

Response ID ANON-2CJT-CQ97-Q

Submitted to **Institute for Apprenticeships Statement: Quality Apprenticeships**
Submitted on **2017-10-18 20:37:44**

Introduction

1 What is your name?

Name:

Elaine Whitby

2 What is your email address?

Email:

elaine.whitby@rcn.org.uk

3 If you are responding on behalf of an organisation please write its name here

Organisation:

Royal College of Nursing

4 Which of these terms best describes your organisation?

Trade or industry body

What is an apprenticeship?

8 Do you agree with this definition of an apprenticeship?

No

9 Do you agree that the needs of the employer and the apprentice are equally important?

Yes

High Quality Apprenticeships

10 Do you agree that an initial assessment of both the apprentice and the job role against the standard should be a requirement for all apprenticeships?

Yes

11 Do you agree that the Commitment Statement should contain a description of the prior learning and the job role in relation to the standard, together with a description of the training programme?

Yes

The Occupation and the Standard

12 Do you agree that apprenticeships should be based on occupations which are transferable in this way rather than on the narrower requirements of one employer?

Yes

13 Do you have any other suggestions as to how we could define an occupation for the purposes of apprenticeships?

If so please enter your suggestions here:

The Job

14 Are there any further ways in which we could ensure that job roles used for apprenticeships meet the statutory terms and conditions and the requirements of the standard in terms of content?

If so, please enter details here:

The Training Programme

15 Should the nomination of a workplace mentor or coach be required?

Yes

16 Do you think that we should ask employer groups to develop model content for off the job training for each standard?

Yes

End-Point Assessment and Certification

17 What more do you think that the Institute could do to ensure that assessment methods chosen are valid and delivered independently?

Please enter suggestions here:

18 Can you make any suggestions which could improve external quality assurance of end-point-assessment?

If so, please enter suggestions here:

Quality Indicators

19 Will you use the Quality Statement in your own organisation?

Not Answered

Quality Indicators (continued)

20 Do you think that apprenticeship take-up should broadly reflect the make up of the economy?

Yes

21 What would you see as priority skill needs in terms of occupations and levels?

Please enter suggestions here:

Quality Indicators (continued)

22 Do you think that the indicators above are the right ones?

Yes

23 Would you suggest any others?

If so please enter suggestions here:

You could consider some apprentice experience measures.

Quality Indicators (continued)

24 Do you agree that we should consider targets for these indicators after they have bedded down?

Yes

Improving awareness

25 Are there any other ways in which we could get feedback on the areas covered by this Quality Statement?

If so, please enter suggestions here:

Consulting apprentices

26 Would you like to suggest any other ways in which we could consult and involve apprentices?

If so, please enter suggestions here:

Involving apprentices in the development of quality measures to evaluate the apprentice experience of their programme, both from a workplace and training/education provider perspective.

Any further comments

27 Do you have any further comments about the Quality Statement or any of the issues raised?

If so, please comment here:

Broadly we consider the proposed definition of an apprenticeship to be useful and applicable. However, given the expansion of apprenticeships to Masters degree and beyond, we question whether sole use of the word 'training' in the definition is adequate? We recognise that learning and knowledge are referred to later in the quality statement and this is valued. We propose that it may be useful to add the term education to the definition. We acknowledge that the terms education and training are used interchangeably by some. However others differentiate between the two. Training has long been associated with the world of work and is very relevant for apprenticeships; however it may be perceived as relating to relatively routine or low level activities. Education is more commonly associated with higher level learning. Given the expansion of apprenticeships to include Masters and doctorate level study, we believe that adding the term education to the definition encompasses these higher level apprenticeships. We also think that this may assist public understanding of apprenticeships at an advanced skill, knowledge and academic level.

A significant concern in the current climate relates to the achievability for the NHS and wider health and care system to provide the motivating and supportive workplace with coaching and mentoring support for the apprentice. Further detail about preparation and support required for effective coaching and mentorship, capacity and quality assurance of this function should be considered. The RCN is happy to share a recent publication on mentorship <https://www.rcn.org.uk/professional-development/publications/pub-006133>

Lastly, as apprenticeships are employer-led, how can it be ensured that apprentices have the knowledge, skills and encouragement to think critically about their context and not just their practice when their employer is in full control of their learning? For advanced clinical decision making and for clinical leadership and management in public sector organisations subject to significant political influence, the ability to think critically is crucial for effectiveness. This may be a gap in the Quality Statement.