

Cleaning Sector Staff and Businesses Urged Not to Miss out on Apprenticeship Opportunities

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[The British Cleaning Council \(BCC\)](#) is marking National Apprenticeship Week by celebrating staff who have passed the cleaning industry's Level 2 apprenticeship and also encouraging more sector businesses to take the opportunity to participate in the scheme.

Two years on from its launch in January 2024, uptake of the Level 2 Cleaning Hygiene Operative (CHO) apprenticeship continues to grow.

More than 200 staff are currently taking the apprenticeship and, of those that have successfully completed the program to date, 70 per cent have achieved distinctions.

To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week this week (9 -15 February), the industry body for the sector is highlighting the huge benefits and opportunities the apprenticeship offers businesses and individual staff.

Businesses can use Growth and Skills Levy funding to invest in their workforce, with smaller companies who do not pay the levy also able to access funding.

Millions of pounds every year in levy payments made by cleaning and hygiene sector businesses are potentially available to sector firms to invest in apprenticeships.

Meanwhile, it provides learners a fully-funded route to develop essential skills and achieve a recognised work-related cleaning qualification, potentially opening the door for them to progress in their careers.

The Level 2 CHO apprenticeship has become more attractive than ever to staff and employers in the last 12 months due to two developments. These were:

- The abolition of the requirement for learners over 19 years to hold or achieve English and maths qualifications in order to pass their apprenticeship. Apprentices will instead show their English and maths skills by using them in real work tasks during the course.
- The launch of the UK Cleaning Career Development Zone has made it easier than ever for staff to find information about the Level 2 CHO apprenticeship, and other industry training and career development opportunities, all in one place online.

A new support programme called Apprenticeship Essentials for SMEs is also being offered to small and medium sized employers (SMEs) across the cleaning and hygiene sector to help them support their apprentices.

The new suite of eLearning courses is fully-funded by the Department for Education, so at no cost to the employer. It is being launched during National Apprenticeship Week to give SMEs the confidence, tools and practical knowhow to help apprentices thrive.

BCC Director for Education and Training, Delia Cannings, said: “We sincerely congratulate all those learners who have successfully achieved their Level 2 Cleaning Hygiene Operative qualification and we recognise and applaud the ongoing commitment of employers and training providers to the success of the standard.

“We want to highlight the huge opportunities and benefits for individuals, businesses and the sector as a whole, offered by the apprenticeship programme, and strongly urge staff and businesses to consider whether it can benefit them.

“Apprentice numbers continue to grow across all regions and this is, of course, encouraging. However, it is vital that the sector does not become complacent.

“As with every apprenticeship standard, the number of learners on programme and successful completions continue to be measured and monitored by the Government. Employers across the sector must engage with the apprenticeship programme to ensure that the industry retains this essential scheme in future.”

The apprenticeship requires frontline staff to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to demonstrate competence in professional cleaning.

In addition to core duties common to cleaning in any type of environment, all learners are required to follow one of two options:

- healthcare cleaning operative – apprentices working in healthcare facilities,

including the NHS

- and commercial cleaning operative – apprentices working in any other type of

Environment.

Staff and employers can find out about the Level 2 CHO apprenticeship at www.ukcleaning.org.uk/courses

Businesses can find out more about the Level 2 CHO apprenticeship at www.britishcleaningcouncil.org/apprenticeships

Visit <https://education-training-foundation.uksouth01.umbraco.io/professional-development/etf-offer-by-top-ics/apprenticeships/sme-apprenticeship-essentials> for details of Apprenticeship Essentials for SMEs.