



EMPLOYERS GUIDE 2026

MENTAL HEALTH



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APPRENTICE MENTAL HEALTH

Supporting apprentices' mental health is a key part of ensuring their well-being and success. Apprentices may face unique challenges, such as adapting to a new work environment or balancing learning with practical tasks, which can impact their mental health. As a manager, fostering a supportive, open environment can make a meaningful difference.

IDENTIFYING MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

Apprentices, especially those new to the workplace, may experience stress or anxiety as they adjust to their roles. Signs of potential mental health struggles can include:

WITHDRAWAL
FROM TEAM
ACTIVITIES

REDUCED
PRODUCTIVITY
OR FOCUS

CHANGES IN
BEHAVIOUR OR
MOOD

INCREASED
ABSENTEEISM



Keeping communication open and observing any changes in an apprentice's demeanour can help identify when additional support might be needed.

CREATING A SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT

Encourage a workplace culture that prioritises mental health by:

1

NORMALISING CONVERSATIONS:

Foster an environment where apprentices feel comfortable discussing mental health concerns. Show that talking about mental health is part of a healthy workplace.

2

OPEN DOOR POLICY:

Make it clear that apprentices can reach out at any time. Regular check-ins allow you to address any emerging concerns early.

3

PROMOTING PEER SUPPORT:

Encourage apprentices to connect with others, either through buddy systems or networking with other apprentices, to create a sense of community.

PROVIDING MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Employers can support apprentices by connecting them with resources for mental health:

- **Internal Support:** Make apprentices aware of any Employee Assistance Programmes (EAP) available. This can include counselling or mental health support available through the company.
- **External Resources:** Offer information about external resources, such as:
 - NHS Every Mind Matters: Provides mental health advice and self-help tips.
 - Mind: A charity offering guidance, support, and access to mental health services.
 - Samaritans: Offers 24/7 support for individuals facing mental health challenges.



Additionally, apprentices with specific needs may qualify for the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service, which is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions. This programme offers free support, such as emotional wellbeing guidance and workplace adjustment recommendations.

▶▶▶▶ <https://atw.maximusuk.co.uk/>

SUPPORTING APPRENTICES THROUGH CHALLENGES

If an apprentice is experiencing a mental health condition that impacts their performance, consider adjustments such as:

- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Adjust work hours or responsibilities to ease stress, particularly during times of high mental health impact.
- **Additional Breaks:** Provide flexibility for short breaks to manage stress during the workday.
- **Gradual Workload Increase:** Allow apprentices to slowly build up their responsibilities rather than feeling overwhelmed immediately.

TRAINING AND RESOURCES FOR MANAGERS

Managers play a crucial role in supporting apprentice mental health. Training can help managers recognise signs of mental health issues and respond effectively. Courses such as Mental Health First Aid or management workshops on mental well-being can improve understanding and provide tools for supporting apprentices effectively.

MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about our Apprenticeships and how we can support our apprentices, please contact our team at training@bpif.org.uk or call us on 01676 526 060.



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