

A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYERS

Modern Apprenticeships

In Agriculture



A Modern Apprenticeship in agriculture is a package of learning and industry-recognised qualifications, combined with practical work on a farm.

Modern Apprenticeships are normally full-time positions for those aged 16 or over, taking 1–3 years to complete, depending on the individual and the needs of their employer.

They work as a partnership between trainees, employers and training providers (usually a college), and are designed by industry, sector skills councils and training providers to meet the needs of agriculture.

Benefits of a Modern Apprenticeship

- Mix of practical work and classroom-based learning provides Modern Apprentices with the knowledge and skills that the agricultural industry needs
- Learning takes place mainly in the workplace, minimising disruption
- It's a great way to attract talented people with fresh ideas
- Can be tailored to specific job roles, making them flexible to the needs of business

Modern Apprenticeships contain:

- A competence-based Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ)
- Core skills: team working, problem solving, communication, numeracy, information technology
- Extra qualifications are available in subjects like first aid, spraying, chainsaws and forklift driving



“As an industry we need to acknowledge the fact that we need to invest more in our staff and by doing that we will attract new people into agriculture, who will be motivated and drive innovation.”

James Orr farms near Cupar and employs a Modern Apprentice in Agriculture

How do I find a Modern Apprentice?

You can put existing employees onto the programme or find someone new through your own contacts or with the help of a training provider.

Once you have found a suitable person, the training provider will arrange a visit to your farm. They will look at the working environment, carry out a risk assessment and let you know if the Modern Apprenticeship can go ahead.

Paperwork is completed by the training provider, then everyone involved will sign a training agreement. The provider then gives the trainee workbooks and online materials. As the employer, you provide a workplace and support the learning.

The training provider can advise you on funding for training and arrange attendance at college for the trainee. Trainers and assessors support the Modern Apprentice by visiting the workplace at suitable times.

Modern Apprentices are just like any other employees in that they get a wage, holidays, overtime and sick leave. As well as learning from the people around them in the workplace, they will also be gathering evidence of their specific skills and working towards a nationally recognised qualification.

What are my responsibilities as an employer to a Modern Apprentice?

You should:

- Provide a contract of employment and be clear about what you expect them to do
- Give them enough time to carry out their training plan and attend off-the-job learning
- Be responsible for their health, safety and support
- Make sure that they can carry out specific tasks to the right standards.

What is a contract of employment?

It outlines the terms and conditions of a job and includes: employee and employer name and address, start date, job title, hours of work, rate of pay, pay date and holiday entitlement. You must give your employee a contract within 8 weeks of them starting work.

See Appendix 1 of the Scottish Government's agricultural wages guide at www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00532986.pdf



What is a training agreement or plan?

A training agreement is drawn up and signed by the training provider, by you as the employer and by the Modern Apprentice. The provider then creates a training plan listing any training that needs to be done as part of the employee's work.

What will the Modern Apprentice expect from me?

Here are the key points but full details are in the Scottish Government's agricultural wages guide at www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00532986.pdf

Rates of pay and overtime: See Parts 2 and 3 of the guide. Modern Apprentices are entitled to the same overtime rate as any other farm workers, which is a minimum of £11.75.

Hours of work: This must be less than an average of 48 hours a week over a 17-week period. This averaging period can sometimes be extended. See **Part 9** of the guide.

Holidays: Someone who works 5 days a week would be entitled to 28 days holiday over the year from January to December. See **Part 4** of the guide.

Sick pay: To qualify, an employee must have been working continuously for the same employer for at least 52 weeks. See **Part 5** of the guide.

Do I have to pay towards the training?

Normally no. A financial contribution for training is usually made by Skills Development Scotland to the training provider. For older apprentices, the employer or trainee may be asked to contribute towards training costs.

Even though the training provider is monitoring the apprentice's progress, should I carry out a performance review?

Yes. It's a good idea to provide feedback to the employee as this allows you to check they are happy with the support that you are giving them. See www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1438

What are the responsibilities of a Modern Apprentice?

They have the same responsibility to you as any other employee and they should be committed to completing their training plan. They should be given a job description so that you both have the same expectations about the requirements of the role. This will help if there are any performance issues. See www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1392

How much time will the trainee spend on the farm?

Most of their time will be spent in the workplace. Some training may take place within the college, including underpinning knowledge, health and safety or first aid training, but this will be kept to a minimum.

What do I do next?

Before you employ a Modern Apprentice, you should contact one of the following training providers; SRUC, Borders College, Orkney College UHI or Train Shetland.





Case Study



Robert Pickford

Robert has been doing a Modern Apprenticeship in Mixed Farming on a farm near Kelso through Borders College.

“College has enabled me to gain extra knowledge in health and safety and first aid, plus I am working towards gaining extra certificates in things like spraying and slug pelleting to go alongside my forklift certificate.

The work-based learning I do with the Modern Apprenticeship has suited me very well, as getting stuck in is the best way to gain experience. I love being thrown a challenge and then having to work out how to solve it. It is a great place for me to work here too, as there are very few two days the same and their work load is quite hectic”.

Training providers in Scotland



SRUC

Has a national remit.
01506 864800
oatridge@sruc.ac.uk



University of the
Highlands and Islands
Orkney College

Orkney College UHI

01856 569210
orkney.college@uhi.ac.uk



Borders College

0870 050 5152
enquiries@borderscollege.ac.uk



Train Shetland

01595 743743
vocational.training@shetland.gov.uk

Find out more

www.scotland.lantra.co.uk
www.ourskillsforce.co.uk

  @lantrascotland  @lantra.scotland



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Lantra Scotland is supported by the Scottish Government.