

Cleaning and hygiene industry urged to have its say on proposals for a Cleaning Hygiene Operative apprenticeship

4 years ago



Cleaning and hygiene sector employers, training operatives, providers and assessment organisations are being urgently encouraged to have their say on proposals for an Apprenticeship Levy accredited industrywide training programme and apprenticeship.

Consultation on proposals for the Cleaning Hygiene Operative apprenticeship opens today, Wednesday 26 January, and runs to Friday 18 February.

Stakeholders should visit <https://britishcleaningcouncil.org/cleaning-hygiene-operative-consultation> to read the proposal and use the download form to feedback on it, emailing replies to admin@britishcleaningcouncil.org by 5pm on the last day, Friday 18 February.

A Trailblazer group of industry employers and sector experts, sponsored by the British Cleaning Council (BCC), has developed the first draft of the much-needed training programme and apprenticeship for the sector.

Feedback from the sector is absolutely crucial for informing the proposal, which will be considered by approving body The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) in the next stage of the process.

Chair of the Trailblazer group, Head of Cleaning at Sodexo UK & Ireland, Lauren Kyle, said: "We are delighted to share that the development for the Cleaning Hygiene Operative is now moving through development after seven months of working with the IfATE.

“This is the opportunity for all interested stakeholders to provide valuable feedback on the work that has been completed to date for the development of this much needed and anticipated apprenticeship.”

BCC Chairman Jim Melvin said: “The industry has continuously stated how badly we wished to utilize the Apprenticeship Levy funding and shown overwhelming support for the idea of a training and development programme aligned to, and with an apprenticeship for, the sector.

“This is a hugely important initiative, so I am overjoyed that we have reached the stage where everyone in the industry can see for themselves what is being proposed.

“It will without doubt assist in the removal of any ‘low skilled’ perceptions that remain or that are levelled at the industry despite the fact that they completely incorrect.

“I cannot encourage all of our collective industry stakeholders strongly enough to please review these published proposals and supply feedback on them to help ensure the best possible Cleaning Hygiene Operative apprenticeship is developed.

“Arguably, this is a prime example of the unified and collective approach that we have been talking about.

“For clarity, it is now simply within our hands, every last one of us, to ensure that we can use the highly significant amounts of money that currently go to government without industry use in order to develop the skills of our superb teams. Please do not miss the opportunity. “

There is currently no apprenticeship scheme for the sector which provides the training in the technical skills needed by cleaning and hygiene operatives working outside health care.

This leaves many cleaning and hygiene sector employers with no suitable option for investing Apprenticeship Levy funds on training staff.

All employers with an annual pay bill of more than £3 million put around 0.5% towards the Apprenticeship Levy.

Businesses would be able to invest those funds in training staff in appropriate industry skills via the Cleaning Hygiene Operative scheme, if it wins approval.

It will have two optional pathways, healthcare cleaning and commercial cleaning.

The Trailblazer group was set up early last year and many cleaning and hygiene sector companies pledged support and supplied statements endorsing the industrywide apprenticeship bid.

In the past few years, the industry has twice approached the IfATE about setting up an apprenticeship but has sadly not got past the first stage.

Representatives from a wide range of companies are taking part in the Trailblazer group including:

- Sodexo
- The Exclusive Services Group
- Principle Cleaning
- OCS

- Mitie
- NIC
- ABM
- Noonans
- Cleanology
- ISS

Supporting stakeholders in the Trailblazer group include:

- the Association of Healthcare Cleaning Professionals (ahcp)
- the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICSc)
- the Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)
- the Cleaning and Support Services Association (CSSA)
- the National Carpet Cleaners Association (NCCA)
- CIWM
- the Worshipful Company of Environmental Cleaners (WCEC)
- the Business Services Association (BSA).

The BCC has 22 members from across the cleaning and hygiene sector. Its research shows that the sector is a UK top ten industry, employing 1.47 million people and contributing over £55.5bn to the economy.

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