



Proposal for a COUNCIL RECOMMENDATION on a European Framework for Quality and Effective Apprenticeships

Criteria for learning and working conditions

Written contract

1. Before the start of the apprenticeship a written contract between the employer, the apprentice and the vocational training institution should be concluded, defining each party's rights and obligations related to training and work.

Learning outcomes

2. A set of comprehensive learning outcomes should be defined by the employers and vocational training institutions ensuring a balance between specific job-related skills and key competences supporting both the personal development and lifelong career opportunities of the apprentices with a view to adapt to changing career patterns.

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Pedagogical support

3. In-company trainers should be designated and tasked to cooperate closely with vocational education and training providers and teachers to provide guidance to apprentices and to ensure mutual and regular feed-back. Teachers, trainers and mentors should be supported to update their skills and competences in order to train apprentices according to the latest teaching and training methods and labour market needs.

Workplace component

4. A substantial part of the learning experience, meaning at least half of the apprenticeship duration, should be carried out in a workplace. This should include opportunities to undertake part of such placements abroad.

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Pay and/or compensation

5. Apprentices should receive pay and/or compensation, in line with national or sectoral requirements or collective agreements where they exist, and taking into account cost-sharing arrangements between employers, apprentices and public authorities.

Social protection

6. Apprentices should be entitled to social protection, including necessary insurance in line with national legislation.

Work, health and safety conditions

7. The host workplace should comply with relevant rules and regulations on working conditions, in particular health and safety legislation.

Criteria for framework conditions

Regulatory framework

8. A clear and consistent regulatory framework should be in place based on a fair and equitable partnership approach, including a structured and transparent dialogue among all relevant stakeholders. This may include accreditation procedures for companies and workplaces that offer apprenticeships.

Involvement of social partners

9. Social partners, including at sectoral level, should be involved in the design, governance and implementation of apprenticeship schemes, in line with national industrial relations systems and education and training practices

Criteria for framework conditions

Support for companies

10. Financial and/or non-financial support should be provided, particularly for small, medium-sized and micro-companies, based on cost-sharing arrangements between employers, apprentices and public authorities, enabling cost-effective apprenticeships for companies.

Flexible pathways and mobility

11. Entry requirements for apprenticeships should take into account relevant informal and non-formal learning. Apprenticeships should lead to a nationally recognised qualification referenced in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework, and should allow access to other learning opportunities, including at higher education and training levels, and career pathways. Transnational mobility of apprentices should be a component of apprenticeship qualifications.

Criteria for framework conditions

Career guidance and awareness raising

12. Career guidance, mentoring and learner support should be provided during the apprenticeship to ensure successful outcomes and reduce drop-outs. Apprenticeships should be promoted through awareness-raising activities.

Transparency

13. The transparency of, and access to apprenticeship offers within and between Member States should be ensured with the support of public and private employment services, and by using Union tools such as EURES when appropriate.

Quality assurance and graduate tracking

14. Quality assurance approaches should be in place in coherence with European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training (EQAVET)¹⁹, including a valid and reliable assessment of the learning outcomes. The tracking of employment and career progression of the apprentices should be ensured.