers your period of employment until your Apprenticeship framework is completed. Although you are employed by SWAC, your main place of work will be:

Host Organisation:

Host Organisation Contact/Manager:

Host Organisation Address:

Host Organisation Telephone
Number:

Host Organisation Website:

Host Organisation Email Address:

Your first day of work will be:

You will be paid (per week):

You will receive your first wage on:

You may terminate your Apprenticeship Agreement with the South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd (SWAC) after the end of the suitability assessment by giving SWAC and the Host a minimum of 1 weeks' notice. Please note you are required to work your notice period unless otherwise agreed by SWAC. Likewise SWAC can terminate your Apprenticeship Agreement after your suitability period by providing you with a minimum of 1 weeks' notice. If you are employed for over 2 years you must give at least 2 weeks' notice. In cases of gross misconduct or gross negligence, the employment may be terminated without notice.

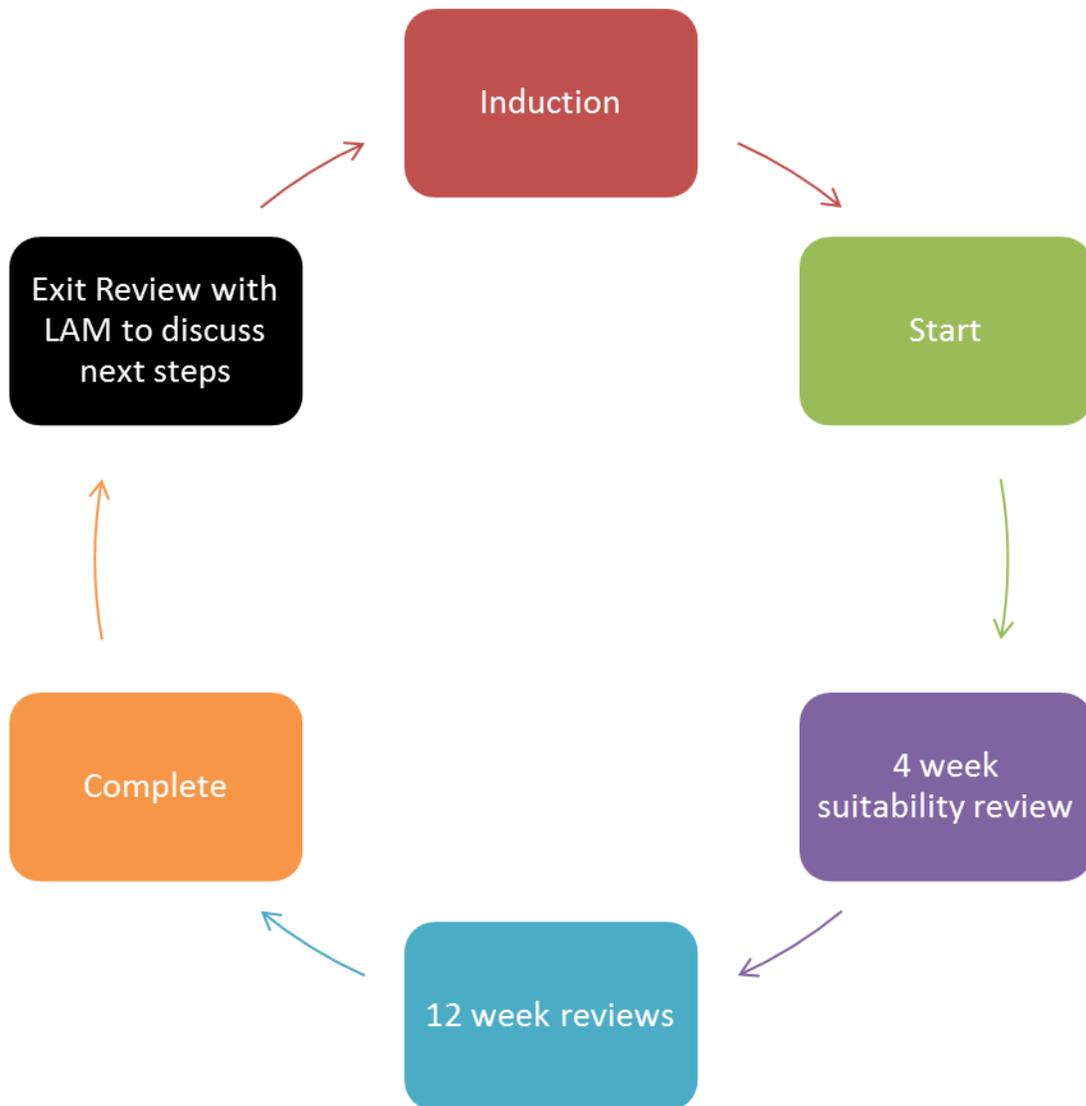
Your training will be delivered by:

Your Learner Account Manager is:

Your Learner Account Manager's
contact number is:

Your learner journey

At SWAC we are here to support you throughout your entire Apprenticeship. Your Apprenticeship journey looks like this:



SWAC's five top tips

1. You will be regularly visited by your LAM. Make sure you try and prepare for these meetings so you can tell them about the progress you have made or let them know of any problems you have.

2. Be honest about your strengths and weaknesses. By being open about where you need to improve, you are more likely to finish your Apprenticeship with a wider range of skills.

3. Make sure you are clear about what your Host Organisation expects and what your individual objectives are. Your LAM will help you create a set of individual objectives if required.

4. Speak up! If you do have any problems make sure you tell either your Host Organisation or your LAM - don't struggle in silence.

5. Don't get stressed! Lots of new apprentices find the experience a bit demanding, don't panic. It can help to write yourself a daily 'to do' list.



What to do if...

I am running late...

As an apprentice it is important that you try to arrive at work on time and ready to get started. Make sure you leave enough time to cover any unexpected delays. If you are going to be late, make sure you contact your Supervisor as soon as you can to let them know why and what time you expect to get there.

I am sick...

Every so often you might be unwell and not able to go to work that day. You must let your Host Organisation and Learner Account Manager know as soon as you can that you won't be at work that day. You may well be eligible for 'statutory sick pay' but you must let your Supervisor and LAM know.

If you think you will be away for a while you should contact your individual LAM and they will try and make sure it doesn't affect your Apprenticeship.

I need some extra help...

There are lots of different types of help and support available. If you are struggling with something, don't suffer in silence, contact your LAM or phone the SWAC office and we can help you access the support you need.

I want to make a complaint...

At SWAC we are here to make sure that you are safe and happy. If you do have a complaint you should contact your LAM and they will do their best to resolve it. If the complaint cannot be dealt with by your LAM it will be passed through the SWAC complaints procedure.

I want to go on holiday...

If your Host Organisation requires you to work Bank Holidays and you prefer not to, you will need to book the bank holiday as leave - this may not always be authorised.

If your Host Organisation does not operate on Bank Holidays, you will need to ensure you allocate a day of your holiday entitlement to each Bank Holiday to guarantee you are paid. Any holiday must be taken according to your Host Organisation's and SWAC's policy.

Before you take any holiday you must get permission from your Host Organisation Supervisor. If you aren't sure about what time off you are allowed ask either your Supervisor or your LAM.

What to do if...

I am unhappy at my Host Organisation...

If things aren't working out at your Host Organisation then the first thing to do is to try and think about why.

In this handbook there are some tips and advice about how to make the most of your Apprenticeship. However it is very important that if you are being bullied, harassed or discriminated against or being asked to work unsafely, you contact your LAM straight away. Your LAM and the rest of the team at SWAC are here to make sure that you are safe and happy in your placement.



I'm not sure whether I'm doing the right course...

SWAC and the Host Organisation will decide on the most suitable course for your placement. If you feel that your day to day work isn't reflected in your qualification you must let your LAM know straight away. Your LAM will help you to work out what you should be doing at work and with the training provider/college to make sure you are having the best experience possible.

If you have any questions or concerns you should contact your LAM.

SWAC contacts

The SWAC headquarters are based in Gloucestershire, the address is:

South West Apprenticeship Company Ltd

Gloucester Campus

Llanthony Road

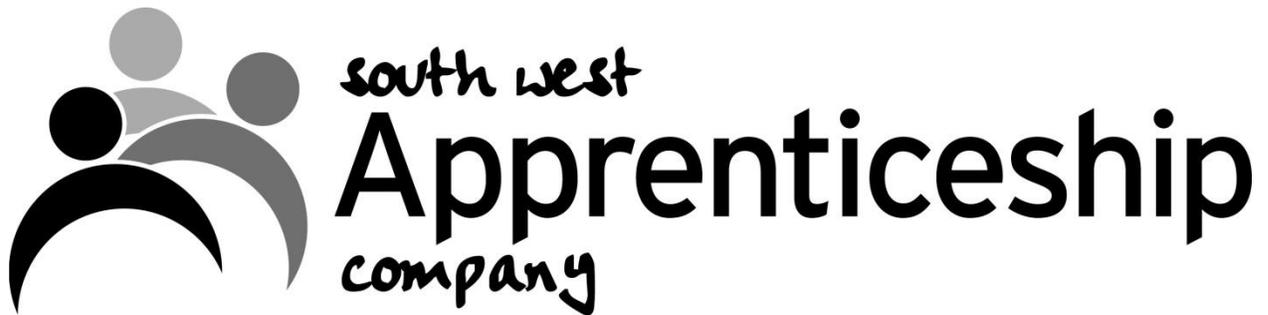
Gloucester

Gloucestershire

GL2 5JQ

Tel: 01452 733962

Website: www.theswac.org.uk



SECTION THREE: YOUR APPRENTICESHIP AGREEMENT EXPLAINED

Terms and conditions - your Apprenticeship Agreement explained...

Start Date

Your official start date as a SWAC apprentice will be DD/MM/YYYY. This is the first day you will work at your Host Organisation. Be aware that any work you do before this date won't count as part of your Apprenticeship and SWAC will not be responsible for paying you.

If you are unsure about when you are supposed to start working you should contact your LAM - their contact details are found on page 6 of this handbook.

Job Title

You are employed by SWAC, but must report to your Host Organisation Supervisor. You can also contact your LAM for any extra advice/support or guidance that your Host Supervisor cannot provide.

What am I expected to do?

Before you begin your apprenticeship, SWAC and the Host Organisation will agree a clear job description which fits with your Apprenticeship framework. You are expected to follow the policies and procedures of your Host Organisation (e.g. Health and Safety), and complete any tasks which fall within your role.

Be aware that your job role is flexible and at times your Host Organisation can ask you to do extra tasks which haven't been set out in

your job description. You should be prepared to do extra tasks but if you feel that your work is not reflecting your Apprenticeship framework then you should contact your LAM.

What if I don't feel ready to do a task?

If you feel uncomfortable with what you are being asked to do or if you feel you do not have enough experience then you should contact your LAM and explain the situation.

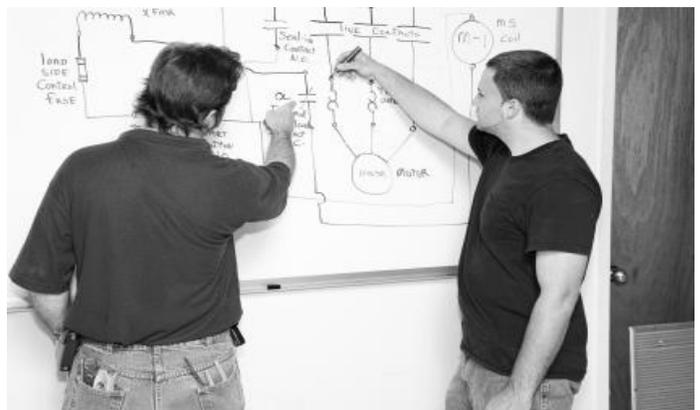
Suitability Period

Like any employee you are subject to a four week suitability assessment. This means that for the first 4 weeks of your apprenticeship you will be monitored by your supervisor/LAM to make sure you are suitable for the role. There will be a review at the end of this period which will involve both your Host Organisation and your LAM checking that your behaviour and work have been satisfactory.

Be aware - during your four week suitability assessment, both SWAC and your Host Organisation can end your apprenticeship agreement at any time.

Lateness

You are expected to be on time for work. If you are going to be late you must contact



your Host Organisation Supervisor as soon as you can. This should be no later than 30 minutes before you would usually start work. If you are late this must be recorded on your timesheet as it will mean that your salary is adjusted.

Salary

You will be paid every Friday directly into your chosen bank account. You are paid 1 week in arrears (this means that you will be paid two weeks after your start date and then every week after that).

Your salary has been decided by the Host Organisation and agreed by you, the apprentice. If applicable, SWAC will automatically take National Insurance and Tax contributions. Your salary is based on an hourly rate and will vary depending on how many hours you work each week. For example, if you work 39 hrs your salary will be your hourly rate x39.



Timesheets

It is very important that you submit a clear and accurate timesheet, signed by your Host to SWAC every Friday by 3pm. If you do not send us your timesheet, or it has not been completed properly you will not be paid on time.

Every week you must fill out an accurate timesheet, noting any time you are ill, late or have any other authorised absences. For a guide on how to fill in your timesheet see the example provided in this folder.

To make sure you are paid the correct amount and on time, follow the steps outlined below.

1. Fill in your timesheet accurately. Include any time spent off ill, on holiday or at College
2. REMEMBER - you are entitled to breaks/lunch during the course of the day but you are not usually paid for this time. So if you work 9-5 and have 1 hour for lunch your total hours will be 7
3. Ask your Host Organisation Supervisor to check and sign off your timesheet
4. Email the completed timesheet to the SWAC office:
 - Email: timesheets@theswac.org.uk
5. If you have unusual circumstances or, just need some advice about filling in your timesheet then you should contact your LAM who will make sure you are clear about what you need to do.

Holiday

All holiday must be authorised in advance by your Host Organisation supervisor and sent through to SWAC using your weekly timesheet. For an example of what you should put on your timesheet see the sample timesheet at the back of this handbook. If you are taking holiday for a week or more you must submit enough timesheets to cover the weeks when you will be away.

For example, on the final Friday before a two week break you will need to submit three authorised timesheets to the SWAC office (timesheets@theswac.org.uk).

Remember:

- ✓ Your holiday allowance will begin on the 1st January
- ✓ You won't be able to carry any untaken holiday into a new holiday year
- ✓ If you take more holiday than you have accrued before you leave - SWAC will adjust your final salary.
- ✓ Taking holiday without authorisation from your Host Organisation is not permitted and could lead to disciplinary action.



Training

All Apprenticeships will include a training element. Training can be delivered in several ways usually either as on the job training or through day release.

The training programme is a compulsory element of your agreement with SWAC and your progress will be monitored by both your LAM and your Host Organisation. If you are struggling to complete your training, or if your Host feels you aren't making enough progress, SWAC may be able to provide extra support.

Failure to complete the training programme could lead to the termination of your employment with SWAC.

As an apprentice you are entitled to support to help you complete your training:

- ✓ Time off to attend compulsory off the job training at a training providers premises
- ✓ 3 days study leave per academic year (September - July) to complete exams, assignments or portfolios if required
- ✓ Purchase of mandatory equipment (this is accessed through your LAM on the



production of a receipt and you will be required to pay the cost back directly through your salary each week)

Sickness

What to do if you are ill:

1. You must contact your Host Organisation and LAM as soon as possible. If you cannot ring them yourself you should ask a family member or friend to do so on your behalf. Text messages or email are unacceptable
2. ALL time off due to sickness or ill-health must be recorded on your weekly timesheet (see sample timesheet) as this will affect your weekly salary
3. You should inform your LAM if you think you might be off work for a significant length of time as this could affect your Apprenticeship. Your LAM will try and make sure that sickness or ill health doesn't impact on your training

If you follow the instructions above and make sure that your Supervisor is aware of your absence, you may be eligible for Statutory Sick Pay.

Statutory Sick Pay:

Statutory Sick Pay applies to any employee in the UK including apprentices if you are eligible. If you are ill for 4 or more days you may be entitled to Statutory Sick Pay and this can be paid for up to 28 weeks.

Failure to notify your Host Organisation and LAM of illness could affect your eligibility for Statutory Sick Pay

Behaviour in the workplace and terminating employment

Gross Misconduct:

You are expected to behave in an appropriate way in the workplace. Bad behaviour or 'Gross Misconduct' could result in dismissal. The following are examples of behaviours classed as Gross Misconduct; you could be dismissed without notice.

What is 'gross misconduct'?

Examples of gross misconduct include:

- ✗ Dishonesty
- ✗ Falsification of records (e.g. forging someone's signature)
- ✗ Violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour
- ✗ Sexual or racial harassment or bullying
- ✗ Deliberate damage to Host Organisation property
- ✗ Attending work under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- ✗ Rudeness to customers or clients
- ✗ Refusal to obey orders or deliberately disobeying your supervisor
- ✗ Negligence
- ✗ A serious breach of Health and Safety
- ✗ Any action likely to have a negative impact on either SWAC's or the Host Organisation's reputation
- ✗ Inappropriate use of Host Organisation facilities (e.g. email/internet)

Grievance:

What if my Host is being unfair?

If you feel that you are being treated unfairly or being discriminated against you could have grounds to raise a Grievance.

The first thing to do in this situation is to contact your LAM.

Disciplinary:

During your placement you are expected to behave appropriately in the workplace and follow any policies set by your Host Organisation. Failure to do this could be classed as Gross Misconduct and result in disciplinary action being taken by either SWAC or your Host Organisation.

How does a disciplinary work?

Disciplinary procedures have several stages:

1. Improvement note
2. Investigatory Meeting
3. First written warning
4. Final written warning
5. Dismissal

In the event of a disciplinary, your LAM will be there to support you and make sure that you understand the process.

For a more detailed overview of the disciplinary procedure, the disciplinary policy can be requested from your LAM.

Use this checklist to make sure you have read and understand the apprentice handbook:

Do you understand what SWAC do?

Have the responsibilities of each party (you, your Host and your LAM) been explained?

Are you clear about your Host Organisation?

Do you know who to report to on your first day?

Do you know what to do if you are ill?

Are you clear about how to book holiday?

Do you understand how to fill in a timesheet?

Have you been through the terms and conditions with your LAM?

Are you 100% clear about what to do next?