



# Academy

**SJC Training Academy Trading as:**

**HB Academy**

**EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**Guidance on how we will work with employers and representative groups**

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## **Our Strategy**

This strategy sets out our mission and objectives relating to our continuing development of work with employers to support economic growth through flexible training and skills development for the current and future workforce.

### **The Mission:**

To be a provider of choice for Apprenticeships and wider workforce development training. We will work with employers in the local community and the Bexley borough to:

- Equip businesses and employees with the skills, knowledge and behaviours that they need to remain competitive and ensure future sustainability.
- Identify and provide qualifications that are current and relevant to industry needs, informed by Industry Advisory Partnership (IAP) employer panels.
- Provide opportunities for work experience, Apprenticeships, Traineeships and Supported Internships for young people and unemployed adults.
- Develop those already in employment to progress their careers, meet their aspirations and fulfil their potential.
- Support businesses through the skills reforms, including the Apprenticeship Levy, non-Levy engagement for SMEs, skills devolution and others as they arise.
- Be the local provider of choice for our specialist sectors, aligned with identified business growth, projected job creation and emerging technologies

### **Objectives of the Employer Engagement Strategy**

To outline the priorities for the organisation in relation to employer-facing provision and set clear targets to measure performance, impact and progress.

Create new business activities and income to develop the skills that employers need, along with direct feedback from clients and advisory forums.

Determine actions to be taken to further develop relationships with a wide range of small, medium and large employers to grow our market share.

### **Social and educational context**

Our strategy is shaped by the needs of the local area(s) and wider region(s).

HB Academy is responding to the identified skills needs by developing industry-informed specialisms at various delivery locations in our catchment/operational area, as defined in the latest organisation-wide Strategic Plan. We acknowledge the prevalence of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and will ensure that the wider offer takes this into account when planning employer-facing curriculum and delivery.

HB Academy responds to economic needs through a diverse range of programmes for young people, adults with jobs, those that are currently unemployed, those with additional physical or social needs and bespoke programmes to fulfil specific skills needs. By having such a wide range, we are able to provide a holistic offer for businesses and communities we serve.

This context shapes our employer engagement strategy and shapes our future curriculum.

To deliver our objectives, we will:

- Ensure our Employer Services/Engagement team have range of skills and knowledge to give our employers confidence in their choice of training partner.
- Increase the number of businesses we work with year-on-year
- Develop new services for learners and employers to increase participation on programmes. This will include input from industry experts and an enhanced recruitment service for employers.
- Access diverse funding, including 19+ Loans and ESF, to help support employers' training plans.
- Ensure training is flexible to meet employer needs including programme content, mode of delivery, timing and location.
- Ensure employers are fully involved in the planning of content and delivery; particularly in relation to Apprenticeships.
- Through the IAP(s), review the existing portfolio of courses and develop an employer-facing curriculum to ensure a steady and consistent increase in the range of programmes and qualifications to meet and to stimulate employer demand.
- Further raise awareness of the benefits and breadth of Apprenticeships with employers to increase the number available across our target sectors.
- Develop an innovative and informative range of sector-specific employer e-newsletters to raise awareness of training opportunities with an emphasis on business impact, particularly in relation to bottom line.
- Ensure our Apprenticeship offer is wide ranging and comprehensive, providing learners and employers with clear, structured progression routes and skills.
- Inform and encourage the design of innovative programmes to engage employers through interactive web based and distance learning programmes
- Offer relevant, added value commercial courses at full cost to employers.
- Continually strive to achieve the highest levels of professionalism and customer service in our work.

### **Apprenticeship Growth**

HB Academy will work with colleagues and employers to further develop employability and pre-apprenticeship programmes to equip learners with the skills they need to gain employment, particularly into Apprenticeships.

We will strengthen links with local schools and agencies to better promote Apprenticeships as an attractive alternative and pathway into careers and further/higher education.

Increase the awareness and support for employers in relation to the recent Apprenticeship reforms.

We will work with partners to develop a broad, cohesive offer, with innovative, high impact marketing support.

We will work with employers to train their staff as assessors to build capacity for workplace delivery.

We will work in close partnership with employers and sector representative bodies to ensure the training provided is relevant, up to date and of industry standard; including the establishment of effective employer partnerships (IAPs) in each sector area; keeping up to date with new developments in the sectors and shape the future curriculum.

We will further develop curriculum departments to improve the offer to employers and support the continual improvement of the quality of our provision.

We will increase the range of guest speakers from industry to develop the commercial awareness and technical/business skills of learners.

Effectively identify potential gaps in the market and pro-actively plan courses to meet the identified needs.

Work sector specific departments to assist them in developing an employer-facing CPD policy for tutors/lecturers and assessors to update competencies and keep up to date with new technology and sector developments.

We will ensure that our employer engagement processes are effective, informative and not over-burdensome for businesses and learners; whilst making sure they are robust and effectively inform the planning of programmes.

### **Performance Targets**

Performance targets will be set against the following indicators:

- To increase the number of apprentices on HB Academy programmes each year
- To increase the number of employers with apprentices each year
- To increase the number of learners completing employability programmes each year, such as Traineeships and Sector-Based Work Academies
- To increase Commercial, Co-Funded and Levy income from employers' year-on-year
- To increase the proportion of learners experiencing relevant and meaningful work experience opportunities with partner employers
- Achieve year-on-year growth in employer satisfaction in the annual surveys.
- To increase learner participation from under-represented groups.