

IRO Apprenticeship

Guidance for Line Managers

Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager

v1.8 Feb 2020

The **Level 5 Operations/ Departmental Manager** apprenticeship standard has been developed by a group of leading employers to equip managers with the knowledge, skills and behaviours required by the role. The apprenticeship standard has been approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education and the Department for Education.

The Institution of Railway Operators (IRO) is an approved main provider for the apprenticeship standard and has used its unique understanding and position to add a rail context to the workshops and assessments. In addition to the taught modules and workshops for the apprenticeship standard content, apprentices will be offered nine rail context workshops to attend in our area hubs. These will be led by rail industry experts and offer apprentices an opportunity to broaden their understanding across the rail industry and extend their networks.

Additionally, the learning will be accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and apprentices will be given access to their high-quality learning materials including their online management resource portal Management Direct. On successful completion, apprentices will achieve a Level 5 Award in Management and Leadership from the CMI.

The **Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship** is a two-and-a-half-year programme suitable both for individuals who are at the start of their career in rail and want to take the first steps into professional management, as well as those who may already have developed some practical experience and now wish to develop their theoretical understanding of management and leadership.

An operations/departmental manager is someone who manages teams and/or projects, and achieving operational or departmental goals and objectives, as part of the delivery of the organisation's strategy. They are accountable to a more senior manager or business owner. Key responsibilities may include creating and delivering operational plans, managing projects, leading and managing teams, managing change, financial and resource management, talent management, coaching and mentoring.

Roles may include: Operations Manager, Regional Manager, Divisional Manager, Department Manager and specialist managers.

There is no age limit and managers may already have experience of the role, or they could be relatively new to management. Regardless, the apprenticeship will support participants in developing their operational and management capabilities in rail.

Benefits to the employer include:

- The development of a professional staff member who will enhance the leadership and management of the organisation
- A manager who understands the importance of their role and its scope
- An individual with a broad understanding of the rail industry
- Development of the employer's business team and specialist expertise gained in areas including Operational Management, Project Management, Finance, Interpersonal Excellence, Leading People, Managing People, Building Relationships and Communication.

Successful apprentices will achieve:

- A **Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager** apprenticeship certificate from the Institute for Apprentices (IfA)
- Enhanced membership of the IRO (level tbc)
- CMI Level 5 Award in Management and Leadership
- Full membership of the CMI, and those with three years of management experience can apply for Chartered Manager status through the CMI
- On-the-job experience
- A professional pathway for future development
- Level 2 in maths and English (if qualifications not already achieved)

Programme Overview

Applicants wishing to join the Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager apprenticeship are committing themselves to a 27 month study period. They are supported by a tutor, a coach and their line manager and with networking opportunities at face-to-face workshops. Apprenticeships require employers to agree to 20% off-the-job training for the apprentice (which can include attendance at workshops, scheduled learning exercises and coaching sessions).

Once accepted onto the programme, apprentices begin their studies, completing the knowledge elements relevant to their apprenticeship Standard and developing a portfolio of evidence of the skills and behaviours listed in the Standard. Most units will begin with a face-to-face workshop and the remainder of their studies will be online, maximising the flexibility of learning. In addition, they will have conference calls with their IRO coach and their Line Manager every 12 weeks plus supporting phone calls about every six weeks. This will ensure, with their line manager's support, that learning is put into practice and also help the apprentice to develop a portfolio of evidence.

In order to successfully complete the apprenticeship, they will need to attend a one-day assessment centre (end-point assessment or EPA) with an external assessor once they have completed all activities. This end-point assessment (EPA) should take place within 8-12 weeks of the successful completion of their apprenticeship studies.

Structure

Level 5 Operations/ Departmental Manager

The apprenticeship includes 20% of time spent off-the-job training (which includes attendance at workshops etc.) The programme includes units on:

| L5 Apprenticeship Standard units | IRO rail contextual modules |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leading People• Managing People• Building Relationships• Communication• Operational Management• Project Management• Finance• Awareness of Self• Management of Self• Decision Making | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rail business• Delivering customer services• Delivering passenger and freight services• Emergency and incident management• Managing Safety• Operational planning and timetabling• Rail people and change• Performance management• Rail engineering |

The programme will develop and examine the knowledge, skills and behaviours of these activities associated with the role of the Operations/Departmental Manager in rail.

The apprenticeship standard teaching includes 10 units which each have a one day workshop, plus there is a one day induction at the start and a one day Gateway and preparation for EPA (end point assessment) at the end. They are spaced at about one every 9 weeks, with content-heavy units getting a bit more time. All the dates are agreed up front and attendance at these workshops is as far as possible compulsory.

In addition, apprentices will be invited to attend 9 one day rail context workshops which offer the wider rail learning and the context for the management learning. These will be put on about every 12 weeks and apprentices will be invited to book on to these at a date and location that is convenient.

Maths and English

It is a requirement that the apprentice is able to evidence that they are working at Level 2 in Maths and English. Should they not have these GCSE qualifications (or their equivalent) or be unable to find your original certificates, then they will need extra time in addition to the 20% off-the-job training time to gain these qualifications. Functional skills learning takes place online via our subcontractor Total People Limited.

Cost

The apprenticeship costs £4500. If you are a levy-paying organisation, then the cost is covered by the Apprenticeship Levy. As long as your organisation has sufficient funds in its digital apprenticeship account (DAS) then there is no additional cost for the programme delivery. If you work for a non-levy paying organisation, then please contact us for further details.

Over the course of the apprenticeship programme the apprentice will be attending workshops which cover the elements of the programme. The apprentice will need to agree with you, as their line manager/ employer, whether your organisation will cover the cost of travel. It is

unlikely that your apprentice will require overnight accommodation, but it is recommended that you confirm what your organisation will cover prior to the programme commencing.

The role of the Line Manager

Applications will only be accepted from individuals who have the support of their line manager. The IRO as Main Provider has to be satisfied that each party understands the commitment being made. The line manager will be asked to confirm and sign that they have read guidance documents and agree to their own and the apprentice's participation.

The line manager will be required to:

- Ensure that the apprentice is given time to attend workshops, meetings and off-the-job learning activities
- Support the apprentice identifying opportunities for them to develop their skills and behaviours alongside their learning
- Observe their apprentice undertaking certain activities e.g. giving a presentation
- Attend a progress review between the IRO reviewer, the apprentice and line manager, every 12 weeks
- Attend induction with the apprentice to ensure that all key parties are aware of the requirements of the apprenticeship. This will give you a better understanding of the journey the apprentices will be undertaking, and how you can help and support them along the way and ensure they are given the best possible chance of completing their apprenticeship to the maximum of their ability.

Off-the-job (OTJ) time commitment

In addition to the above-mentioned workshops etc., apprentices must be given time to learn and develop their skills and behaviours. OTJ time should be flexible to minimise the impact in the workplace and this should be agreed between you and the apprentice prior to them starting the programme. For an apprenticeship, you are required to allow the apprentice 20% of their work time to study; this includes workshops and meetings with their coach, but it also includes any learning or development activities that their role requires, for example meetings with you to discuss their work, work-based dialogue between colleagues etc.

If some of the apprenticeship activities occur at weekends and these are not working days in the apprentice's employment contract, it is important the IRO are shown an agreement between the apprentice and their employer that TOIL (Time Off In Lieu) is available to cover any such time they spend.

Next Steps

If the IRO apprenticeship seems the right way forward for a member of your team and you are confident that they are committed to study the whole programme (plus end-point assessment), with support from you, then please get in touch with the learning and development team in your organisation.

Cohorts of 12-14 apprentices are negotiated by IRO with employers and workshops set up at suitable locations for the group. New cohorts can be made up of mixed employers.

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