

Social work apprenticeship briefing: options for employing a Practice Educator

The following guidance is as a result of discussions with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) about the implications of engaging a Practice Educator as part of a Social Worker apprenticeship.

As part of the discussion with ESFA the following points were agreed:

- 1) The Practice Educator is delivering relevant training. In this context, relevant training is training that is required as part of the apprenticeship standard that the main provider will not be delivering themselves.
- 2) The Practice Educator would normally be employed by the employer of the apprentice (such as a local authority).
- 3) The key issue is that local authorities do not want, if at all possible, to have to apply to the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) but want to be funded for the Practice Educator input.
- 4) The ESFA position is that if apprenticeship funding is being accessed by a subcontractor to a main provider then this subcontractor would need to be on RoATP. The fact that a subcontractor is also the apprentice's employer is not relevant.
- 5) With regards to who is considered to be a subcontractor on the ROATP, the acid test is whether apprenticeship funding, for the delivery of apprenticeship training and/or on-programme assessment, is being accessed. If it is then the subcontractor must be on RoATP; if it is not then there is no such requirement.
- 6) Regardless of the subcontracting / RoATP position in point (5) above, all off-the-job training, including that delivered by a subcontractor for no fee, could be counted towards the 20% off-the-job (OTJ) training requirement, provided the activity meets the OTJ definition. This means it must be delivered to an individual who is on the apprenticeship programme; it delivers new knowledge, skills, behaviours; it is delivered in normal working hours; and it is not English/maths up to Level 2.
- 7) Some eligible costs sit outside of the subcontracting and RoATP requirements. For example, a third-party company (including an employer) can access apprenticeship funding if they are providing a non-delivery role/service e.g. materials, administration, placement hosting etc.

Given the above information, there are 3 likely options for the Practice Educator role. These are:

- 1) Where the employer's personnel (e.g. the practice educator) is delivering OTJ and this employer wants to access apprenticeship funding: in this case the employer must be on RoATP, no exceptions.
- 2) Where the employer's personnel (e.g. the practice educator) is delivering OTJ and employer does not want to access apprenticeship funding: in this case the employer does not need to be on RoATP.

If the PE role is being funded from elsewhere (and apprenticeship funding is not being used) then this sits outside of the ESFA remit and the apprenticeship funding rules regarding subcontracting.

- 3) Where the practice educator is delivering OTJ but is employed by, or is seconded to, the main provider. If the apprenticeship funding is staying with the main provider, and is not being passed to a delivery subcontractor, then there would be no requirement for the employer to be on RoATP, as technically this party is not delivering the training.

The ESFA's apprenticeship [subcontracting guidance](#) states that if an individual is seconded to a main provider who 'directs and manages the secondee in exactly the same way as they do their other tutors and assessors' the funding rules are met in terms of subcontracting not taking place.