







Institute

Paraplanning is a relatively recent function within financial advice firms, which focuses mainly on non-client-facing tasks in order to make the advice process more efficient. Paraplanners did not really exist 20 years ago, as most financial advisers would tend to carry out all aspects of the financial planning process, including their own research, technical analysis and suitability processes.



However, now that regulatory aspects within the advice process have become more challenging, advice firms have realised that separating the client-facing processes and the non-client-facing processes can bring a huge level of efficiency to a firm and therefore improve productivity and profitability.

The role of the paraplanner is now seen as an essential component within many advice firms, in order to provide technical expertise, regulatory support and product guidance to financial advisers. Like financial advisers, paraplanners are now expected to be level four qualified, as a minimum, but not necessarily with exactly the same qualifications.

Following the launch of the NMBA Financial Adviser Apprenticeship Programme in April 2018, we are delighted to now be able to offer a Paraplanning Apprenticeship Programme for both senior and mid-level paraplanners looking to further their knowledge or new industry entrants, graduates or otherwise aspiring to become paraplanners or looking for an entry route into financial planning.

Again, we are proud to be at the forefront of apprenticeship training in areas of financial advice and right at the heart of helping to bring new talent to our sector.

Apprenticeship Programme

The New Model Business Academy

What is an apprenticeship?

The New Model Business Academy was launched in May 2008 as a not-for-profit organisation, dedicated to the training and development of financial advisers and their support staff. The organisation was originally established to support advisers through the transition of the Retail Distribution Review (RDR), but the Academy has now evolved further to become a UK-wide training, development and business support resource for financial advice professionals.

Our experience and track record in financial services training and development has provided us with the expertise to offer national apprenticeship training and we are committed to working closely with financial advice firms and apprentices, to offer an end-to-end training solution for bringing new talent to the financial advice profession. An apprenticeship combines practical on-the-job training with off-the-job learning, which helps people gain valuable knowledge, skills and behaviours to develop their career. Apprenticeships are suitable for those who have recently left full time education and are looking to start a new career, as well as those already working, who want to try something completely different or progress their career further and improve their future prospects.

An apprentice could be employed as a cost-effective way to improve the productivity of a business, which could also lead to the improved skill and talent for the future of an organisation. Taking on apprentices can lead to higher levels of energy and enthusiasm within a business, improving competitiveness and levels of motivation within the workplace.

There are some basic rules that govern what an apprenticeship is:

- The apprentice must be employed in a real job but could be a new or existing employee
- The apprentice must work towards achieving an approved apprenticeship standard
- The apprenticeship training must last at least 12 months
- The apprentice must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training



New apprenticeship changes

The Government has a new vision for 2020 and wants to see an increase in the quality and quantity of apprenticeships delivered throughout the country.

In April 2017, the way that the Government funds apprenticeships changed. Now, all employers with a pay bill of over £3M need to contribute to an apprenticeship levy, which is a substantial change to the way that apprenticeships have been funded in the past.

Also within the new funding system, employers who do not contribute to the levy are also allowed to gain access to apprenticeship funding through 'co-investment'. An employer can choose the most appropriate training they would like for their apprentices, through an approved training provider, as well as select an assessment organisation.

Through co-investment, the government require non-levy paying employers to make a 5% contribution towards the cost of the apprenticeship training and they will pay the remaining 95%, up to the maximum amount of government funding available for that particular apprenticeship. There are also some financial incentives for apprentices who are aged between 16 and 18 at outset.

Please note that these new apprenticeship changes are currently only available in England. Discussions are continuing

between the government and the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish administrations to ensure the new system works for everyone, wherever they are in the UK. Levy contributions from firms in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be returned to those devolved administrations via the so-called Barnett Formula. This is because skills policy and funding is devolved to the respective administrations.

We have demonstrated our capability to deliver apprenticeship training and are listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, which provides assurance to government and employers as to our suitability to deliver apprenticeship programmes. The NMBA Apprenticeship Programme can support a range of apprenticeship requirements from recruitment to funding and the delivery of the apprenticeship training. We can also help to appoint an independent assessor and tailor an apprenticeship solution to meet different requirements.

Although NMBA were approved as a registered training provider in March 2017, it was not until December 2017 that NMBA were allocated any apprenticeship funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which can be used to support employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy. This funding allowed NMBA to start its apprenticeship training programme in early 2018.

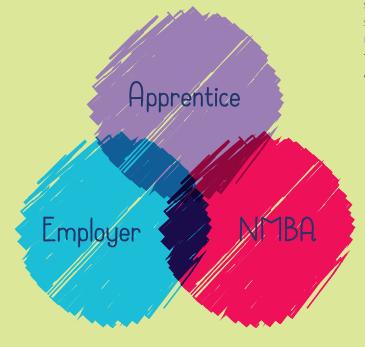


How do apprenticeships work?

Financial services apprenticeships

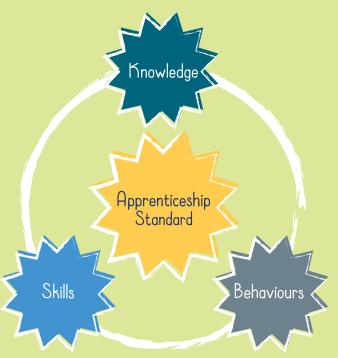
Apprenticeships provide a fantastic opportunity to develop a career path in a chosen industry, by combining work-based learning with industry relevant qualifications. The majority of the learning will be within the workplace in a role relevant to the nature of the apprenticeship but will also require an at least 20% to be off-the-job training.

This therefore requires a three-way relationship between the employer, the apprentice and ourselves as the appointed Apprenticeship Training Provider.



We will aim to build a strong relationship with the employer, and ensure that they are fully equipped to support their apprentice's learning journey. Regular meetings between the three parties will ensure that development plans can be initiated, tailored, monitored and reviewed to maximise success. Within the financial advice sector, the number of advisers has been declining over recent years and this trend is set to continue due to the current age demographics and the limited number of options for entry into the profession. We hope that apprenticeships could provide an excellent opportunity to introduce new people to a career in financial services as well as develop those already working within the industry.

New apprenticeship 'standards' have been developed by employer groups known as 'trailblazers'. These standards show what an apprentice will be doing and the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by them for a particular role. A number of standards have already been developed within the financial services sector and each of these include an approved assessment plan and funding cap.



NMBA was involved in the trailblazer group for a number of the current standards available and so have close insight to the training, assessment and funding required for each of these particular standards. Although there are a number of approved apprenticeship standards in financial services, our expertise currently focuses on the Paraplanning and Financial Adviser apprenticeship standards.

The Paraplanner Apprenticeship

This is an apprenticeship in paraplanning; a professionally qualified technical support role in Financial Adviser businesses. The role of the Paraplanner is to assist the Financial Adviser in researching, analysing and preparing compliant financial reports for clients that verify the recommendations made in accordance with the company investment philosophy.

It is designed as either an entry role for businesses wishing to develop a professional Paraplanner with no previous experience, although it is also a potential progression route from (the entry level) Financial Services Administrator apprenticeship. Additionally, as there is increasing demand for competent Paraplanners, this will also be attractive to part qualified staff or those having gained general administration experience, who's employers have traditionally found it difficult to provide a formal training structure to facilitate progress into this role.

Upon completion, there is the potential to develop further into the role of Senior Paraplanner (which requires a broader level of industry experience, with strategic input and a wider range of technical knowledge supported by further qualifications), or other highly technical roles within advice or product provider businesses, including the regulated role of a Financial Adviser.

'The role of the Paraplanner is to assist the Financial Adviser in researching, analysing and preparing compliant financial reports for clients that verify the recommendations made in accordance with the company investment philosophy'

Entry requirements for the Paraplanner Apprenticeship:

- Qualifications 5 GCSEs A-C Grades (including Maths and English)
- Criteria be an EEA Citizen and have been ordinarily resident within an EEA country for the previous three years (as at the first day of the apprenticeship)
- Age eligibility aged 16 65
- Job role work for at least 30 hours per week

Financial Services – Paraplanner – Level 4

- Duration 18 months
- Funding band maximum £9,000 (this is the total cost for the apprenticeship)
- Cost to employer £450 as a non-refundable payment
- Apprenticeship funding NMBA will use its funding allocation for the remaining costs
- Further incentives are available for apprentices aged 16 to 18
- Apprentices will obtain knowledge, skill and behavioural competencies
- Qualifications the apprentice will be required to achieve a level 4 qualification

Qualifications required:

The apprentice will be required to complete the Certificate in Paraplanning from Chartered Insurance Institute. The CII Certificate includes the following four examinations:

- Financial Service Regulation & Ethics (R01)
- Investment Principles & Risk (R02)
- Personal Taxation (R03)
- Paraplanning (J09)

Professional registration

By passing the apprenticeship, professional registration can be achieved by application to the Chartered Insurance Institute, with recognised status as follows:

 'Cert PFS (Paraplanning)' with the Chartered Insurance Institute

The learner journey

1. On-programme learning

The on-programme stage has been designed to integrate with and support the Employer's existing Performance Management processes.

NMBA's role during the on-programme stage is to:

- Support the employer, monitor progress and make interventions as required to ensure that progress is being made against the learning outcomes as described in appendix 1;
- Advise and agree with the employer when the apprentice is ready to pass through the 'Gateway' and progress to end point assessment;
- Oversee the compilation of all evidence required for end point assessment including conducting reflective discussion as required;
- Submit all final evidence (to cover all learning outcomes) from the three methods of end point assessment and submit to the independent Assessment Organisation for 100% end point assessment.

The approach taken to ensuring that the apprentice is on track during the apprenticeship is based on the in house Performance Management process, which is a standard and recognised way of working within the Financial Services sector.



2. Assessment gateway

The Line Manager and Training Provider will jointly assess the Apprentice's readiness to move to end point assessment from approximately three months from the projected completion date. This stage is known as the 'gateway' in which the on-programme learning is reviewed against the learning outcomes. It allows time to plan for how the assessment methods will be most effectively applied (depending on the employers particular business model) to provide evidence of competence in the role. If the apprentice is considered ready to progress then they can move to End Assessment.

3. End point assessment

End point assessment will be provided by an independent Assessment Organisation who will have 100% accountability for the formal assessment of the apprentice and the decision of pass, fail or distinction.

The focus of the end point assessment is on the apprentice being able to prove their competence in the role of Paraplanner, through work completed in this end point assessment stage. This entails demonstrating competence in the 45 defined learning outcomes (defined as 'What Good Looks Like') derived from the skills and behaviour competencies set out in the standard; as shown in appendix 1.

The end point assessment will be measured using two assessment methods which together will provide the evidence through synoptic assessment:

1. A portfolio of work completed during the end point assessment stage

This can be from a range of evidence and will be collected by the Training Provider as deemed appropriate for the type of business and the apprentice's working environment. The most appropriate types would be identified through discussion with the Employer and Apprentice, taking into account the job role and internal systems and processes.

2. Reflective discussion

The reflective discussion will take the form of a structured interview with the Training Provider to explore the content of the portfolio and the learner journey in more detail.

Responsibilities



Training provider responsibilities

NMBA's role during the **on-programme stage** is to:

- Support the employer, monitor progress and make interventions as required to ensure that progress is being made against the learning outcomes as described in appendix 1
- Advise and agree with the employer when the apprentice is ready to pass through the 'Gateway' and progress to end point assessment
- Oversee the compilation of all evidence required for end point assessment including conducting reflective discussion as required
- Submit all final evidence (to cover all learning outcomes) from the three methods of end point assessment and submit to the independent Assessment Organisation for 100% end point assessment

NMBA's will again play a key part in overseeing the **end point assessment** process by:

- Taking responsibility for organising and coordinating the process
- Providing support to the Line Manager to ensure a full understanding of the assessment methods, tools and submission requirements to enable the apprentice's journey to end point assessment

Employer responsibilities

The employer plays a key role in the development of an apprentice and should put time aside to provide dedicated support and mentoring to the apprentice within the workplace. The employer should ensure that the apprentice is given the right level of support and experience throughout the learning programme and be able to complete the portfolio with the apprentice to the level required. The employer will work closely with the apprentice and therefore be able to agree apprentice readiness for end point assessment through discussion with NMBA.

Apprenticeship journey

The NMBA Apprenticeship Programme will consist of a series of workshops, which apprentices will attend at the NMBA offices in Huddersfield. Other tuition will be conducted on a distance learning basis through webinars and online modules. Access will be provided to online learning tools, which will assist the apprentices to log and document all their learning activity, which will support the gathering of evidence for end point assessment. This apprenticeship training timetable shows the approximate timelines within the learning journey with the various roles and stages involved.

Month	Apprentice	Employer	Training provider	Assessment organisation
0	Understand the job role and apprenticeship commitment	Deliver induction training and understand role in apprenticeship	Explain apprenticeship, roles, timetable and commitments.	-
1 – 18	Works to role objectives / KPIs Develops knowledge and skills in line with learning outcomes	Manages as any other employee, including performance management via monthly 1 to 1s	Monitors progress; identifies gaps; supports employer and apprentice learning as required	-
1–12	Studies and takes qualifications	Supports and coaches the apprentice	Supports and trains the apprentice	-
13 – 15	Continues to work to role objectives/KPIs whilst developing knowledge and skills	'Gateway' to fir Line Manager and Training F agree whether the apprentic levels required against a Yes = Ready to sta No = Agree r	-	
15 – 16	tw	gree to make up of the) – nts		
16 - 17	Continues in role as normal and takes responsibility for completing portfolio of work completed	Continues to manage using Performance Management process and monthly 1 to 1s	Works with apprentice and Line Manager to ensure satisfactory progress in the final assessment (portfolio and reflective discussion)	_
17 – 18	Completes all work and prepares for submission to the independent assessment organisation for end point assessment	Continues to manage using performance management process and monthly 1 to 1s	Checks submission, administers as required and submits to independent assessment organisation for end point assessment	-
18	Receives result from end point assessment organisation	Receives result from end point assessment organisation	Reviews result with Line Manager and agrees next steps with Line Manager as required: Fail = Discuss for further assessment Pass or Distinction = Discuss progression	Assesses the submission and makes decision on Fail/Pass/Distinction



'The employer plays a key role in the development of an apprentice and should put time aside to provide dedicated support and mentoring to the apprentice within the workplace'

Appendix 1: Learning outcomes

KNOWLEDGE

Section	Competence	Learning outcomes: the learner can consistently:	
	Demonstrates a good understanding of the structure of the Financial Services market, including the role of the financial adviser, the paraplanner,	1. Describe the structure of the Financial Services market.	
Financial Services		2. Explain the role of financial advisers, paraplanners, product providers, support services and platforms in the financial services market place.	
Market	product providers, support services and platforms.	3. Explain the different options for how customers can make protection, investment and pension decisions including the difference between advice, non-advice, guidance and information only.	
	Understands the Financial Services	4. Describe the role of the Financial Conduct Authority and other regulatory bodies which are relevant to the role.	
Regulatory and Compliance	Understands the Financial Services regulatory framework, the ethics and key principles of the advice process. Knows and adheres to the systems and controls that are in place to protect the client and the company.	5. Outline the Financial Services regulatory framework and describe the organisational policies and procedures for complying with this.	
Compliance		6. Explain the key principles of the financial advice process.	
		7. Explain the meaning and importance of ethical behaviour.	
	Demonstrates an in-depth understanding of both financial products and financial planning tools. Can identify which type and features of the financial products are appropriate to the client's needs.	8. Explain the key features, benefits and limitations of the financial products which are relevant to the role.	
Products		9. Describe the financial planning tools which are relevant to the role and their purpose.	
		10. Explain the how to identify client's needs and how to match these to the most appropriate financial products.	
	Understands and utilises all systems and processes required to deliver the role objectives. Has awareness of how these fit within the wider company and	 Describe the organisational policies and procedures that apply to the role and how to comply with these to deliver the role objectives. 	
Systems and Processes		12. Identify how the organisational policies and procedures that apply to the role have an impact on the wider organisation.	
	the financial advice profession.	13. Identify how the organisational policies and procedures that apply to the role align to the wider financial advice profession.	

SKILLS

Section	Competence	Learning outcomes: the learner can consistently:			
	Consistently develops and delivers	 Demonstrates an in depth understanding of the needs of customers, colleagues and advisers and responds in a timely and accurate fashion within service standards. 			
Quality Service Delivery	excellent service to customers, colleagues and advisers, supporting the products / services provided and adhering to 'Treating Customers Fairly'	2. Demonstrates where they have exceeded customer expectations within the essence of TCF.			
	principles at all times.	3. Demonstrates through revised proposals that they have checked and considered that their work meets the quality processes put in place by your firm from a regulatory, compliance and ethical perspective.			
		4. Demonstrates an ability to adapt technical language in a way that the client understands.			
Customer	Develops effective relationships with customers and key contacts, handling and resolving issues through effective verbal/written/IT skills.	5. Builds rapport with an adviser and demonstrates technical ability through explanation of their reports and recommendations.			
Communication and Relationships		6. Prepares client reports through a variety of relevant media to support the data gathering, research, analysis and formation of the report.			
		7. Takes ownership of issues, escalating those which cannot be solved, highlighting potential solutions and follows through to ensure action has been taken.			
	Understands role within team and impact on others. Consistently endeavours to support colleagues and collaborate to achieve results.	8. Is an enthusiastic and positive team member and can demonstrate the value they bring to their team/workplace.			
Team Working and		9. Shares knowledge, ideas and experiences with the wider team to assist in continuous improvement.			
Collaboration		10. Demonstrates an open and honest communication style.			
		11. Identifies and communicates solutions to help their team achieve results.			
		12. Prioritises time and activities accordingly, managing resources as appropriate to deliver good outcomes for both the customer and the business.			
Planning and Prioritising	Successfully analyses and plans in order to deliver good outcomes for the business.	13. Flags concerns and potential solutions before crises arise, when concerned about workloads or timescales.			
		14. Demonstrates continual reprioritisation of work dependent on internal and external factors that may impact on the delivery schedule.			
Using Systems and Processes	Consistently adheres to systems and processes using proficient IT	15. Utilises systems accurately and appropriately.			
	skills, including risk, regulatory and governance requirements.	16. Demonstrates proficient use of IT systems and ensures that regulatory requirements are met.			

BEHAVIOURS

Section	Competence	Learning outcomes: the learner can consistently:		
Honesty and Integrity	Truthful, sincere in their actions and doing the right thing (even when not the easiest).	1. Demonstrates integrity and ethical behaviour in the way they do their job.		
		2. Acts in an open and honest way.		
		3. Works in the Clients' best interests.		
Adaptability	Willingness to accept changing priorities and work patterns when new jobs need to be done, or requirements change.	4. Demonstrates a flexible approach.		
		5. Responds positively to change and shows willingness to refocus priorities when required.		
	5	6. Suggests ways to improve how work is done and shares best practice.		
	Shows drive and energy in their work, when things are going well and when challenges arise.	7. Demonstrates a positive and constructive approach to work.		
Enthusiasm		8. Shows a desire to get the detail correct.		
		9. Suggests ways to improve how work is done.		
	Meets personal commitments and expectations, eg completing work, timekeeping.	10. Plans and delivers work accurately in line with agreed targets.		
Dependability		11. Demonstrates tenacity in capturing all the information necessary to complete the supporting documentation.		
		12. Demonstrates attention to detail.		
	Proactive in their own development; commitment to the job and the business.	13. Takes ownership and seeks ways in which to develop own knowledge and skills within the role.		
Personal		14. Shares knowledge and experiences with others to assist in their learning journey.		
Commitment		15. Shows progression in developing their own career as they learn more about the job, the business and the market.		
		16. Demonstrates a proactive approach to maintaining competence in respect of new market developments and maintains own CPD record.		

CII Level 4 Certificate in Paraplanning

Qualification overview

The level 4 Certificate in Paraplanning offers a dedicated qualification route, developing paraplanning skills, expertise and advanced technical knowledge in several key advisory areas.

'The level 4 Certificate in Paraplanning offers a dedicated qualification route, developing paraplanning skills, expertise and advanced technical knowledge in several key advisory areas'

Completion requirements

The Certificate requires completion of four units from the Personal Finance qualifications framework, providing a minimum of 75 credits on successful completion.

Candidates are required to take the following units:

- (R01) Financial services, regulation and ethics, or (CF1)
 UK financial services regulations and ethics
- (R02) Investment principles and risk
- (R03) Personal taxation
- (J09) Paraplanning

Members are entitled to use the designation CertPFS (Paraplanning), subject to membership and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements.





Chartered Insurance Institute

Key information

Unit	Assessment method	Study hours ⁽¹⁾	Credits awarded	Unit level	Results notification
(R01)	2-hour exam		20	4	Immediate
Financial services, regulation and ethics	100 multiple choice questions	60			
and ethics	65% nominal pass mark ⁽²⁾				
	2-hour exam		20	4	Immediate
(RO2) Investment principles and risk	100 multiple choice questions	60			
	65% nominal pass mark ⁽²⁾				
	1-hour exam		10	4	Immediate
(RO3) Personal taxation	50 multiple choice questions	50			
	65% nominal pass mark ⁽²⁾				
(JO9) Paraplanning	3 written coursework assignments, each typically 2,000 to 3,000 words	100	30	4	8 weeks

Notes: 1. The recommended minimum study hours will vary depending on your experience and ability.

2. The actual pass mark may vary from one session to another to ensure consistency in pass standards.

Assessment method

Certificate level units (R0 units) are assessed by multiplechoice question exam (MCQ). For online MCQ exams, result notification is immediate on completion. For paper-based MCQ exams, results are released five weeks' following the exam sitting. Unit J09 is assessed by written coursework assignments.

Study time

Specific study time guidelines are provided for each unit on its webpage and in the CII qualifications brochure. The notional Ofqual 'Total Qualification Time' for this qualification is 270 hours. This represents the time a student might typically take to complete the qualification.

Assessment format

Each unit, with the exception of J09 (Paraplanning), is assessed by a single multiple-choice on screen exam, tested year-round throughout the UK at a choice of over 40 centres.

J09 is assessed by three written coursework assignments.

The qualification award will be graded fail/pass.

Further information on learning and assessment for each unit

Please ensure that you refer to the individual unit syllabus for unit-specific details:

- learning outcomes and assessment criteria
- further reading and resources
- important notes, such as the tax and legislative position that will be assessed

Ongoing professional development



Paraplanning is a very highly skilled profession. Not only do paraplanners need to learn and retain a large amount of technical information, they also need to adhere to a comprehensive regulatory regime of principles and ethics. The financial advice sector has also experienced wide change over recent years. Whether this change has been economic, legislative, regulatory or behavioural, it has often influenced industry professionals to evolve their knowledge, principles and practices. Change has also opened up new opportunities for advice firms to improve their profitability and business efficiencies.

The unique skill set required by industry professionals and the ever-changing industry means that once qualified, all individuals should focus on a wide range of development areas.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Qualified financial advisers are required to complete a minimum of 35 hours of CPD each year, of which at least 21 hours should be structured learning. Although paraplanners do not need to complete this CPD as a regulatory requirement, it is recommended that they follow this same structure in order to maintain their knowledge and skills in their role.

The NMBA Professional Development Programme

Due to the requirement for Continuous Professional Development and the need for other ongoing development, NMBA has created a Professional Development Programme, which includes all of the key areas that advice professionals require for their ongoing knowledge, skill and behavioural development. This programme has equal relevance to paraplanners and financial advisers.

Within this programme is an NMBA Professional Development Framework, which not only includes technical knowledge, but also covers conduct and ethics, business development, practice management and personal development, all of which should form part of any individual's annual development programme.



"...NMBA has created a Professional Development Programme, which includes all of the key areas that advice professionals require for their ongoing knowledge, skill and behavioural development" NMBA does not intend to offer compliance support services, but does intend to provide financial advice professionals with all the ongoing support they require to improve their individual knowledge and skills and also improve their business practices to achieve profitability and enhanced customer outcomes. This Professional Development Programme therefore ultimately aims to:

- Improve the quality of advice received by customers;
- improve the internal and external reputation of the financial advice sector;
- and, improve the sustainability and provision of financial advice for the future.

The NMBA Professional Development Programme offers qualified advisers a range of learning and development events, offering structured CPD, as well as a comprehensive communications programme allowing advisers to learn, develop and stay informed.

'The NMBA Professional Development Programme offers qualified advisers a range of learning and development events...'





What next for your firm?

If you are interested in taking on an apprentice or applying for an apprenticeship for one of your existing employees, please apply through our website – **www.NMBA.info**. If you are not already a member of NMBA, you will need to register for free to access the website.

For any enquiries about the NMBA Apprenticeship Programme, please contact NMBA on **01484 439200** to speak to a member of our team.

References

This document contains information found from the Government Apprenticeship Standards, which is public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0.

New Model Business Academy





New Model Business Academy The John Smith's Stadium, Stadium Way, Huddersfield, HD1 6PG Tel: 01484 439200 Email: info@nmba.info

www.nmba.info

New Model Business Academy Limited. Registered in England under Company No: 06542304 A 'not for profit' division of The SimplyBiz Group