Shaping Lives

Shaping your tomorrow, today.

Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 5 Apprenticeship



Ofsted
Good Provider

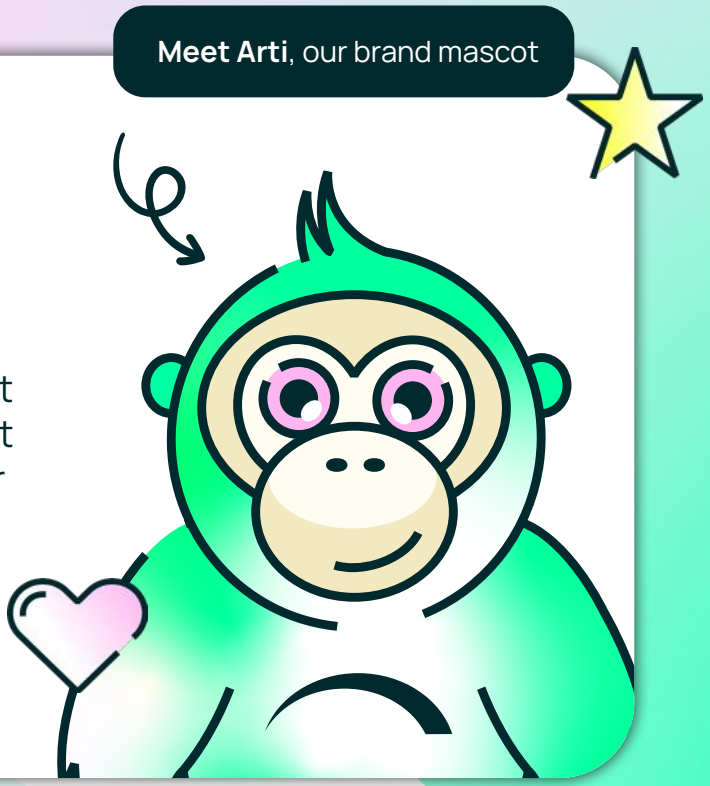
Education & Skills Funding Agency

Specialist Teaching Assistant 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



The Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 5 programme is designed to equip practitioners with advanced pedagogical knowledge and leadership skills to drive educational excellence. Participants will develop research-informed strategies to provide expert, targeted support – ensuring every learner has the opportunity to progress and achieve their full potential within an inclusive educational community.

For Learners:
This programme provides learners with the sophisticated understanding required to become specialist leaders and agents of inclusion. They will gain proficiency in instructional design, child development patterns, and various assessment techniques to monitor and evaluate progress effectively. By choosing a distinct specialist pathway – SEND – learners will develop the advocacy and collaboration skills necessary to work alongside families, teachers, and external agencies for a holistic approach to student welfare.

For Employers:
Investing in the Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 5 programme equips employers with high-impact practitioners capable of leading teams and supporting the development of others. By supporting staff through this rigorous apprenticeship, employers gain subject-specific experts and mental health champions who can pioneer early identification and remove barriers to learning. This commitment to professional reflection and sustainability enhances the quality of provision within the setting, ensuring the school is well-prepared to meet the evolving challenges of the modern education sector.

Duration:

18 Months + 3 Months EPA Period

Level:

5

End-point assessment organisation:

Innovate Awarding

Qualification:

Level 4 Award for Higher Level Teaching Assistants (RQF)

Who is it for:

- Higher level teaching assistant
- Send teaching assistant
- Specialist education support
- Specialist learning assistant
- Specialist learning support
- Specialist teaching assistant

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Curriculum & Statutory Frameworks
Ensures all educational provision aligns with national standards, health and safety requirements, and safeguarding protocols to protect learner well-being.

Theories of Learning & Pedagogy
Utilises advanced pedagogical knowledge and research-informed evidence to design instructional activities that effectively advance learner progress.

Child Development & Age-Related Expectations
Applies an understanding of typical development patterns and individual differences to tailor support and manage transitions across different educational stages.

Assessment & Progress Monitoring
Employs diverse methods of assessment, observation, and recording to evaluate learner progress and inform future planning and reporting.

Inclusion, Equity & Diversity
Promotes the principles of equality and sustainability, ensuring that social and cultural contexts are considered to remove barriers to educational access.

SEND Policy & Early Identification
Implements national and local SEND procedures, using specialist tools to identify needs early and adapt provision for learners with diverse requirements.

Theoretical Background to SEND
Maintains a deep understanding of specific needs –such as ASD, attachment, trauma, and dyslexia – and their impact on a young person's learning journey.

Enabling Environments & Behaviour for Learning
Designs stimulating, safe learning spaces that incorporate the principles of positive behaviour and value the importance of the "learner voice".

Effective Communication & Collaboration
Builds professional relationships with families, SENCOs, and external agencies, ensuring a holistic and coordinated approach to learner welfare.

Coaching, Mentoring & Professional Leadership
Applies the principles of teamwork and professional development to support colleagues and drive excellence within the educational community.

Reflective Practice & Resilience
Engages in continuous self-reflection and utilises strategies to develop personal and professional resilience in self and others.

Digital & Emerging Technologies
Selects and applies appropriate digital tools and technologies safely to enhance the learning experience and support modern educational needs.

What will be covered?

Knowledge.
Skills.
Behaviours.



Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Implementing Statutory Guidance & Safeguarding
Acts in line with all policies and procedures to maintain a safe environment and implement the setting's behaviour policy effectively.

Creating Nurturing Learning Environments
Establishes safe, stimulating spaces and conducts dynamic risk assessments to mitigate hazards while promoting learner growth.

Building Professional Relationships
Develops effective working connections with learners, parents, and stakeholders to advocate for and champion individual needs.

Advancing Learning through Scaffolding
Applies targeted teaching strategies and uses equipment safely to support and challenge learners at their specific point of need.

Analysing Assessment for Future Planning
Uses formative and summative data to provide feedback to learners and report progress clearly to a variety of audiences.

Collaborating with Multi-Agency Professionals
Works alongside colleagues and external experts, knowing when and how to escalate concerns for specialist advice.

Evaluating Practice through Research
Uses a range of research findings to critically assess and improve teaching methods and assessment approaches.

Managing Continuous Professional Development
Reflects on own practice and seeks feedback to update skills, ensuring high standards are maintained in the specialist role.

Mentoring & Coaching Colleagues
Supports the professional growth of others by sharing expertise and leading the development of effective practices within the team.

Leading Difficult Conversations
Identifies and challenges issues where appropriate, undertaking necessary conversations to ensure the best outcomes for learners.

Supporting Social & Emotional Well-being
Implements specific strategies to remove emotional barriers to learning and identifies signs of vulnerability in self and peers.

Prioritising Workload & Capacity
Manages professional responsibilities and workload effectively, ensuring that high-impact support is delivered consistently.

What will be covered?

Knowledge. Skills. Behaviours.



The Level 5 Specialist Teaching Assistant programme develops the key professional behaviours needed to effectively support teaching, learning and pupil development, benefiting both learners and employers.

Here's what apprentices will gain through the programme:

Inclusion & Equity
Modelling ethical, fair, and impartial behaviour ensures that every student feels valued. By prioritising diversity, practitioners create an environment where equality is at the heart of the professional context.

Professionalism & Positivity
Acting proactively and with a positive outlook inspires confidence in colleagues and learners alike. Professional conduct sets a high standard for the educational community and encourages a culture of excellence.

Respect & Empathy
Showing genuine care and approachability builds the trust necessary for effective learning. Empathy allows practitioners to understand the unique challenges faced by children and stakeholders, fostering stronger connections.

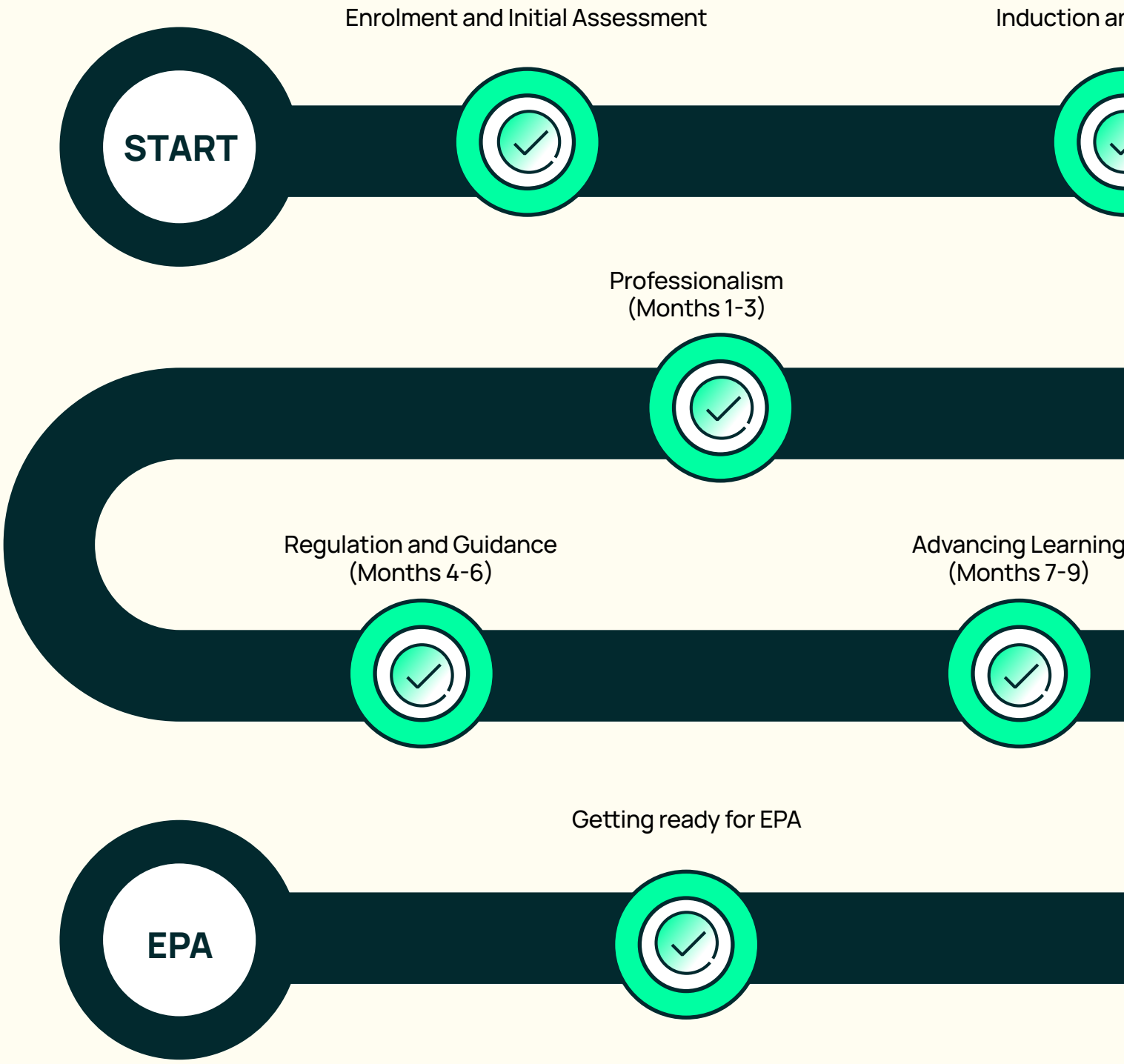
Adaptability & Resilience
The ability to remain flexible and resilient in a changing educational landscape ensures consistent support for learners. These traits allow specialists to navigate challenges effectively while maintaining a focus on progress.

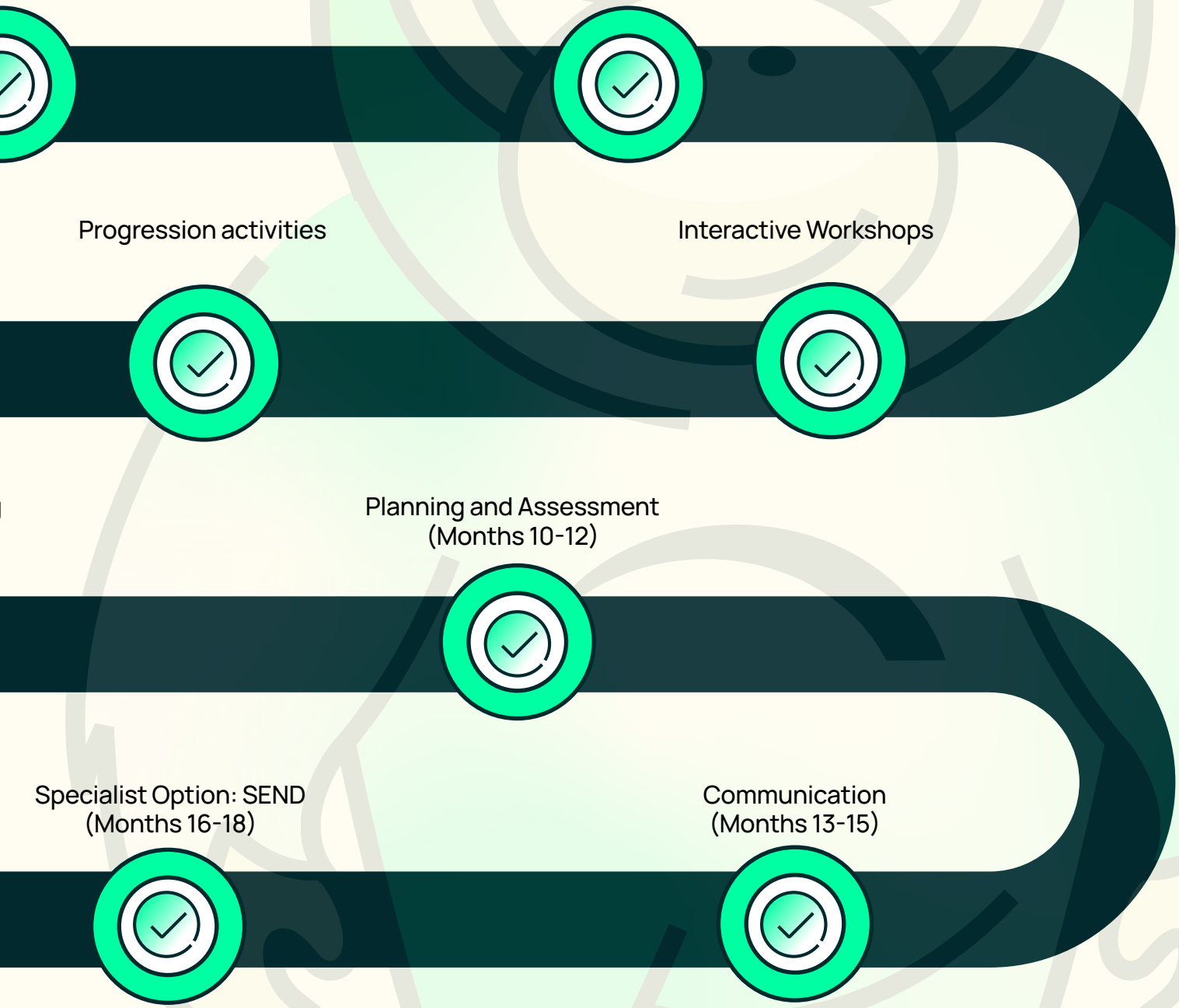
Commitment to Development
Being eager to grow and open to constructive criticism shows a dedication to the craft of teaching. Receptive practitioners continually refine their skills to provide the best possible support for their students.

Aspirational Leadership
Modelling aspirational practices encourages students and colleagues to aim high. By leading by example, specialists promote a sense of belonging and drive the collective ambition of the entire school community.

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.




nd Skill Scan
eLearning Module Completion
Progression activities
Interactive Workshops
Planning and Assessment
(Months 10-12)
Specialist Option: SEND
(Months 16-18)
Communication
(Months 13-15)

Understanding the End-Point Assessment (EPA).

The EPA is the final stage of the apprenticeship, marking the transition from learner to specialist practitioner. An independent assessor evaluates the apprentice's competence against the national standards to ensure they are "status-ready" for advanced professional practice.

What Does the EPA Involve?

EPA Includes:

Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence
Observation with Questions

The two assessment methods can be completed in any order.



Portfolio of Evidence
The portfolio highlights the apprentice's journey, demonstrating their growth, knowledge, and practical skills. It includes reflective journals, lesson plans, assessments, and observations—showcasing the depth and variety of their work. For managers, this is a tangible representation of the apprentice's development and readiness to step into more responsibilities.



Professional Discussion
This structured conversation between the apprentice and assessor allows for deeper reflection. Apprentices will discuss the work in their portfolio, share their insights, and link their learning to the apprenticeship standards. For employers, this is a chance to hear how the apprentice has applied their learning to real-world situations, ensuring they meet the required standards.

Assessment Method 1: Observation with Questions

This practical assessment allows the apprentice to demonstrate their skills in a real-world classroom or specialist setting.

- **Total Duration:** 2 hours (90-minute observation followed by a 30-minute Q&A session).
- **The Observation:** The apprentice is observed completing day-to-day duties, which must include conducting planned sessions with an individual, group, or class.
- **The Focus:** Assessors look for evidence of adaptive teaching, the use of resources/technology to support SEND outcomes, and the creation of safe, inclusive learning environments.
- **The Questions:** Following the observation, the assessor will ask targeted questions to confirm understanding of any areas not seen during the live practice.
- **Preparation:** Apprentices must provide their session plan and support materials to the assessor at least one day before the scheduled observation.

Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion

A structured, in-depth conversation between the apprentice and the assessor, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence.

- **Duration:** 60 minutes (with an optional 10% additional time if required).
- **The Portfolio:** Compiled during the training period, this contains typically 15 discrete pieces of evidence, such as case studies, research tasks, and workplace records, mapped to the apprenticeship standards.
- **The Discussion:** The apprentice will answer at least 10 questions designed to probe their competence in core themes, including SEND regulation, advancing learning, and professional leadership.
- **Authentication:** The portfolio must be submitted at the Gateway stage; the assessor requires 14 days' notice to review the evidence before the discussion occurs.

Grading and Results

- **Order of Assessment:** The two methods can be completed in any order to suit the school's schedule.
- **Grading Criteria:** Both methods are graded Fail, Pass, or Distinction.
- **Final Outcome:** The combined performance across both assessments leads to an overall grade of Fail, Pass, Merit, or Distinction.

For Learners and Employers Alike

By fully preparing for the End Point Assessment, apprentices can ensure they complete their qualification successfully, while employers benefit from confident and capable team members who are ready to take on more responsibility and contribute even more to the success of your setting.

Supportive training for Specialist Teaching Assistant apprentices.

eLearning
Our fully interactive eLearning modules are designed to fit seamlessly into the busy lives of apprentices. Learners can study at their own pace while covering essential knowledge for each module.

Modules include:

- Engaging digital resources
- Videos
- Interactive quizzes
- Scenarios and case studies
- Knowledge checks

This flexible approach supports all learning styles and encourages deeper understanding before workshops.

Workshops
Our dynamic workshops provide an interactive space for apprentices to deepen their knowledge and connect with peers.

Each session:

- Lasts approximately one hour
- Is led by a sector expert
- Includes activities such as role-play, case studies, research tasks, quizzes, and presentations
- Develops both technical knowledge and essential soft skills

Apprentices do not need to complete eLearning before attending workshops.

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 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