
FW Solutions
Apprentices:-
Mentoring Handbook
For Employers

Contents

Section	Page
1. What is mentoring?	3
2. What is an Apprenticeship and how do they work?	4
3. The roles and responsibilities within Apprenticeships	4
4. Action planning, setting SMART targets	6
5. Managing the mentoring relationship	8
6. Good practice and skills of mentors	9
7. Benefits of good mentoring and making the mentoring relationship work	11
8. Links between the workplace and the external learning support	11
9. Stages in the mentoring relationship	12
10.The training cycle and learning styles	13
11.Health and safety	15
12.Safeguarding	15
13.Barriers to success	16
14.Additional support available to mentors	17
15.Further qualifications in mentoring	19

1. What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship between two people – the "mentor" and the "mentee." As a mentor, you pass on valuable skills, knowledge and insights to your mentee to help them develop personally and in their career.

In Greek mythology, Odysseus placed his friend **Mentor** in charge of his son Telemachus when he had to leave to fight in the Trojan War. The name Mentor has been adopted in English as a term meaning someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a less experienced colleague.

A more up to date definition is:

"Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they may maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be."

1. What is an Apprenticeship and how do Apprenticeships work?

An Apprenticeship offers a learner the opportunity to earn a wage while they train in a job, gaining a formal qualification and supporting their journey towards progressing in their career. Depending on the sector and level, the Apprenticeship may take anything from 12 months to over four years. Apprenticeships may be offered to both new and existing staff within an organisation. As a rule they will require the Apprentice to work for at least 30 hours a week, although this may be reduced in certain circumstances and by adding to the length of the learning programme.

An apprentice is generally paid as a regular member of staff, however there are set minimum guidelines which can be seen at www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

Apprenticeships are available at:

- Intermediate level – level 2
- Advanced level – level 3, and
- Higher level – level 4-7

Apprenticeships can be in over 190 sectors with over 2000 job roles being covered. Alongside the nationally recognised qualification at the appropriate level to the requirement of their role, the Apprentice will also develop functional skills in English, Maths and IT and a technical certificate based on an assessment of the background knowledge they will need to carry out their job role and complete their qualification.

2. The roles and responsibilities within Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships involve a tripartite relationship between the Apprentice, the employer and a learning provider. Each has their respective roles and responsibilities within the Apprenticeship relationship and these are flexed in each situation, depending on the particular needs and abilities of the parties involved.

The apprentice is responsible for:

- Upholding the requirements of the job role
- Carrying out the planned tasks and targets in line with training goals
- Acting in accordance with the employer requirements & their organisational policies
- Ensuring they maintain a safe and healthy work environment
- Maintaining high levels of attendance at work and / or training (if off site)
- Participating in regular reviews
- Setting stretching targets for personal development.

The employer responsibilities include:

- To employ the Apprentice and pay their salary, providing a contract of employment
- To provide an induction, including personal safety
- To provide a safe and healthy work environment

- To safeguard the Apprentice
- To provide a work role whereby the Apprentice has access to relevant work experience to complement the chosen Apprenticeship qualification
- To pay the required contribution toward training costs (if applicable)
- Allowing the apprentice time off for study
- Supervisory & mentor support.

The learning provider's responsibilities include:

- To support the employer with the identification of an appropriate Apprenticeship framework
- To help develop job descriptions and person specifications
- To support recruitment
- Initially assessing the candidates to ensure they receive the appropriate learning support to maximise the chances of them achieving their Apprenticeship
- To create and update as appropriate, an Individual Learner Record and Learning Plan to document the Apprenticeship
- Registering the Apprentice with appropriate awarding bodies for their framework
- Providing advice, guidance and materials to support the building of an evidence portfolio
- To support the apprentice's workplace induction
- To develop and implement a bespoke training programme in line with employer and apprentice requirements
- Manage the required paperwork to ensure the provider can claim the Government funding available for the training within the Apprenticeship
- To manage their Ofsted responsibilities
- To regularly monitor, review and assess progress and provide feedback to both the employer and Apprentice
- To support with additional training where such needs are identified
- To provide pastoral care to Apprentices whilst on programme.

3. Action planning, setting SMART targets

One way to be helpful to the mentee will be to support them to progress towards their targets and helping them to set effective targets.

SMART targets help develop explicitness in goal setting. SMART stands for:

S	Specific
M	Measurable
A	Achievable
R	Realistic
T	Time-bound

So SMART targets set out what is going to happen, who's going to do it, by when and how achievement will be measured. Such targets should be set by the apprentice to ensure that they 'own' them and therefore feel greater commitment to their achievement.

Developing SMART targets

Specific

The goal needs to be specific not general. This means the target is clear and unambiguous. To make goals specific, they must state exactly what is expected and will generally answer the "W" questions:

What: What do I want to accomplish?

Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal;

Who: Who is involved? Where: which location;

Which: Identify requirements and constraints.

Measurable

Requires the need for concrete criteria for measuring progress towards achievement in order to know if the target is complete.

A measurable goal will usually answer questions such as: How much? or How many?

Achievable

This requires the target to be realistic and attainable. It may be stretching but should never be impossible. A measure of achievability may be the ability of the apprentice to answer questions around how they plan to achieve the target.

Relevant

Relevance is about ensuring that the target matters. That it will make a difference to the apprentice and their role. A relevant target would be one that when asked, "Does this seem worthwhile?" would gain the response "YES".

4. Managing the Mentoring Relationship

The mentoring relationship needs to be treated with respect. It should focus on the mentee's needs, and use the skills of smart questioning, active listening, and feedback to achieve the best outcome.

1. Ground rules

Establish some rules for the mentoring arrangement, with desired outcomes. This could be a set agenda for points to cover, or some performance goals for the mentee to pursue outside of their regular appraisal structure. This clarity ensures that all parties know explicitly what the mentoring relationship is for and what success of the relationship looks like. One of the key reasons that mentoring can fail is that there is a fundamental misunderstanding about what is expected from either party. *It is important to ensure that the mentoring relationship is not confused with the line management relationship.*

2. Set regular mentoring meetings

Mentoring is based on mutual trust and respect. You will need to set regular meetings to ensure you have opportunities to work together on planned activities and reviewing progress against actions set. Your own time management and reliability are important features to ensure that the mentoring time is respected and treated as a priority. If possible, conduct mentoring meetings away from the mentee's normal working environment. This will help provide the right environment and provides an opportunity to create an environment which enables a different perspective to be accessed.

3. Lead by example

The mentoring conversation may be informal, but the overall arrangement is important and should be professional. This needs to be modelled by the mentor if the mentee is to understand the importance and treat the relationship appropriately. Consistency is key, showing that you have a consistent approach to development, the relationship and your commitment to the development of the mentee.

4. Be honest and open

Discuss current issues or concerns in an honest conversation. You will need to be approachable and show respect for your mentee.

5. Build sustainable improvements, not quick fixes

Use the mentoring session to exchange views and give the mentee guidance. It is important not to just give the mentee immediate answers to a problem. A simple answer to a problem is rarely as valuable as understanding how to approach such problems in the future. Mentoring is a great way to progress a person's professional and personal development, and help create a more productive organisation. It can also be very rewarding – for the mentor and the mentee. To keep the mentoring relationship on track, set regular mentor meetings, be honest and open, and do not look for quick fixes. Mentoring is a long-term commitment.

5. Good practice and skills of mentors

To be a good mentor, you need to have experience relevant to the mentee's situation. This can be technical experience, management experience, or life experience. Mentoring is about transferring information, competence, and experience to mentees, so that they can use it to build their confidence. As a mentor, you are there to encourage, nurture, and provide support because you have already travelled the same road.

In terms of the process the mentor must be in charge of timekeeping, keeping the mentee on track and focused; holding the mentee accountable for setting goals and strategies to achieve these outcomes. The mentor role is to reflect back, provide pathways and structure to enable clarity of thinking and generation of positive ideas for growth and **development**.

Therefore to be an effective mentor, you need to:

- **Want to help others** – you will need to be willing to spend time helping someone else to understand aspects of work, work life and the skills required for tasks and be available to generally provide information, guidance and act as a sounding board.
- **Be Positive** - be approachable in order to encourage questions.
- **Show empathy** – ensure that the mentee understands that you are supportive and were once in their position and so understand their concerns and challenges.
- **Understand what motivates development and personal growth** – through continuing your own personal development you become a role model for others on the journey of careers development. To help others develop, you need to value your own development and promote through role modelling the idea of lifelong learning.
- **Have confidence** – with the ability to offer feedback and challenge your mentee in a way that is non-threatening and helps them to look at situations from different perspectives.
- **Ask the right questions** – it is useful as a mentor to ask the questions that enable your mentee to do the thinking. One way to achieve this is to think of what you want to tell the mentee and to find a question that will help the mentee come to the same conclusion. Open questions are critical here, those that cannot be answered with just yes or no. Also, challenge the responses offered by the mentee to ask why they offered that answer, are there other perspectives? It is important to ask rather than make your own assumptions about a situation or area of development. This may be achieved by summarising your understanding and asking if your summary is correct.
- **Observe progress** – you will need to be able to objectively observe skills and abilities being implemented and provide feedback on these.
- **Motivating and encouraging** – ensuring that through your support the mentee is motivated towards their learning and feels supported, even when things are not going as well to plan as they may hope.
- **Listen actively** – this involves attentively listening not only to what is said but also the way it is said in terms of tone, body language and perhaps what is not said. Showing that you are listening is an invaluable skill; it shows that you value that persons view and that you will not interrupt them. This requires patience, practice and time.
- **Provide feedback** – feedback is critical to ensure that the mentee understands the progress they are making and areas for further development. It should be delivered objectively and supported by specific task-based evidence to make it tangible. This

provides another opportunity to suggest alternatives to a chosen approach from discussion and adopting a different perspective. It should also include some alternatives and suggestions for continued improvement and development. They may well need ideas and even advice at this stage. This feedback will contribute to the apprentice's overall assessment by their learning provider.

- **Notice** – a key to good mentoring may be merely noticing how the apprentice is. Sometimes this may be more about what is not said than what is said. Are there any changes in their motivation, commitment, attendance and so forth that may need support and discussion? There may be subtle indicators that the apprentice has an issue with work or interpersonal relationships that with support they can overcome.
- **Agree future goals and targets** – in order to understand how to progress to the next stage the mentee needs help with setting specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound goals and recording these in some form of action plan to enable you together to review progress against these at the next opportunity.

Mentoring is about supporting structured development. The mentor should not feel pressured to have to tell the mentee everything you know about a subject, at every opportunity. What is more important is helping the mentee to identify suitable opportunities to gain skills, knowledge and experience at work, preferably within everyday tasks. Opportunities might include, but not be limited to the following ideas:

- reading appropriate manuals, procedures
- work observation or shadowing
- learning a new job, procedure or practice
- researching options to an issue or question
- attending relevant meetings
- solving work based problems
- managing tasks or systems
- writing reports to update others on an event, task or job
- attending internal training

6. Benefits of good mentoring and making the relationship work

When carried out well, mentoring can help the mentee feel more confident and therefore move toward greater development and self-reliance. They will develop greater self-awareness and improve vital skills required to succeed in the workplace and the wider world.

For an organisation, mentoring is a good way of transferring valuable competencies from one person to another, in a way which makes sense to that particular organisation. It therefore complements training and external support. Mentoring can help to build strong teams and can form part of succession planning, ensuring the skills vital to business success are developed and nurtured within the workplace. Many Apprenticeship schemes are based on the principles of mentoring.

The apprentice's learning is their responsibility; as a mentor you are there to facilitate their learning by helping to manage the mentoring relationship. Both parties have responsibility for the quality of the relationship and making it work. It is worthwhile spending some time with the learner when you first meet, agreeing the 'ground rules' for how you will work together. The Initial meeting might include: getting to know each other informally to begin to build trust and identify areas of common interest; discussing the mentee's learning needs and aspirations for career development; setting the ground rules in terms of timeliness for set meetings, honesty, openness, respect, directness of feedback, preferred communication style; and what records or formal papers will be required to document the relationship.

It is essential that you discuss confidentiality and the types of information that will be confidential but also that as a mentor you would be duty bound to report to appropriate colleagues, e.g. anything illegal or where you believe the mentee may be at risk of harm to himself / herself or others.

7. Links between the workplace and the external learning support

In collaboration with your organisation, the learning provider will provide sets of standards for the qualifications that the apprentice is working towards. These will provide details of the knowledge, skills and experience required to be evidenced and how these must be evidenced and assessed. Discussing these criteria with the apprentice and the assessor assigned to your organisation by your learning provider, will ensure that the opportunities for gathering evidence from the workplace are maximised and your role as mentor is as effective as possible. It will also ensure that the Apprenticeship framework units to be completed are relevant to your organisation and the role that the apprentice is expected to perform within it.

Capturing the agreed plans for evidence building into a formal training plan will aid explicitness and provide a tangible reference to support day to day target setting. Your training provider assessor will work with you to do this. This plan will link to an assessment plan, with qualification units, timing for their completion and the assessment evidence required. This will enable formal assessment visits to be scheduled to enable you and the apprentice to fit the planned schedule and help motivate the apprentice through unit achievement.

8. Stages in the mentoring relationship and how to let go of the relationship

There are 4 key stages in the mentoring relationship:

1. **Getting to know each other** – establishing rapport and building a relationship of trust. At this stage it is essential to ensure that expectations of both parties are explicitly understood.
2. **Goal setting** – agreeing learning expectations by:
 - identifying potential learning opportunities at work and how these will fit with the off the job training element.
 - agreeing a schedule of meetings.
 - confirming the ‘ground rules’ and perhaps formally recording these.
3. **Progress** – this should be the longest stage in the relationship. Using the series of meetings agreed you will meet to review, assess and provide feedback on targets as well as together agree future goals and targets. All will contribute to the off the job training provided by the learning provider.
4. **End** – it may be difficult to end the relationship, as if built on trust it may develop into a close working relationship. However, defining the end of the relationship is important. A final meeting may be helpful here to provide a final review, a reflection on distance travelled and confirming future support strategies which may be in place for the apprentice’s future development and career journey. It may also include a celebration of achievement.

9. Training, learning and learning styles

The Training Cycle

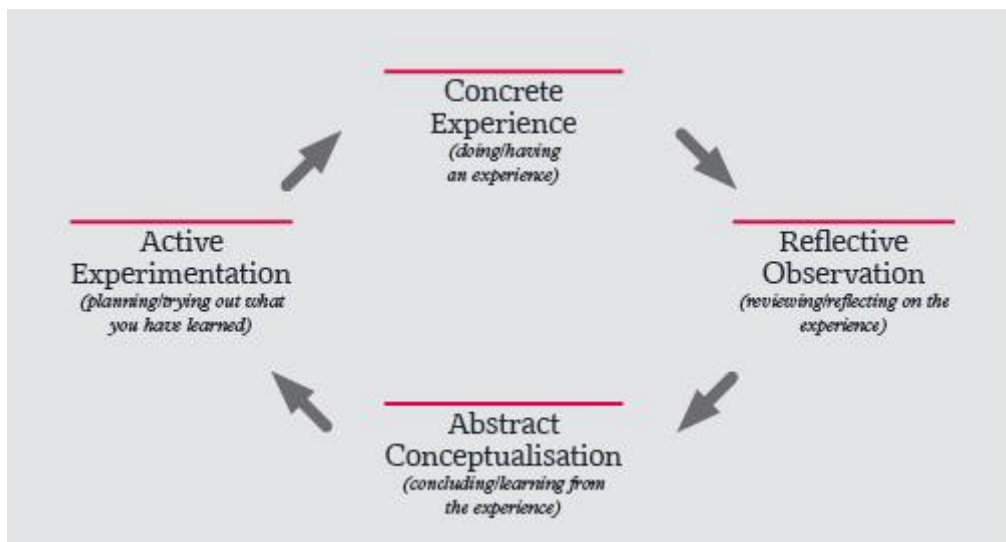
Without overcomplicating the process, the training cycle is a simple way of ensuring that the best Individual Learning Plan is determined for the apprentice, & may include any or all of:

- Establishing the skill requirements and subsequent training needs of the mentee.
- The design of the most suitable events and most effective training methods.
- Delivery of the training with additional support if required.
- Evaluation and validation of the training to ensure that the mentee achieved their required outcome and offers an opportunity to reflect on alternatives or ways to improve further.



The Learning Cycle

There has been much research carried out on how individuals learn and the most popular and widely referenced is the work carried out by David Kolb in the 1970s and 1980s. He described the learning cycle, now known as **The Kolb Experiential Learning Cycle**:



The learning might commence at any point on the cycle (an experience or a lesson) but the learner needs to go through all the processes of the cycle to complete the learning. This must include reflecting on the experience in order to understand how to apply the learning in another context. As a mentor you might wish to discuss with them what they have learned in order to stimulate that reflection process.

Learning styles

Preferred styles guide the way individuals learn. They also change the way you represent experiences, the way you recall information, and even the words you choose. Research shows that each learning style uses different parts of the brain. By involving more of the brain during learning, we remember more of what we learn.

An individual's preferred learning style and the environment they find most comfortable for learning is a function of their personality type. We have the ability to learn using all learning styles, but will have a preference. The key to successful learning is to satisfy your own preferences and use all the appropriate learning styles required, to meet the learning needs necessary to accomplish the task. We can truly grow as learners by using all learning styles, including those you least prefer.

The Seven Learning Styles

- **Visual (spatial):** prefer using pictures, images, and spatial understanding.
- **Aural (auditory-musical):** prefer using sound and music.
- **Verbal (linguistic):** prefer using words, both in speech and writing.
- **Physical (kinaesthetic):** prefer using your body, hands and sense of touch.
- **Logical (mathematical):** prefer using logic, reasoning and systems.
- **Social (interpersonal):** prefer to learn in groups or with other people.
- **Solitary (intrapersonal):** prefer to work alone and use self-study.

Through understanding these differences it is possible to support the mentee to think about learning opportunities which either match their preferences or, when they want to stretch themselves, use different learning styles other than their preferences. There are many online questionnaires, freely available which can support the mentee to understand their learning style. Also, your learning provider may well be able to provide a quick test.

10. Health & Safety

Your training provider will conduct a Health & Safety assessment of your organisation and the apprentice's work place before the apprentice starts with you and might require some actions to be taken if risks are identified. This process will also identify any personal, protective equipment that might be required by the apprentice.

As the mentor you might not be a designated Health & Safety representative but as an employee you do have an obligation to always consider health and safety in the workplace. You will be ideally placed to identify any potential risks to the apprentice and certainly obliged to act on any concerns raised by the apprentice. You can seek immediate advice from your local Health & Safety representative but your training provider will also be well placed to offer advice and support and should be notified immediately if the apprentice has any concerns, even if they are being addressed.

11. Safeguarding

As well as the normal duty of care that an employer has towards any employee, there is an enhanced responsibility for safeguarding when it comes to an apprentice. This will form part of the workplace assessment carried out by your training provider. Issues that will be considered in the process will be that there is adequate supervision, not working alone and not at risk of harassment, discrimination or abuse. Your training provider will offer the apprentice advice and guidance on staying safe and provide them with contacts to report any concerns that they might have. As mentor it is your responsibility to remain vigilant to ensure that the apprentice is not liable to be exposed to these risks. Again, if you have any concerns you can ask your training provider for advice.

12. Barriers to success

Barriers to effective mentoring and coaching stem from:

1. Organisational issues
2. Personality issues
3. External issues

Organisational issues cause barriers where the mentoring relationship is not fully supported in the workplace. This will mean time and access may prove difficult. This may often result from the fact that organisational needs and objectives are not aligned with those of the mentoring relationship, most commonly because of business needs....”we need to get this done, there is no time to ...”

It is vital that when the individual learning plan is put together that it is realistic in terms of expectations of what both the apprentice and the mentor will be working on. It must also have an element of flexibility in order to accommodate business need. If it becomes apparent that the business requirements have changed then discuss this with the workplace assessor and adjust it accordingly.

However, if an employer agrees to offer a young person an Apprenticeship then they are agreeing to make certain commitments in terms of resources in supporting the apprentice. If they are unable to see that commitment through then they should not take on an apprentice. The mentoring obligations in terms of direct supervision and time out from the work place must not be seen as less important than other business needs.

Personality issues between the mentor and the mentee can lead to a breakdown of the relationship. Your workplace assessor will be able to mediate in an attempt to provide a strategy to overcome this. Often it simply comes down to communication. If the relationship is irreparably damaged then either a new mentor will need to be identified or the apprentice will have to be withdrawn.

External issues arise when other factors are important to the mentee and they are unable to concentrate on progressing their targets in line with mentoring commitment. These will often be issues in the apprentice’s personal life or circumstances. Your workplace assessors will provide you with assistance in working with the apprentice to talk through the issues in an attempt to help the apprentice to identify possible solutions.

Another barrier to a successful outcome for the apprentice might be that they have additional learning needs. These should be identified in the Initial Assessment of the apprentice which is carried out by the training provider before the apprentice starts. Your training provider will then work with you to develop a strategy of additional support for both mentor and apprentice.

Very occasionally the additional learning needs will only be identified after the apprentice has begun their Apprenticeship. In these circumstances you will need to work with your training provider to determine the best course of action for all parties – the apprentice and you as employer.

13. Where to signpost for additional support:

There are many support agencies available to help you to signpost your mentee to specific advice. Below is a sample of the types of support available and links to find them.

General Advice

Citizens Advice Bureau Free advice on legal and other issues	http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/index.htm
No Limits General support and advice for young people	http://www.nolimitshelp.org.uk/need-help
Mental health support	https://www.turn2me.org

Money and Debt Advice

Frontline Debt Advice	http://frontlinedebtadvice.org.uk
National Debt Line	https://www.nationaldebtline.org
Money Advice Service	https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk

Alcohol and Drug addiction support

Alcohol support	http://www.stop-drinking.co.uk/index.html
NHS alcohol support	http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholsupport.aspx
Talk to FRANK	http://www.talktofrank.com/contact-frank
NHS drug support	http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/drugs

Pregnancy support

NHS Support for Parents	http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/Pages/services-support-for-parents.aspx
NHS pregnancy support for teenager	http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/teenager-pregnant.aspx#close
Action for Children	http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/our-services/young-people/teenage-pregnancy

Sexual Health

NHS sexual health information	http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Talkingaboutsex/Pages/Whocanhelp.aspx http://www.nhs.uk/service-search/sexual-health-information-and-support/locationsearch/734
Sexual healthline	http://www.patient.co.uk/support/sexual-health-line-england

Housing and Council Tax support

Council tax advice	http://www.counciltaxsupport.com
Southampton housing support	http://www.southampton.gov.uk/living/housing
Hampshire housing support	http://www3.hants.gov.uk/adult-services/supporting-people.htm
Portsmouth housing support	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/ext/housing-and-council-tax/housing/looking-for-a-home.aspx

English and maths support for adults

Elevate App - educational game that supports learning outside of the classroom, available from App store	
BBC English and maths support	http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/0/

Disability support

Disability support	https://www.gov.uk/browse/disabilities
--------------------	---

14. Additional support available to mentors

We have a mentor group set up on Linked-in specifically for all employer staff who have attended the ALPHI mentor training programme. This forum provides an opportunity to chat to fellow mentors, ask questions, discuss queries and share good practice.

To access the group go to:

Your learning provider will help and support you in many ways throughout the lifetime of the Apprenticeship. You will have their contact details and be in regular contact through reviews and assessments.

The European Mentoring and Coaching Council (EMCC) promotes good practice in mentoring and coaching across Europe:

www.emccouncil.org

15. Further qualifications in mentoring

There are many accredited training programmes leading to mentoring qualifications at all levels. Some links to support you to find such qualifications include:

Hot courses:

<http://www.hotcourses.com/training/mentoring-courses/16022/>

Institute of Leadership and management:

<https://www.i-l-m.com/About-ILM/Work-with-us/coaching-and-mentoring>

Institute of Counselling:

<http://www.instituteofcounselling.org.uk/certificate-in-mentoring>

Links to other mentoring qualifications:

http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Qualification/Details/601_1814_3

http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Qualification/Details/600_6834_6

http://register.ofqual.gov.uk/Qualification/Details/601_1220_7