



APPRENTICESHIP AND TRAINING POLICY

Digiquip Group Limited
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1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to set out the approach Digiquip Group Limited has adopted in relation to all forms of Apprenticeship and Employee Training in the workplace.

1.2 The policy also ensures that those involved in the recruitment, selection, mentoring and supervising of apprentices and trainees have clear guidance relating to their employment.

1.3 The policy will ensure consistency and parity in the engagement and deployment of all apprentices and trainees.

Philosophy

2.1 The Apprenticeship and Training Policy is designed to set out:

- The aspirations of Digiquip Group Limited.
- The different forms of Apprenticeships.
- The value of such placements to the workplace and workforce.
- The process for engaging Apprentices.
- Training available to all employees

The Apprenticeship and Training Policy

3.1 Digiquip Group Limited has made a commitment to having a diverse workforce offering opportunities to all. This extends to helping address issues relating to all forms of unemployment and improving the local skills base in Sussex. This commitment encompasses the workforce employed within Digiquip Group Limited's community.

3.2 A programme of placement opportunities within Digiquip Group Limited is fundamental to delivering a skilled and representative workforce. These placements include Apprenticeships and work experience placements.

3.3 In light of the introduction of the national Apprenticeship Levy, all training programmes should be Apprenticeships, wherever this is possible. This includes new hires and existing employees. This is to enable Digiquip Group Limited to obtain full value for money from its compulsory investment in the Levy.

3.4. All existing employees will be equally entitled to further training either on or off-site as required.

Apprenticeships

4.1 Apprenticeships are open to both new and existing employees.

4.2 An apprenticeship is a job with an accompanying skills development programme. Apprentices gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills they need for their immediate role and future career. The apprentice gains this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the-job training and the opportunity to practice new skills in a real work environment.

4.3 Apprentices cannot be employed solely to deliver an apprenticeship; there must be the prospect of genuine jobs available in the roles in which they are developing skills.

4.4 The main rules governing what an apprenticeship is includes:

- An apprenticeship must be employed in a real job; they may be an existing employee or new hire.
- The apprenticeship training must last at least 12 months.
- The apprentice must spend at least 20% of their time on off the job training.

4.5 Depending on the sector, job role, prior experience and qualifications, an Apprenticeship can take anything between one and five years to complete.

4.6 There are a range of occupations suitable for apprenticeships. Subject areas include:

- Business Administration
- IT
- Customer Services
- Sales and Marketing

4.7 The structure of the training programme and end point assessment will be determined by the selected apprenticeship standard or framework.

Value of Apprenticeships in the Workplace

5.1 Apprenticeships add real value to the workforce. Research has highlighted that:

- Apprenticeships help to deliver higher overall productivity.
- Apprenticeships help to reduce staff turnover.
- Employers believe apprenticeship programmes provide the skilled workers that they need for the future.
- Apprenticeships help to support a more motivated and satisfied workforce.

Recruitment of New Hire Apprentices

5.2 Employers must follow normal procedures for seeking approval to proceed with creating and recruiting to an Apprentice role. A job description and person specification must be prepared for any role.

5.3 Support from the Employer will include conducting follow up exercises with the approved training providers to check training is commencing at a determined timeframe, recording apprenticeship starts with; monitoring progress and scheduling end point assessments.

Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 Once an Apprentice has been appointed, the role of the Employer extends to:

- Ensuring an accurate Apprenticeship Agreement is provided to the apprentice and that all pre-employment checks are undertaken.
- Planning and organising a thorough Induction Programme.
- Planning and facilitating on-the-job training
- Ensuring the work load enables apprentices to gather evidence of demonstrating skills required and/or provide opportunities to practice under supervised conditions.
- Agreeing suitable times in which the Apprentices' Assessor can visit the work place to carry out assessments in line with the standards of the Apprenticeship.
- Approving paid time off for the individual to attend taught sessions and examinations delivered by the approved training provider, where necessary.

- Supporting the end point assessment. This may include sitting on an assessment panel, evaluating written assignments or projects or arranging for an independent colleague to take on the role.
- Supporting the Apprentice with finding progression opportunities towards the end of the programme. This may include agreeing paid time off to attend interviews.

6.2 It is important that Managers recognise that Apprentices are learners and are employed to learn a role, study for qualifications, and gain valuable work experience.

6.3 Managers must provide an appropriate work programme for Apprentices and ensure that regular meetings are held with the Apprentices to discuss and assess progress. Managers may wish to appoint a team member as a workplace mentor to carry out this function.

6.4 Managers must ensure that Apprentices are given appropriate time to attend any external learning and training, including attendance at formal sessions and examinations as part of any agreed course of learning leading to an approved apprenticeship qualification.

The Role of the Apprentice

7.1 The Apprentice is required to:

- Attend learning sessions delivered by the training provider.
- Be responsible for compiling their own vocational portfolio, assignments or work based project. Support will be available to undertake this work and some assignment work may be required outside of working time.

Apprenticeship Employment and Contracts

7.2 Apprentices will be employed on normal Digiquip Group Limited terms and conditions with specific variations in regards to funding for training and expectation of participating in the training offered.

7.3 All Apprentices will be required to sign an Apprenticeship Agreement, confirming their commitment to the apprenticeship.

7.4 Apprentices will be entitled to the same Annual Leave as other employees, if appropriate.

New Hire Apprentices

7.5 The rate of pay must be reviewed at the end of the first year. After completing the first year an apprentice must be paid at least the minimum wage rate for their age if aged 19 or over.

7.6 Contracts will be a Fixed Term Training Contract for a duration that aligns with their availability, training and attainment of the apprenticeship qualification (minimum of 12 months). This will be stated in their appointment documentation at the commencement of their Apprenticeship.

7.7 New hire apprentices will be paid a standard salary and are not entitled to annual increments or to any locally agreed allowances. Actual working hours and patterns of work will be discussed and negotiated between a Manager and Apprentice.

7.8 New hire apprentices are not eligible for compulsory redundancy at the end of their Apprenticeship.

7.9 Digiquip Group Limited cannot guarantee further employment for new hire apprentices and any vacant roles that become available must be applied for in the normal way in accordance with usual Recruitment and Selection Procedures.

7.10 Existing employees who sign up for apprenticeships will continue to be bound by their normal terms and conditions of employment and will continue their employment as before once the apprenticeship ends.

Internal Training

8.1 Further training is available to all existing employees.

8.2 There are a range of training courses available as roles require. Subject areas include:

- Business Administration

- Telecoms Engineering and Brand Specific Configuration
- IT and Networking
- Customer Services
- Sales, Telesales and Marketing

8.3 The structure of the training programme and end point assessment will be determined by the selected Training Body.

Value of Further Training in the Workplace

8.4 Training adds value to the workforce. Research has highlighted that:

- Training and role specific qualifications help to deliver higher overall productivity.
- Training and role specific qualifications help to reduce staff turnover.
- Employers believe Training and role specific qualifications provide the skilled workers that they need for the future.
- Qualified employees help to support a more motivated and satisfied workforce.

Roles and Responsibilities

8.5 Once an Employee has been offered a Training Course/Scheme, the role of the Employer extends to:

- Planning and organising a thorough training programme.
- Planning and facilitating on-the-job training
- Agreeing a suitable time and venue for the training
- Approving paid time off for the individual to attend sessions and examinations delivered by the approved training provider, where necessary.
- Supporting the end point assessment. This may include sitting on an assessment panel or evaluating written assignments or projects.
- Supporting the Employee in finding progression opportunities following the programme and implementing their knowledge in the workplace.

The Role of the Trainee

8.6 The Trainee is required to:

- Attend learning sessions delivered by the training provider.
- Be responsible for compiling their own vocational portfolio, assignments or work based project as required. Support will be available to undertake this work and some assignment work may be required outside of working time.

8.7 Existing employees who enrol for training schemes/courses will continue to be bound by their normal terms and conditions of employment and will continue their employment as before once the training ends.

8.8 There may be a repayment levy on course costs imposed in the event of an employee undertaking training for the benefit of an alternative employer or improper gain.

Raising Awareness of this Policy

9.1 We will raise awareness of this policy via:

- Our website
- Internal memos and notices
- Staff meetings and Training sessions

Equality Impact Assessment

10.1 Under the Equality Act 2010 we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their age, disability, gender, gender identity, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

10.2 This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010. As it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any employee and it helps to promote equality at this workplace.

Monitoring the effectiveness of the Policy

10.3 This procedure shall be subject to periodic review and may be changed from time to time.

Management of Policy

10.4 The Company Director and Office Manager have overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy. They will maintain a record of concerns raised and the outcomes.