

Quality framework model

The quality framework apprenticeship model, published by The City & Guilds Group and the Industry Skills Board (ISB), was put together following a series of interviews with businesses and training providers about what constitutes a quality apprenticeship and how they ensure the best experience for apprentices and employers.

Planning



Recruitment and induction



Putting learning at the heart of apprenticeships: Real experience, practice and problem solving to achieve productivity and autonomy



Validation of learning outcomes and mastery



Independent end-point assessment



Career progression

To read the full report click here

Making Apprenticeships Work: A reflection on practice

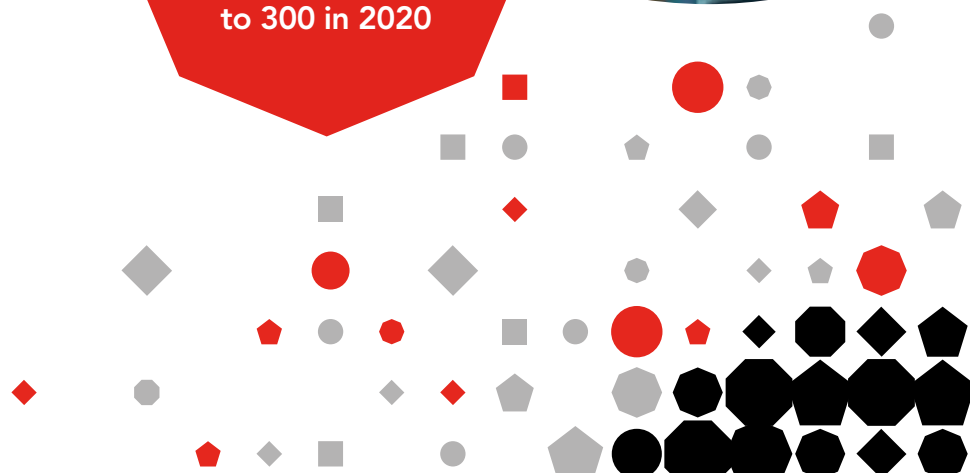
Specialist IT and digital apprenticeship provider, Intequal, is a Microsoft Learning Partner (Silver) and has been delivering apprenticeships since 2013. Its senior management team has many years of experience in managing employer-led apprenticeships. Its head office is in the Midlands and it has offices in the North and South of England. Intequal has helped to deliver more than 500 employer-led apprentices since it launched and is an early adopter of the new standards.

Planning

Intequal took the proactive decision to put all new starters onto standards in March 2016. It delivers seven standards at intermediary Level 3 and advanced Level 4 in areas such as Software Developer, Software Technician, Network Engineer, Software Tester, Technical Sales, Digital Marketer and Infrastructure Technician. It currently has 160 apprentices on programmes but has plans to increase this to 300 next year. The organisation has a pipeline of levy payers who are keen to expand their apprenticeship offering as well as non-levy payers. It also has four of its own employees on apprenticeship programmes.



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Recruitment and induction

Intequal engages with clients at every stage of the resourcing process, discussing skills and behavioural requirements before any recruitment activity commences. It will run recruitment campaigns if its pipeline of candidates does not specifically suit an employer's needs or employers want to run larger cohort recruiting. It advertises on national and niche job boards and websites as well as across social media and its own platforms. One of its most successful avenues for attraction is the National Apprenticeship Service website.

Intequal initially undertakes an introductory interview to assess suitability and if the candidate passes this they are asked to perform a research task based upon the vacancy or the employer's requirements. This is reviewed and a further suitability telephone interview is arranged with Intequal's resourcing team before a face-to-face meeting with the employer. No additional qualifications other than those asked by the

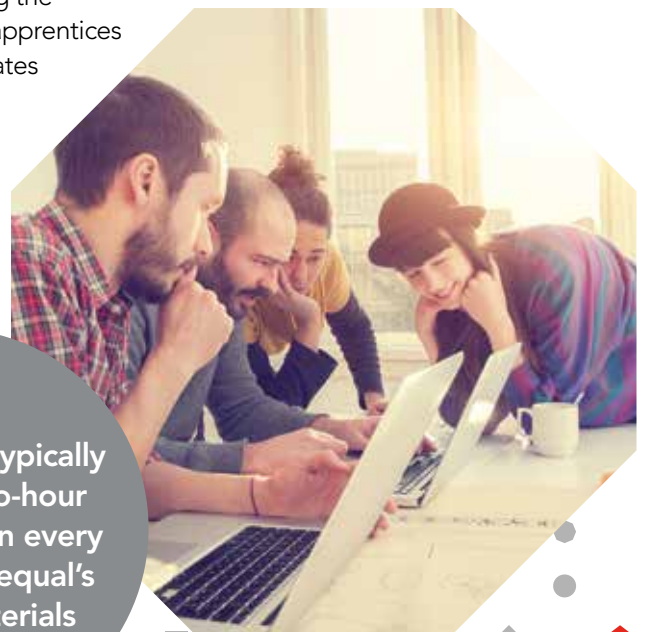
standard are required and Intequal will support apprentices to get to an acceptable level in functional skills as part of the apprenticeship. An induction programme is built into the delivery model and this includes face-to-face sessions with the learner and line manager to set objectives and discuss course commitments and expectations.

Training and learning programmes

Intequal would discuss with the employer the mix of vendor or Award Organisation (AO) qualifications/units required for the programme. Their Pathway Planners work directly with both apprentices and employer needs and to ensure needs are met and consider any specific requirements. Pathway Planners are key members of personnel who understand the technical, skills and knowledge requirements of the apprenticeship and how this is applied in the workplace to benefit both the apprentice and the business. They monitor the process from beginning to end, starting with building the calendar of training events apprentices must attend, target exam dates and stretch activities.

Off-the-job is typically done as a two-hour training session every week with Intequal's learning materials.

Employers also designate a line manager or mentor who works in partnership with the Pathway Planner and apprentice to make sure the programme meets everyone's needs and stays on track. Group and one-to-one sessions, tuition and review meetings all form part of the review and assessment process. The Pathway Planner also uses a CognAssist assessment to determine the learning needs of each apprentice. Intequal ensures that the Pathway Planner remains engaged with the apprentice throughout the entire process and this also allows them to monitor any dips in performance or motivation. It also checks that the apprentice is still in the correct job role and will be fully equipped to answer questions about what they do in their role.



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Learning outcomes and mastery

Apprentices must demonstrate they have mastered the skills they need to do their jobs in a number of ways including being able to apply themselves to routine tasks, demonstrate resourcefulness on projects and display business-like attitudes. The ability to work on their own is built up over time. When it comes to the functional skills, apprentices in the digital space tend to have a lot of natural stretch exercises (for instance, many are building and creating analytics reports) so there is ample opportunity to demonstrate these during training.

End-point assessment

Intequal has a 100% success rate against standards delivered including the country's first distinction in digital marketing. It provides the employer with a choice of EPAO where possible. Its high success rate has been attributed to the quality of the teaching and learning throughout the duration of the individual programmes up to and including the Gateway stage. This provider has created and standardised a robust internal quality assurance process to check portfolio development against the criteria of each standard.



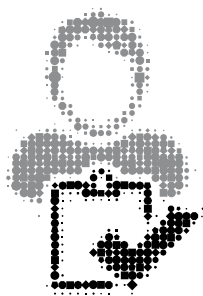
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Career progression

Of those who pass, 90% are offered a permanent role in businesses.

Business benefits

- increased productivity
- quicker return on investment from the individual
- engenders loyalty and retention
- builds a pipeline of digital talent for the future
- allows companies to upskill and cross-skill existing staff to address digital skills shortages
- Intequal's delivery method also provides the added benefit of less disruption in the working week to the employer and learner.



Read the full 'Making Apprenticeships Work: A reflection on practice' report at [cityandguilds.com/industry-skills-board](https://www.cityandguilds.com/industry-skills-board)

