



Davidson Training UK Ltd
Training for Growing Businesses

HR SUPPORT APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD LEVEL 3

HANDBOOK Version 2 (2025)

HANDBOOK

This Handbook has been produced for learners and employers for the HR Support Apprenticeship Standard Level 3

Davidson Training UK Limited

HR Support Apprenticeship Standard Level 3

Qualification aim

HR Professionals in this role are typically either working in a medium to large organisation as part of the HR function delivering front line support to managers and employees, or are a HR Manager in a small organisation.

Their work is likely to include handling day to day queries and providing HR advice; working on a range of HR processes, ranging from transactional to relatively complex, from recruitment through to retirement; using HR systems to keep records; providing relevant HR information to the business; working with the business on HR changes.

They will typically be taking ownership for providing advice to managers on a wide range of HR issues using company policy and current law, giving guidance that is compliant and where errors could expose the organisation to employment tribunals or legal risk.

In a larger organisation they may also have responsibility for managing a small team – this aspect is outside the scope of this apprenticeship and will need to be covered separately by the employer. The focus of the apprenticeship is primarily on individuals who are new to the role or are progressing on their career journey through the organisation.

Working in human resources involves engaging with a range of people, dealing with challenging situations and issues as they arise. You'll need a motivational attitude, approachability and a good understanding of workplace policies and culture.

Benefits/Results for Apprentices

- Continuous development of personal effectiveness and impact as a HR Support
- Increased knowledge and confidence to influence behaviours
- Consideration of Employment Rights and Responsibilities
- Gain the key skills to aid career progression
- Receive support from a dedicated team of qualified assessors/training consultants.
- Targeted learning and development is delivered in alignment with the latest apprenticeship standards – ensuring all learning is relevant, with no gaps in knowledge.
- It will maximise confidence and readiness for End Point Assessment.
- Apprentices gain a range of skills
- Put new skills into practice in own role
- Develop skills using own knowledge, values and motivation

Impact for employers

- Targeted learning and development in complete alignment with the latest apprenticeship standards – ensuring that all learning is relevant, with no gaps in knowledge.
- Maximises Apprentice's confidence and readiness for End Point Assessment.
- HR Support with relevant Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours to promote the organisation
- Training tailored to organisational goals and values
Collaboration between in-house training teams and experienced Davidson Training UK Ltd staff
- Flexible delivery options
- HR apprentices learn all about the profession, their role within the organisation and the practical skills they need to succeed. By passing modules on personal development, analysing data, supporting change and others, they can take on increasingly important tasks.

What opportunities for progression are there?

The qualification will allow you to progress in your career or onto further HR qualifications:

- Qualifications in other work-related areas (for example Recruitment Consultant, Level 5 HR Consultant/Partner, Level 7 HR Professional, Level 3 Learning and Development Practitioner, Level 5 Learning and Development Consultant/Business Partner)

Entry requirements

Applicants must be 16 or over and living in England.

The Level 3 Apprenticeship is comparable to an 'A'-level standard of education. Whilst applicants do not necessarily need 'A' levels for successful completion of this apprenticeship, they do need to demonstrate capability of operating competently at the Level 3 standard of work.

There are no specific entry requirements for this qualification however you must be in a position to meet the assessment demands of the qualification, which are work-based and reflective in nature. As this qualification is work-based, Apprentices must be employed in an appropriate role.

Knowledge – shows an ability to learn factual, procedural and theoretical knowledge and understanding according to the HR Support Standard. As well as learning, retaining and processing this well-defined information, Level 3 apprentices show their ability to complete tasks and address problems that may be complex and non-routine. They can interpret and evaluate relevant information and ideas, and are aware of the different perspectives or approaches within HR.

Autonomy and accountability – Level 3 apprentices show aptitude to exercise responsibility, autonomy and judgement within limited parameters. They are able to take responsibility for initiating and completing tasks and procedures including, where relevant, responsibility for supervising or guiding others.

Apprentices will be required to have or achieve Level 2 English and Maths prior to completion of their Apprenticeship.

Age restrictions

This qualification is not approved for under 16s.

Link to professional registration

The successful apprentice may be eligible to apply for Associate membership of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) or any other professional body that recognises this apprenticeship within its membership criteria (membership is subject to the professional bodies own membership requirements).

It forms the foundation of a career within the profession, giving the base for further development through a career path within an organisation and/or through the HR Consultant/Partner apprenticeship. The apprentice can choose to stay within core HR or diversify into one of the specialist areas of HR.

Duration

The apprenticeship will take a minimum of 14-16 months to complete

Overview of HR Support Apprenticeship Standard Level 3

Knowledge	
Business Understanding	Understands the structure of the organisation; the products and services it delivers; the external market and sector within which it operates; where their role fits in the organisation; the 'Values' by which it operates and how these apply to their role.
HR Legislation and Policy	Basic understanding of HR in their sector and any unique features. Good understanding of HR legislation and the HR Policy framework of the organisation. Sound understanding of the HR Policies that are relevant to their role. Knows where to find expert advice.
HR Function	Understands the role and focus of HR within the organisation; its business plan / priorities and how these apply to their role.
HR Systems and Processes	Understands the systems, tools and processes used in the role, together with the standards to be met, including the core HR systems used by the organisation.
Skills	
Service Delivery	Delivers excellent customer service on a range of HR queries and requirements, providing solutions, advice and support primarily to managers. Builds manager's expertise in HR matters, improving their ability to handle repeated situations themselves where appropriate. Uses agreed systems and processes to deliver service to customers. Takes the initiative to meet agreed individual and team KPIs in line with company policy, values, and standards. Plans and organises their work, often without direct supervision, to meet commitments and KPIs.
Problem solving	Uses sound questioning and active listening skills to understand requirements and establish root causes before developing HR solutions. Takes ownership through to resolution, escalating complex situations as appropriate.
Communication & interpersonal	Deals effectively with customers/colleagues, using sound interpersonal skills and communicating well through a range of media e.g. phone, face to face, email, internet. Adapts their style to their audience. Builds trust and sound relationships with customers. Handles conflict and sensitive HR situations professionally and confidentially.
Teamwork	Consistently supports colleagues /collaborates within the team and HR to achieve results. Builds/maintains strong working relationships with others in the team and across HR where necessary.
Process improvement	Identifies opportunities to improve HR performance and service; acts on them within the authority of their role. Supports implementation of HR changes/projects with the business
Managing HR Information	Maintains required HR records as part of services delivered. Prepares reports and management information from HR data, with interpretation as required.
Personal Development	Keeps up to date with business changes and HR legal/policy/process changes relevant to their role. Seeks feedback and acts on it to improve their performance and overall capability.
Behaviours/Attitude	
Honesty & Integrity	Truthful, sincere and trustworthy in their actions. Shows integrity by doing the right thing. Maintains appropriate confidentiality at all times. Has the courage to challenge when appropriate.
Flexibility	Adapts positively to changing work priorities and patterns when new tasks need to be done or requirements change. Make realistic promises and deliver on them.
Resilience	Displays energy and enthusiasm in the way they go about their role, dealing positively with setbacks when they occur. Stays positive under pressure.

Evidence requirements

Although this standard does not actually require a portfolio of evidence, this is encouraged to ensure those in learning are gaining and retaining knowledge, skills, and behaviours as they progress. This is also to be used as a revision tool and assists them at End Point Assessment when completing the Consultative Project and Professional Discussion.

Units may be assessed through several different sources to ensure and test knowledge and understanding, which may include:

- **Naturalistic observation of workplace activities**
- **Products:** Such as reports, letters, e-mails, memos, printouts, etc. which are valuable items demonstrating performance evidence.
- **Expert witness:** Can be used to address any gaps and for confidential or sensitive activities.
- **Witness testimony:** Can provide valuable evidence of candidate competence. In line with established principles, witness testimony must be:
 - a clear, authentic statement indicating how the learner carries out their job
 - dated, signed and include the job title of the witness.
- **Candidate reports (feedback):** Oral or written reports from the candidate which involve descriptions of activities and processes and some self-assessment, e.g. a work diary.
- **Reflective accounts:** A reflective account is usually a write up of how a candidate has carried out part of their job, recording events that happened.
- **Professional discussion:** Professional discussion is a single, or series of, structured, planned and in-depth discussion(s) which can be recorded electronically or manually in paper, computer, audio or video files. They can be used to support observation reports, examination of work products and knowledge questionnaires.
- **Verbal / written questions:** May include questionnaires; work-based tasks; reflective accounts; case studies; professional discussion; and feedback reports.
- **Projects:** An extended piece of practical and/or written work involving planning and research, generally presented as a report.
- **Assignments:** May be practical or written tasks given to learners which test skills, knowledge or understanding, or combinations of all three.
- **Case studies:** An effective case study report should:
 - clearly identify the core problem(s)
 - analyse the issues underlying the problem
 - discuss and justify alternative solutions using theory / experience
 - present feasible recommendations
 - be presented in an appropriate format
- **Audio/video recordings:** May be used to support observation reports, examination of work products and knowledge questionnaires.

What you will learn:

HR Support professionals deliver front-line assistance to managers and employees. They take ownership for providing advice on a wide range of issues, using company policy and current law. The qualification covers a range of topics:

- Handling day-to-day queries
- Providing HR advice
- Using HR systems to keep records
- Providing the business with relevant HR information
- Working with the business on HR changes
- Working on a range of HR processes, varying from transactional to relatively complex issues (from recruitment through to retirement)
- Questioning, listening and negotiation skills
- Management of challenging and complicated situations
- Understanding of current legislation, compliance and regulatory guidance
- Adapt communication style to clearly and concisely communicate information
- Maintain positive relationships.
- Achievement of results through effective team work and collaboration.
- Personal development.

English and Maths Functional Skills

Apprentices will be required to have or achieve level 2 English and Maths prior to completion of their Apprenticeship unless you already hold the required qualifications or equivalents.

On Programme learning

The period of learning, development and continuous assessment is managed by the employer, in most cases with the support of the training provider. The on-programme pace will be driven by individuals as well as by the breadth of experience an employer can offer prior to the minimum of 12 months after which end-point assessment will take place.

Employers will work closely with the training provider to plan and deliver support and training appropriately. This working closely will add value to the employer as it centres on real work competencies demonstrated in a real work environment

End-point assessment – What is this?

End-point assessment is a new way of assuring quality in the apprenticeship system. It replaces the existing model of continuous assessment resulting in qualifications.

The End Point Assessment will be carried out by an Independent Assessment Organisation.

The decision on readiness to progress to the End Point Assessment will be taken by the line manager and apprentice with input from the Training Provider.

The End Point Assessment will be synoptic and therefore cover the knowledge skills and behaviours in the Standard.

Some knowledge will be evidenced implicitly through the skills demonstrated by the apprentice e.g. providing advice on the organisation's HR policies and procedures can only be done if the apprentice understands those policies and procedures.

The focus of the end point assessment is on the apprentice being able to meet the requirements of the Standard and to be able to demonstrate this through the work that they have done. It takes place in the last 3-4 months of the apprenticeship, once the apprentice has met the Gateway criteria, and consists of two assessment methods:

- **Consultative Project**
- **Professional Discussion**

The Employer, Training Provider and Independent Assessment Organisation will work with the apprentice to agree the content of the Consultative Project, providing guidance as to the content, structure etc.

In the event that an apprentice cannot complete a Project covering all of the required knowledge and skills, due to their organisational circumstances, then it is permissible for a maximum of three of the listed components of knowledge / skill to be assessed in the Professional Discussion instead. This will be identified by the Independent Assessment Organisation when the content of the Project is agreed. The two assessment methods will build up a cumulative picture of how well the apprentice has met the requirements of the Standard.

Grading

The Independent Assessment Organisation will make the decision on the grade to be awarded to the based on their scoring of the two components of the End Point Assessment, the Consultative Project and the Professional Discussion.

The apprentice will be awarded a Fail, Pass or Distinction for each assessment method and for the overall apprenticeship.

In order to gain a Pass the apprentice must achieve a Pass in each method – this represents full competence against those particular Knowledge, Skills or Behaviours in the Standard.

The Distinction is designed to recognise the small proportion of apprentices who are seen as outstanding employees, regularly going beyond what is required to be competent in the role and seen as having greatest potential for the future.

The apprentice who achieves a Distinction can be described in broad terms as:

- Consistently exceeding the standards set for the role (both what is delivered and how it is delivered)
- Able to perform well in difficult situations or when under pressure
- Being seen as a role model by others
- Able to work upwards as well as with peers

The table below shows the combination of assessment method grades to determine the overall grade:

Grade	Consultative Project Professional	Consultative Project Professional
Distinction (85 to 100 marks)	Distinction	Distinction
Pass (60 to 84 marks)	Pass	Pass
Fail (59 marks or less)	The apprentice has not achieved a minimum of a Pass in both methods	

The overall grade is arrived at using a 50:50 weighting of the two scores.

The table below outlines the scoring criteria that will be applied for each assessment method. Detailed guidance will be developed by the Independent Assessment Organisation. It is based on the following principles:

- All Pass criteria need to be achieved – in achieving this the apprentice will be demonstrating all Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours in the standard
- Distinction builds on the Pass criteria

Consultative Project (100 marks)		
Distinction Criteria	Pass Criteria	Fail Criteria
Score 85 and above In addition to the Pass criteria: Demonstrating insight into the issues facing the business Meeting challenging customer needs and delivering appropriate HR advice / guidance Taking personal initiative to consistently exceed required standards and targets	Score 60 to 84 Provides evidence of the required knowledge and skills with particular emphasis on: Understanding and application of HR legislation, policies and procedures relevant to their role Developing a clear understanding the business situation through appropriate questioning and active listening Providing HR advice and guidance that are appropriate to the business context Building the skills of managers in dealing with HR matters	Score 59 or below Fails to provide evidence to meet all knowledge, skill and behaviour requirements

Professional Discussion (100 marks)		
Distinction Criteria	Pass Criteria	Fail Criteria
Score 85 and above In addition to the Pass criteria: Communicating effectively with people above them in the organisation, up to senior management Working well and delivering results when under pressure Taking a leadership role within their team when appropriate	Score 60 to 84 Provides evidence of the required skills and behaviours with particular emphasis on: Demonstrating effective working relationships with customers Showing how they have communicated effectively, using a range of media, at all required levels of the organisation Supporting colleagues and collaborating to achieve results Showing how they have developed themselves in the role and kept up to date with technical HR changes	Score 59 or below Fails to provide evidence to meet all knowledge, skill and behaviour requirements

The table below identifies the different types of Assessment Method that will be used for the End Point Assessment

Knowledge	
Business Understanding	Consultative Project
HR Legislation and Policy	Consultative Project
HR Function	Consultative Project
HR Systems and Processes	Consultative Project
Service Delivery	Consultative Project
Problem solving	Consultative Project
Communication & interpersonal	Professional Discussion
Teamwork	Professional Discussion
Process improvement	Consultative Project
Managing HR information	Consultative Project
Personal Development	Professional Discussion
Behaviours	
Honesty & Integrity	Professional Discussion
Flexibility	Professional Discussion
Resilience	Professional Discussion

Consultative Project

The Consultative Project will be a real example of work done by the apprentices in their role that will be completed after the Gateway, taking a maximum of three months.

The Project will require the apprentice to describe how they have applied their knowledge and HR related skills to deliver the services required by the role as described in the Standard.

It will describe a situation where the apprentice has successfully worked with a customer (probably an internal one) to deliver a specific piece(s) of HR advice or provide an HR solution(s) for them.

The content of the project will include project objectives, scope of the work, description of the situation/problem/business need, methodology used, information gathered / findings, conclusions and recommendations, implementation plan.

Examples of typical projects might include:

- Providing advice/guidance to a manager / team on a range of HR matters from recruitment through to retirement.
- Taking a defined role in a larger project run by more senior members of the HR team.
- Carrying out analysis of HR information and producing recommendations for action.

The project will be 3000 words +/- 10%.

A more detailed brief for the Consultative Project will be provided by the Independent Assessment Organisation.

As the Consultative Project will be relevant to the actual business context and role that the apprentice is performing, it may not be possible to cover all of the knowledge and skills that are expected in the Project.

If this situation arises, then a maximum of three of the listed components of knowledge / skill can be assessed in the Professional Discussion instead. This will be agreed when the Project is scoped at the start of the End Point Assessment and signed off by the Independent Assessment Organisation

The Consultative Project will be sent to the Independent Assessment Organisation for a fully independent assessment against the standard. It will be marked before the Professional Discussion is carried out. The Professional Discussion will be carried out within two weeks of the Project being marked.

Professional Discussion

The Professional Discussion will be conducted after the Independent Assessor has reviewed and marked the Consultative Project.

It will focus on the Skills and Behaviours specified, together with any Knowledge and Skills components that have not been covered in the Consultative Project. To ensure consistency of approach, the Independent Assessment Organisation will provide a bank of standard questions that the Independent Assessor will use.

The bulk of these will be the Skills and Behaviours listed that must be tested in the Professional Discussion. In addition, the question bank will also include questions that explore the Knowledge and Skills covered by the Consultative Project.

There will be 13-16 questions in each Professional Discussion carried out with an apprentice and each question will focus on a single component of Knowledge, Skill or Behaviour as listed.

Having marked the Consultative Project, the Independent Assessor will confirm the Knowledge and Skill components normally covered by the Consultative Project for which they do not have evidence.

They will then add into the Professional Discussion any additional questions (from the question bank) that are required to cover these Knowledge and Skill components. The Professional Discussion is expected to last between 60 and 75 minutes. The Professional Discussion may be carried out face to face, typically at the employer's premises, or remotely using e.g. video conference or Skype.

The combination of these assessment methods builds a cumulative picture of performance against the Standard. They require apprentices to demonstrate the application of knowledge, skills and behaviours in an integrated manner to deliver the required outcomes, enabling the Independent Assessment Organisation to make a holistic judgement about how well the apprentice meets or exceeds the Standard.

Initial assessment

An initial assessment will be made before the start of the programme to identify:

- If you have any specific training needs.
- Support and guidance you may need when working towards your qualification.
- Any previous, relevant qualifications or learning where Recognition of Prior Learning can be applied.

We are required to demonstrate commitment to equal opportunities and can give guidance in making arrangements if you require reasonable adjustments or special considerations in respect of assessment.

Induction

You will receive an induction of at least two hours and will include written information covering:

- An outline of the qualification and the related support available.
- This will in the full Apprenticeship Standard HR Support Level 3.
- The aim of the Apprenticeship Standard HR Support Level 3.
- Expectations of, and benefits to, the individual and where relevant, their employer.
- Format of the programme – content, hours, attendance, delivery methods, etc.
- The assessment requirements, including assessment criteria.
- Roles and responsibilities of Centre staff, Apprentices and End Point Assessment Organisations.
- Learning and study skills, including reference to use of library, internet and any open or online learning to be used.
- Information on tutorial support, advice and guidance, equal opportunities, appeals procedures, authenticity and plagiarism.

The First Step

We aim for you to complete your Apprenticeship with the use and ease of eLearning, encouraging you to prepare and submit evidence and email it to your Trainer/Tutor. They will assess and upload evidence into an ePortfolio.

If you do not have access to the internet to email work to your Trainer/Tutor, that is not a problem, we will issue you with a USB stick so that you can save your work and the Trainer/Tutor can upload it when they visit you.

Your Training Plan

We will set you targets that are specific to your needs, training you as we go on what you need to know. The qualification will be adapted to suit your job description and your organisation's needs, however it is flexible and easily fits in with your normal every day work.

You must complete 6 hours a week off-the-job training and this will be discussed and planned with your employer. This could be in the way of mentoring, job shadowing, spending time on set tasks and assignments or researching.

Reviews

Every 12 weeks your trainer and employer will check that you are on target. If you are not then your plan will be amended and any additional training and development needs will be addressed.

Functional Skills explained

Functional skills are a part of the Apprenticeship.

You will be required to complete a Functional Skills initial assessment test. These are completed on-line to enable us to assess your level of literacy and numeracy. They are not there as a test to decide whether you can complete the qualification, but to give a clear indication of the where we may need to give you additional support and training.

English

The English functional skill is there to encourage you to demonstrate speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in a range of contexts for various purposes. You will complete a speaking and listening task which involves doing a short presentation. You will also do 2 online tests to assess how well you can read different text in different situations and obtain and relay information from the text and answers questions. One test is to assess your writing skills and the other to assess your reading skills.

Mathematics

In whatever area of training, numbers feature significantly. You will find a wealth of examples in the workplace as well as outside of work. It could be calculating a customer's bill, measuring ingredients for a recipe, working out the amount of stock that was used for a particular day, counting stock. Each and every day numbers feature heavily in our working life. Math's functional skills will allow you to demonstrate your knowledge when working with numbers in different situations.

Data Security

All work we receive is dealt with as confidential. It is only seen by the designated trainer/assessors and internal/external verifiers for the programme. A sample of assignments are required by the external verifier for quality assurance purposes.

All work and assignments are stored by Davidson Training on a secure computer whilst you are an 'active' ILM candidate.

Plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Plagiarism is passing off someone else's work as your own. Access to the internet and the ease of copy and paste has made it easier than ever to plagiarise, sometimes people don't even know that what they are doing is plagiarism. Quoting someone else or referencing their work is not plagiarism as long as you credit the original source of the information. Ensure that you do your own work and do not plagiarise work from others. If you are not sure what is meant by plagiarism speak to one of the trainers who will clarify.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is where computer systems perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. As with plagiarism, to a degree, you can use AI, however it is important to use the information to learn and put the topic into your own words and also crediting the original source of the information.

Finally, we do have an appeals process if you feel that we have not treated you correctly regarding assessment. This will be issued at enrolment.