Shaping Lives

Shaping your tomorrow, today.

Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 Apprenticeship



Ofsted Good Provider

Education & Skills Funding Agency

Early Years Lead Practitioner

Level 5 Apprenticeship

Making the right choice about your next step is key to unlocking your potential and setting yourself up for a bright future. This overview is here to give you all the essential info about the apprenticeship—how they benefit you, and why it's the perfect route for practical learners like you.

Ready to shape your tomorrow? Let's dive in.

Meet Arti, our brand mascot



Are you ready to make a real difference in the lives of young children? Our Early Years Lead Practitioner programme is designed just for you! Whether you're working in day nurseries, playgroups, nursery schools, pre-schools, primary schools, hospitals, or social care settings, this course will empower you to excel in your role.



For Learners:
Join us on a journey of self-discovery and growth! This programme encourages you to reflect on your learning style and embrace your unique strengths. You'll gain the skills and confidence to lead daily practices, inspiring both children and fellow practitioners along the way. With tailored learning experiences and compassionate support, you'll be equipped to meet the highest standards in early childhood education. Let's unlock your potential and make every day count for the little ones in your care!



For Employers:
Investing in your staff's development is key to creating a thriving early years environment. Our programme equips practitioners with the essential skills to lead operational practices effectively. Participants will learn to guide and support their teams, fostering a positive atmosphere that benefits everyone. With a focus on high-quality care and education, your organisation will benefit from dedicated and knowledgeable practitioners ready to shape the future of early years education.

This programme is perfect for proactive and influential practitioners who are eager to take on more responsibility and lead day-to-day practices. If you're someone who enjoys working directly with children and wants to inspire your colleagues while creating a nurturing environment, you'll find this course to be an invaluable stepping stone in your career.

Duration:

25 months + 3 months for EPA

Level:

5

End-point assessment organisation:

TQUK

Recognised by Ofsted as a full and relevant qualification.

Who is it for:

- Qualified Level 3 who are moving into a senior nursery role.
- Room Leaders, Senior Practitioners, Managers and Deputy Managers who want to be highly skilled professionals and take an operational lead for the care, learning and development of all young children in their setting.

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



Our Early Years Lead Practitioner programme equips learners with the essential knowledge to thrive in early childhood education.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Self-awareness & Reflective Practice
Understanding your own strengths and areas for growth helps you become a more effective practitioner and enhances your ability to support children.

Ethical and Rights-based Approaches to Support the Child and Their Authentic Voice and Advocacy
Promoting children's rights and listening to their voices empowers them to express themselves and make choices in their learning experiences.

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies & Procedures in Practice
Implementing robust safeguarding measures ensures a safe environment for children, protecting them from harm while promoting their wellbeing.

Typical and Atypical Neurological, Cognitive, Social, Emotional, Behavioural, Communication, and Physical Development
Recognising the varied developmental pathways of children helps you tailor your approach to meet individual needs effectively.

Theories of Self-regulation, Resilience & Wellbeing
Understanding these theories equips you to foster a supportive environment where children can develop coping strategies and thrive emotionally.

Theories of Attachment
Exploring attachment theories aids in recognising the importance of secure relationships in a child's development and learning.

The Social Cultural Context on the Learning and Development of the Child
Considering the cultural backgrounds and social contexts of children enhances your ability to provide relevant and meaningful learning experiences.

The Importance of Play and the Theoretical Perspectives of Play
Valuing play as a crucial element of learning encourages creativity and exploration, making it essential for holistic child development.

Collaborative Approaches to Working with Parents, Professional Bodies, and Multi-Agencies
Building strong partnerships with families and professionals fosters a unified approach to supporting each child's unique needs and circumstances.

How Planning Cycles Inform and Improve Practice and the Principles of Individual Needs-Based Assessment
Utilising planning cycles allows for ongoing evaluation and adjustment of practices to ensure they meet the diverse needs of every child.

For employers, this programme will help develop a highly skilled and motivated workforce. For learners, it's a chance to build a fulfilling career with the opportunity to make a lasting impact. Together, let's shape the future—yours, your team's, and the children you care for.

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



The Early Years Lead Practitioner apprenticeship develops the vital skills needed for a successful career in early childhood education, benefiting both learners and employers alike.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Reflective Practitioner
Being a reflective practitioner means regularly evaluating your own practice to identify strengths and areas for improvement, ultimately enhancing your effectiveness in supporting children.

Advocate for the Child
Acting as an advocate for children ensures their voices are heard, rights are upheld, and their needs are prioritised in every aspect of care and education.

Safeguarding
Prioritising safeguarding involves creating a safe and secure environment for children, where their wellbeing is paramount and policies are actively enforced.

Analyse and Articulate
The ability to analyse and articulate your observations and findings is crucial for communicating children's progress and informing future practice effectively.

Children's Individual Learning
Recognising that each child has unique learning styles and paces allows you to tailor your approach, fostering a more engaging and supportive learning experience.

Develop and Extend Children's Learning and Thinking
Encouraging children to think critically and creatively helps to deepen their understanding and promotes a lifelong love of learning.

Individual Development Needs and Circumstances of Children
Being aware of each child's specific developmental needs and personal circumstances enables you to provide targeted support that nurtures their growth.

Support, Mentor, Coach and Guide Colleagues
Offering guidance and support to colleagues enhances teamwork and helps build a strong, collaborative learning environment for everyone.

Develop and Articulate Own Pedagogical Approach and Practice
Articulating your own pedagogical approach empowers you to be intentional in your teaching, ensuring it aligns with your values and the needs of the children.

Importance of the Home Learning Environment
Recognising the impact of the home learning environment encourages collaboration with families, enriching the overall learning experience for children.

Observe, Assess, Plan, Facilitate and Participate in Play Opportunities
Engaging in the full cycle of observing and facilitating play allows you to create rich learning opportunities that are responsive to children's interests and developmental needs.

By investing in this apprenticeship, employers can build a strong, skilled workforce, while learners gain the practical expertise to thrive in early years settings. Together, we can shape the future of your team, your career, and the children you care for.

What will be covered?

Knowledge. Skills. Behaviours.



The Early Years Educator Level 3 apprenticeship cultivates essential behaviours that are crucial for success in early childhood education, benefiting both learners and employers.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Ethical, Fair, Consistent, and Impartial, Always Valuing Equality and Diversity Within Professional Boundaries
Upholding ethical standards means treating everyone with fairness and respect, celebrating diversity while maintaining clear professional boundaries.

Leaderful and Motivating
Being a leaderful practitioner inspires others to excel, fostering an environment where everyone feels empowered to contribute and innovate.

Person Centred, Friendly and Approachable
Creating a welcoming atmosphere ensures that children, families, and colleagues feel comfortable and valued, enhancing communication and collaboration.

Caring, Empathetic and Respectful
Demonstrating care and empathy fosters trust and strong relationships, allowing you to better support the emotional and developmental needs of children.

Authentic and Fun
Bringing authenticity and joy to your practice makes learning enjoyable and engaging, encouraging children to explore and express themselves freely.

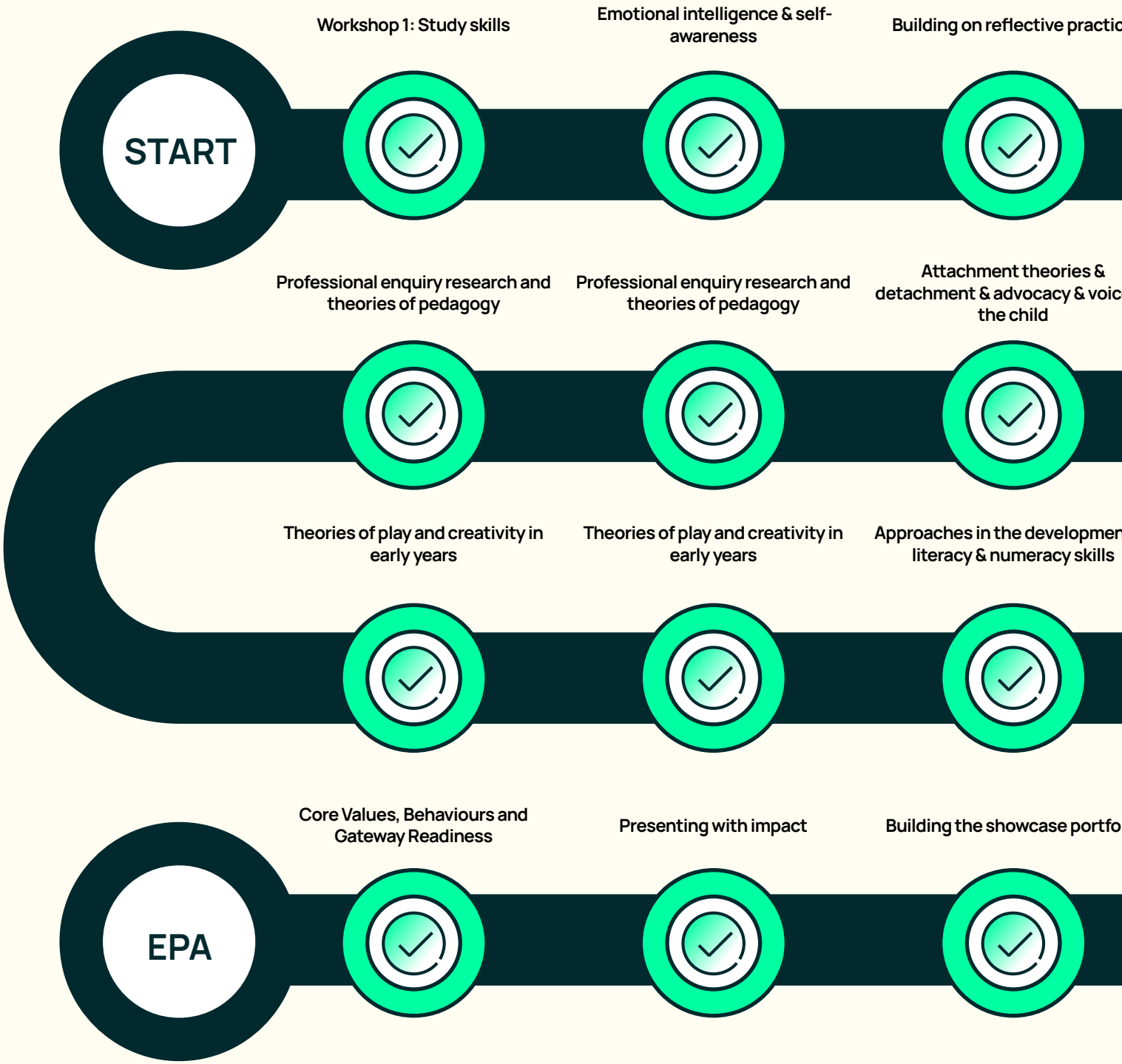
Positive and Proactive Member of the Team
Being a positive and proactive team member contributes to a supportive work culture, where everyone is encouraged to share ideas and work towards common goals.

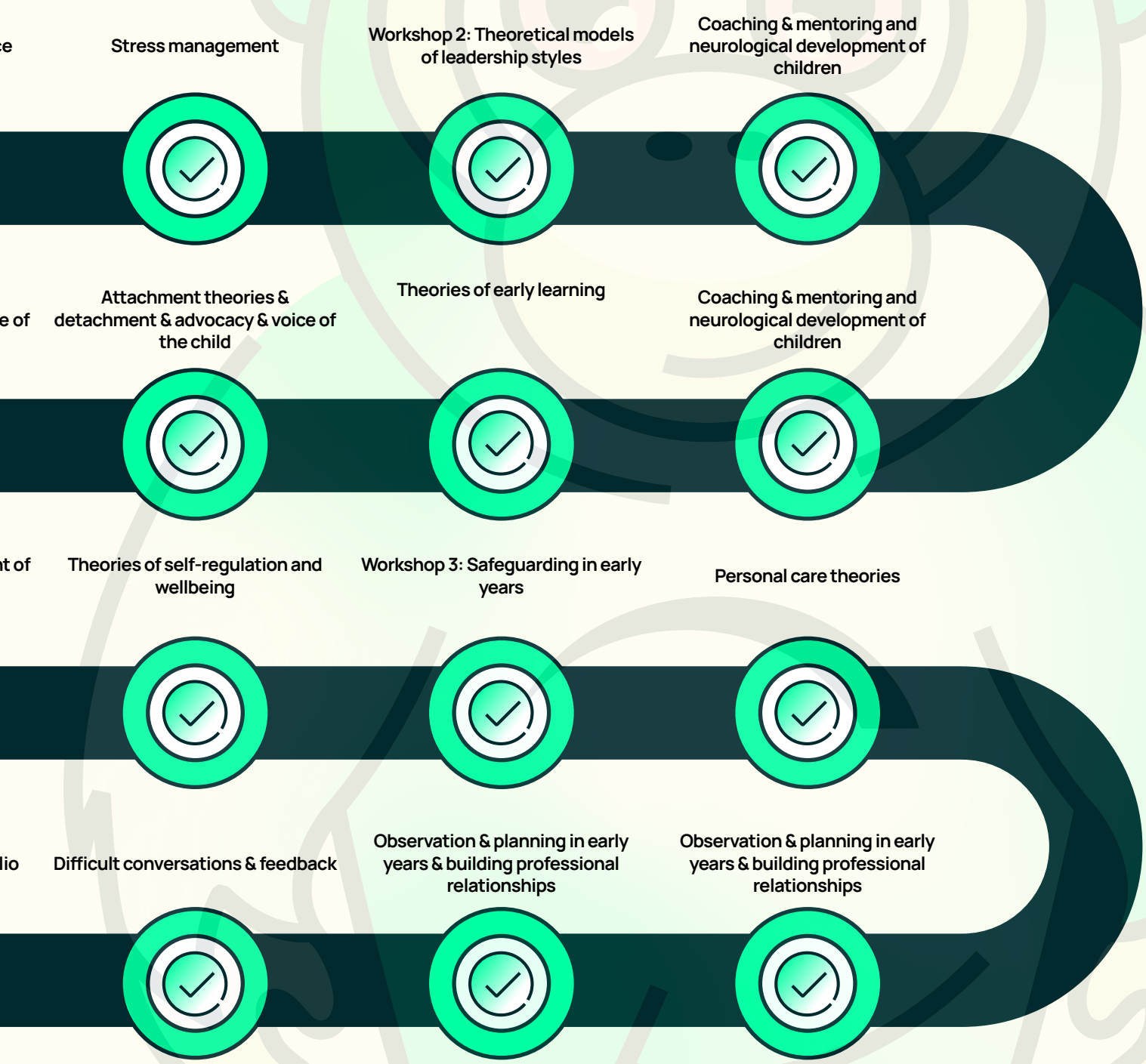
Creative and Imaginative
Embracing creativity and imagination allows you to design engaging learning experiences that captivate children's interests and stimulate their curiosity.

Receptive, Open to Challenge and Constructive Criticism
Being open to feedback and challenges promotes personal and professional growth, helping you refine your practice and better support your team and the children.

By embracing these behaviours, learners will not only enhance their personal development but also contribute positively to their teams. For employers, investing in these behaviours means fostering a professional and effective workforce that prioritises the wellbeing and development of every child. Together, we can create a brighter future for the children and communities we serve.

Learner journey.




Stress management
Workshop 2: Theoretical models of leadership styles
Coaching & mentoring and neurological development of children
Attachment theories & detachment & advocacy & voice of the child
Theories of early learning
Coaching & mentoring and neurological development of children
Theories of self-regulation and wellbeing
Workshop 3: Safeguarding in early years
Personal care theories
Difficult conversations & feedback
Observation & planning in early years & building professional relationships
Observation & planning in early years & building professional relationships

The benefits of ‘Flipped Learning’.

Flipped learning presents numerous advantages over traditional lecture-based approaches, including:

Personalised Learning Pace: Apprentices can learn at their own pace, revisiting online materials as often as necessary. This flexibility is especially beneficial for complex topics or procedures.

Enhanced Preparation: By providing essential knowledge before remote workshop sessions, apprentices can deepen their understanding and develop higher-level skills.

Focused Support: Trainers can dedicate more time to addressing individual needs, offering tailored feedback and support instead of simply delivering content.

Active Learning Environment: Flipped learning encourages active, differentiated, and learner-centred experiences, allowing apprentices to engage in collaborative and interactive tasks.

Skill Development: This approach fosters essential intra- and interpersonal skills such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and self-regulation—critical competencies for future careers.



For the Learners
Flipped learning empowers learners to take charge of their education, making it more engaging and relevant. By accessing materials at their convenience and participating in interactive sessions, they develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter while honing essential skills that will benefit them in their careers.



For the Employers
Employers also reap significant benefits from flipped learning. It can lead to higher retention and completion rates, as apprentices feel more motivated and satisfied with their learning experience. Additionally, it boosts performance and productivity by equipping apprentices with knowledge and skills that are directly applicable to their roles. The flexibility and scalability of this training approach make it easy to adapt to various learning needs and contexts, ultimately enhancing the overall effectiveness of workforce development.

Exciting pathways to learning: What's involved.

eLearning
Our fully interactive eLearning modules are designed to fit seamlessly into the busy lives of your apprentices. They can learn at their own pace while covering essential knowledge for each module. With a blend of digital resources, engaging videos, interactive quizzes, scenarios, and case studies, we cater to various learning styles, ensuring everyone can thrive.

One-to-One Online Session with a Personal Tutor
Each apprentice will benefit from personalised online one-to-one sessions with their dedicated Personal Tutor. This tailored support ensures that every learner receives the attention and encouragement they need to excel. Tutors assess learning, provide individual feedback, conduct progress reviews, and prepare apprentices for their end-point assessment (EPA). Our flexible approach allows us to adapt to each learner's unique needs, with easy access to tutors via email, phone, and the online platform, Bud.

Workshops
Our dynamic Elevate workshops offer a fantastic opportunity for learners to enhance their skills and tackle new challenges. Each two-hour session focuses on a specific module, creating an interactive space where apprentices can deepen their understanding while connecting with peers from diverse backgrounds. This interaction enriches their learning experience and broadens their career perspectives.

In addition to mastering module content, workshops help develop essential soft skills, including communication, maths, digital literacy, and positive attitudes. Learners also have the chance to build a supportive network with their peers, which can be invaluable throughout their journey.

What to Expect in a Workshop
Before attending, apprentices must complete the relevant eLearning module to ensure they are well-prepared for the workshop activities. Each session, led by a sector expert, involves a variety of engaging activities, such as role-playing, quizzes, presentations, case studies, and research projects, making every workshop a unique and enriching experience. With multiple timeslots available each month, we can accommodate various working patterns, ensuring that learning fits seamlessly into their lives.

Understanding module progression.

The graphic below illustrates the exciting stages that learners will navigate through for each module:

1



eLearning
Get ready for an exciting learning adventure! For each module, you'll access interactive eLearning resources that are expertly crafted to enhance your knowledge and prepare you for the upcoming workshops. These engaging materials are more than just learning tools—they're your gateway to fully immersing yourself in the subject, ensuring you're well-prepared for an exhilarating workshop experience.

2



Group Workshops
Step into the world of dynamic learning at each workshop, guided by industry experts! You'll explore a thrilling variety of activities, with support at every turn. Imagine engaging in role-playing, tackling quizzes, creating eye-catching presentations, analysing fascinating case studies, and diving into research projects. Each workshop is a unique adventure, filled with diverse activities that promise an enriching and unforgettable experience!

3



Consolidation Activities
As you reach the grand finale of each module, it's time for dynamic consolidation activities! This is your moment to shine, showcasing all the knowledge, skills, and behaviours you've mastered. This crucial step helps you build an impressive portfolio. Get ready to dive into a mix of exciting tasks: write insightful assignments, gather compelling witness testimonies, and present your practical workplace creations. This stage is designed to let your learning take centre stage in a variety of engaging ways!

Unlocking the potential of off-the-job hours.

Off-the-job hours, also known as protected apprenticeship time, are a key part of every apprenticeship programme. This dedicated time helps learners develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to succeed. Apprentices are entitled to 6 hours per week of protected time, which for those working part-time (under 29 hours a week) amounts to 20% of their working hours.

At Shaping Lives, we support apprentices in making the most of these hours by offering engaging eLearning modules that typically take about 3-4 hours to complete. We also run workshops that provide an additional 2 hours of hands-on learning. Plus, we encourage consolidation activities where apprentices can dive into research and practice, averaging around 15 hours per module.

Employers play a crucial role in this journey by creating opportunities for training that connect directly to the apprenticeship. To make this easier, we've developed a comprehensive learner journey that outlines the content of each module and suggests activities for apprentices to explore. Together, we can shape the future of early childhood education!

Test 1
Learning has taken place during the learner's normal working hours

Test 2
It can't be maths or English

Test 3
It must be relevant to the skills, knowledge and behaviours in the apprenticeship standard

Test 4
The learner must be learning something new

Key roles in your learning success.

At Shaping Lives, several dedicated professionals work together to ensure your success throughout your apprenticeship. Here's how each role contributes to your journey:



Business Development Managers (BDM)
Our Business Development Managers (BDMs) play a crucial role in guiding you smoothly through the enrolment process. They begin by collecting learner nominations and carefully verifying the information to ensure eligibility criteria are met. This thorough review streamlines the next steps. Once you're set to enrol, BDMs collaborate closely with the Customer Success team (CST) to facilitate enrolment meetings, eligibility verification, and initial assessments. They manage the entire process, ensuring contractual and funding compliance is maintained.



Learning Enrolment Tutor
Your journey kicks off with the Learning Enrolment Tutor, who meets with you to gather final enrolment details and conducts a skill scan to assess your prior learning. After this initial meeting, they lead a group workshop, marking the exciting start of your learning experience. While it may be the same tutor who conducted your meeting, another team member might also take on this role.



Functional Skills and Learning Support Tutor
At the beginning of your programme, you'll complete initial assessments in English and maths, which will help shape your Functional Skills pathway. We offer workshops to build foundational skills, and if you need more tailored support, especially if you have Additional Learning Needs (ALN), our one-to-one sessions are here for you. We work closely with your personal tutors to provide the resources, advice, and guidance necessary for you to feel prepared and confident for your Functional Skills exams.



Personal Tutor
After your first day of learning, you'll be assigned a personal tutor who will support you throughout your apprenticeship. They're there to assist with your individual needs, help consolidate your learning for your diploma, and prepare you for your End Point Assessment (EPA). You can meet with your personal tutor remotely via platforms like Teams or face-to-face, which may include observations. They are your primary contact for any support you need during your apprenticeship.



Workshop Tutor
As you attend group workshops for each of your modules, a workshop tutor will be by your side to facilitate your activities and learning. These sector experts guide you through engaging sessions, and after each workshop, they provide feedback to you and your personal tutor, helping to foster your development.



Quality Improvement Coach
While you may not interact directly with a Quality Improvement Coach, their role is essential. They sample the work you complete for your Diploma to ensure it meets the required standards. Additionally, they support the professional development of your personal tutor and may occasionally join one of your sessions to provide further insights.



Independent End-Point Assessor
Your Independent End-Point Assessor comes from an organisation separate from Shaping Lives. Their role is to assess your learning and conduct your final assessments. You will meet this assessor after completing your on-programme learning, just as you're ready to go through the gateway process for your final assessments.



Additional Learning Support Coach
As you start your programme, we'll reach out to discuss your Cognassist assessment or any declared needs. We'll determine if you require extra support and develop a plan so your personal tutor knows how to best assist you. Ongoing mentoring and support are available throughout your programme, and we also provide your personal tutors with continuous training, advice, and guidance to help them support you effectively.

Understanding the End-Point Assessment (EPA).

The End Point Assessment (EPA) for the Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5 apprenticeship is the final stage of your training. It is designed to assess your competence and knowledge against the apprenticeship standards, ensuring you are ready to take on a senior leadership role in early years education.

What Does the EPA Involve?

The EPA evaluates the apprentice's abilities through these key components:



Portfolio of Evidence
Your Portfolio of Evidence is a comprehensive collection showcasing your work throughout the apprenticeship, reflecting your advanced skills and knowledge. You are required to provide 20 pieces of evidence, which might include observations, work-related assignments, professional discussions, reflective journals, lesson plans, assessments, certificates, and evidence of your leadership, management, and strategic planning skills. Additionally, it should include documentation demonstrating your involvement in policy development and implementation, all of which will highlight your journey and achievements in early childhood education.



Professional Discussion
This is a structured conversation with an assessor, during which you will discuss your portfolio and answer questions related to your role as an early years lead practitioner.



Observation in Practice
An assessor will observe you working in a real-world early years setting, assessing your ability to apply your knowledge and skills in a senior leadership capacity. This observation will be planned and holistic, followed by questions. You will also need to provide a session plan.



Implement Change in Setting: You may be required to analyse an EPA case study and implement changes related to early years education. This will demonstrate your ability to problem-solve, make informed decisions, and implement strategic plans. You will need to write a report of 4,000 words, which will be submitted to and marked by the assessor.



Presentation: You will be required to give a 20-minute presentation summarising the case study you have completed. This will be followed by a discussion and questioning.

What Goes into the Portfolio?

Both apprentices and employers should be mindful that the portfolio must:

- **Evidence of Competence:** The portfolio must demonstrate your competence in all areas of the apprenticeship standard.
- **Authenticity:** Evidence should be genuine and reflect your own work.
- **Variety:** The portfolio should include a variety of evidence types, such as observations, lesson plans, reflective journals, and work product evidence. It should also include evidence related to theories, leadership, and management.
- **Clear Links:** Evidence should be clearly linked to the apprenticeship standards and assessment criteria.

Specific Requirements

- **Strategic Leadership:** Provide evidence of strategic planning, policy development, and leadership skills. Show how you support the development of staff within early years settings.
- **Quality Improvement:** Demonstrate your ability to drive quality improvement and innovation in early years settings.
- **Partnership Working:** Provide evidence of effective partnership working with families, communities, and other professionals.
- **Research-Informed Practice:** Show evidence of research-informed practice and your ability to critically evaluate information, linking theory to your own practice.

Professional Discussion: A Key Element

The professional discussion is your chance to showcase your understanding of the apprenticeship standards and how you apply your knowledge in practice.

Key Areas of Discussion

- **Portfolio Evidence:** Explain the evidence you have included in your portfolio and how it demonstrates your competence.
- **Apprenticeship Standards:** Discuss your understanding of the apprenticeship standards and how you have met them.
- **Strategic Leadership:** Describe your approach to strategic leadership and your ability to drive change.
- **Partnership Working:** Share your experience of working with families, communities, and other professionals.
- **Promoting Best Practices:** Discuss your role in promoting best practices within early years settings.

Following Observation of Practice

- **IEPA Observation:** Answer questions about what the IEPA has observed and how it relates to policies and procedures, as well as practice and theory.

Discussion Following Presentation of Case Study

- **Effectiveness of Case Study:** Be prepared to answer questions that will stretch and challenge your understanding and application of the case study.

By understanding these requirements and preparing adequately, you can increase your chances of success in your End Point Assessment.

Supportive, flexible, and tailored training for Early Years Apprentices.

At Shaping Lives, we believe that every learner deserves the best support possible. That's why each of our apprentices is paired with a dedicated Personal Tutor. Think of them as their guiding star throughout their journey—available for remote one-on-one sessions right from their workplace!

Their Personal Tutor isn't just there to check in; they'll be their mentor, helping them learn, tracking their progress, and preparing them for their end-point assessment (EPA). We pride ourselves on our flexible approach to training, tailoring our support to suit their individual needs.

Here's how it works:

One-on-One Sessions: Connect with their Personal Tutor through remote sessions. This means they can learn at their own pace, in a way that suits them best.

Self-Study: They'll have access to our fantastic social learning platform, Bud, where they can dive into self-study materials at their convenience.

Always Accessible: Their Personal Tutor is just a message away! Whether it's via email, our learner portal, or good old-fashioned phone calls, we're here to help them every step of the way.

Specialist Learning Portal

Our learning portal, Bud, strikes the perfect balance between performance and usability. Designed in collaboration with Paragon Skills, it places the learners' needs at its core, ensuring flexibility across multiple platforms with simplicity as a priority. The hard work of managing apprenticeships is taken care of, allowing Bud to guide them through the process step by step—from enrolment and gathering evidence to preparing for audits, end-point assessments, and funding.

Functional Skills

As part of the apprenticeship, learners will need to provide evidence of achieving a grade A–C in English and maths at GCSE level (or an equivalent higher level). If they can't provide this evidence, or if they have an exemption, they'll undertake functional skills training alongside their apprenticeship.

Functional skills are seamlessly integrated into their programme, enabling them to work towards their qualification while developing these essential skills. At the end of their functional skills training, they'll complete an assessment, which can be in the form of online tests or a professional discussion.

Ongoing Support

Learners will receive full support from our experienced Client Services and Operations teams before, during, and after their apprenticeship journey. Our team is dedicated to helping them measure the impact of their apprenticeship programme, providing regular progress updates, and inviting them to exclusive events—all to ensure they maximise the benefits of their apprenticeship.

We go beyond the job role by offering pastoral support, along with valuable advice and guidance. With a strong focus on care and social responsibility, we empower our learners to progress through our programmes, building their confidence to tackle any challenges they may face.



Shaping Lives

Why choose Shaping Lives?

Shaping Lives is a trusted national training provider, delivering high-quality apprenticeship programmes. Our focus on early years education is paramount, as we understand the critical role it plays in shaping young lives and laying the foundation for future success.

Our dedicated Personal Tutors work closely with your business, providing tailored support to ensure your employees thrive in their roles. We are deeply committed to fostering an outstanding learning experience, empowering both our learners and employers to make a meaningful impact in early childhood education. Together, we can cultivate the next generation of leaders in this vital field.

Contact us

0800 7832545

hello@shapinglives.co.uk

shapinglives.co.uk

Education & Skills Funding Agency

Ofsted Good Provider