

## BCC hopes Apprenticeship Standard will be approved later this year

2 years ago



The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) is considering final proposals for an Apprenticeship-Levy funded Apprenticeship Standard for the cleaning and hygiene sector, with the expectation that it could be approved later this year.

The final submission for the funding band will happen on 5 July, with a decision likely to be made by early autumn before the required ministerial sign off.

The British Cleaning Council (BCC) also holds an expectation that the final Apprenticeship Standard and funding will be agreed and signed off in time for the Cleaning Hygiene Operative Apprenticeship to be launched in January, 2024.

Getting the Apprenticeship established is a key priority for the BCC, the industry body for the £59bn UK cleaning, hygiene and waste sector, though the process is taking longer than expected.

This is the third time the sector has submitted a bid for an Apprenticeship Standard covering the entire industry. Two previous proposals were rejected however the latest bid has made progress as it is reflective of a professional industry.

The Cleaning Hygiene Operative Apprenticeship has widespread industry backing, as it would enable millions of pounds of compulsory Apprenticeship Levy funds paid annually to Government by larger sector employers to be instead invested in training industry staff.

It would also help address the severe shortage of staff the sector currently faces by providing the first stage of a career ladder to attract new joiners and helping alleviate the completely false and uneducated

narrative that cleaning and hygiene industry workers are 'low skilled'.

BCC Chairman Jim Melvin said: "An industry as large as the cleaning and hygiene sector – which is one of the ten biggest in the UK – will benefit hugely from an Apprenticeship Standard teaching the technical skills needed by most cleaning and hygiene operatives working outside healthcare.

"Sector staff have a vital, frontline role keeping others safe, well and healthy and increasing the public's hygienic confidence in the UK's infrastructure and workplaces, so it is essential that they are trained and recognised as being of the correct standards.

"The industry is crying out for this Apprenticeship, which will release millions of pounds for training staff, as well as helping in recruitment and tackling the misguided, ridiculously incorrect idea held in some quarters that our staff are low skilled.

"We want the Cleaning Hygiene Operative Apprenticeship, and the funding for it, to be approved as soon as possible. We are aiming for a launch in January next year at the latest. "

There is currently an apprenticeship for cleaning staff in healthcare in place but that is not appropriate for the vast majority of cleaning staff.