

## Employer Engagement Policy

Croydon is a diverse, vibrant borough with many industries. It also has some pockets of deprivation and some residents are far from the workplace. CALAT, as part of Croydon Council's Economic Growth department, has a commitment to work with employer and partner organisations to provide pathways for employment for Croydon residents, and to increase their economic wellbeing. We are committed to using government funding to move people closer to work, to improve their skills and qualifications in this way enable residents to be more secure in their work roles or move into higher paid roles with higher pay.

CALAT's vision is to provide an outstanding curriculum to Croydon's business and community which will tackle skills gaps and increase individuals earning potential, increase productivity and economic growth, promote social cohesion, reduce social isolation, improve health and wellbeing and enable all to realise their aspirations and transform their lives.

In order to realise our vision CALAT is committed to supporting local businesses to develop their workforce, and to informing employers of sources of government funding that can be used to support their business's training needs.

CALAT will work with employers in the following ways:

- Working with employers to inform and co create our course content and identify the most appropriate Apprenticeship programme to suit job roles within their organisation.
- To provide Apprenticeships, qualifications and training that meet the needs of local employer needs, thereby increasing productivity as well as the learners' likelihood of finding work.
- Working with employers to deliver short course that provide a clear pathway to employment, with employers providing course input and the course being part of their recruitment pathway.e.g. all participants have a short interview with the employer at course end.
- Employers provide short input sessions within vocational courses, giving learners an opportunity to learn about job opportunities, form a realistic picture of specific job roles, and find out how to apply for specific roles.
- Provide bespoke training for employers on specific skills that they need their employees to acquire. This can include achievement of a qualification where appropriate.
- Offering employers a Training Needs Analysis: CALAT curriculum manager will work with the employer to identify all knowledge, skills and experience required for all roles within the employers' organisation. The employer and curriculum manager will then identify knowledge, skills and experience gaps and explore how these can be bridged through training. CALAT will provide this training where appropriate or provide information to enable the employer to identify other training providers.
- CALAT will inform employers of funding that can be accessed through AEB or apprenticeships to cover the costs of training, and will explore with the employer their responsibilities when accessing these funding streams. AEB funding could be used to fund pre-employment courses delivered in partnership with an employer hoping to recruit new employees.
- Many of our learners carry out work experience and this may be a compulsory component of their qualification. This may include assessment that takes place in the workplace.

CALAT will ensure that all learners are suitable for the workplace they are in and work collaboratively with employers to resolve any issues that may arise. All learners on work placement working with children, families or vulnerable adults will have a DBS check before commencing their placement. Where learners have any additional learning needs these will be discussed with the employer (with the learner's consent) to ensure that the learner has appropriate support in the workplace and can perform their role satisfactorily.

- Give employers, Apprentices and learners a voice and act on feedback ensuring that all are satisfied with their experience, achieve their learning objectives, increase productivity and strive for excellence. CALAT will ensure that employers have a named person to work with and regular meetings, telephone conversations/follow ups, video conferences to maintain good working relationships. Employers will also be provided with a named person to escalate any concerns to.

### **Delivering Apprenticeships**

CALAT will work transparently with employers, partners and Croydon Council's Economic growth services to promote apprenticeships. CALAT is able to provide apprenticeships to employers who pay the apprenticeship levy, but does not currently have a contract for delivery to smaller employers who are not levy payers.

CALAT will engage with all employers to promote apprenticeship opportunities and assisting employers to identify which apprenticeship funding they can access. Where an employer is non-levy paying CALAT will signpost the employer to training providers who have access to non-levy funding.

CALAT will work with employers to ensure they understand the 20% off the job training requirements and how this can be met through a combination of employer and CALAT training components.

CALAT can support employers to recruit new members of staff as apprentices, and to provide professional development for existing staff. We will fully explore the learning needs of the apprentices, including recognising their prior learning and experience. We will also explore impact on the business of the apprentice engaging in 20% off the job training and where appropriate English and maths training, finding a sensible, realistic training programme that meets the learning needs of the apprentice and the business needs of the employer.

CALAT will undertake initial assessment, recruitment and induction processes inform dynamic, inspirational, well-paced learning which continually assesses the rate of learning and challenges all including the more able apprentice and the use of a wide range of inspiring methods, resources and activities including the use of IT to engage and support learning. Assessors, IQA's and external verifiers track and oversee the rate of progress by the use of robust IQA plans, reports and frequent tutorials, ensuring that the criteria of the apprenticeship framework or standards are being met and the apprentice can see their practice is meaningful and valued within the workplace.

Continual and timely assessment within the workplace acknowledges progress and achievement providing developmental feedback for improvement including guidance on coaching and mentoring for employers to support the apprentice. Training is well differentiated and takes into account different learning styles ensuring the apprentices engagement from the outset. Progress is well monitored and initial assessment is thorough and objectives are linked to apprentice's personal targets as well as those of the employer and framework standard. Personal Learning and IQA Plans are used to set SMART targets and measure progress and achievement, whilst mapping a pathway to career progression and job outcomes within the industry.

We will continuously monitor and improve employer engagements through cyclical reviews, regular feedback from employers and the use of complaints data, frequently asked questions and contract review meetings as part of the delivery of programmes.

Employers, Apprentices, learners and all service users can access CALAT's complaint policy and procedure via the website: <http://www.calat.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2019/04/CALAT-Apprentices-Learners-Users-Complaints-policy-and-procedure-2018-19.pdf>

## Key CALAT contacts

Job title	Name	Email contact	Areas of responsibility
Strategic Service Manager	Sidra Hill-Reid	sidra.hill-reid@croydon.gov.uk	Overall strategic and CALAT service delivery and quality assurance, Business engagement and partnerships, English and Maths and ESOL
Curriculum Team Manager for Vocational Learning and Apprenticeships	Sarah Oxby	sarah.oxby@croydon.gov.uk	Strategic and operational delivery of Apprenticeship programmes and vocational learning, Business engagement and partnerships
Curriculum Team Manager for Community Learning and Support	Francoise Gayle	francoise.gayle@croydon.gov.uk	Strategic and operational delivery of Community learning, learner support services and careers information, advice and guidance, Business engagement and partnerships