

The Public Sector Apprenticeship Target Apprenticeship Activity Data Return

The Rodillian Multi Academy Trust has a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of staff as new apprentice starts over the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018.

Return Section 1 - Data Publication

Reporting Period **1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021**

A	The number of employees whose employment in England by the body began in the reporting period.	62
B	The number of apprentices employed by the body whose apprenticeship agreements began in the period (includes employees who were already working for the body before beginning their apprenticeship, as well as new apprentice hires).	1
C	The number of employees employed in England that the body has at the end of the period.	360
D	The number of apprentices who work for the body at the end of the period.	3
E	Figure B expressed as a percentage of figure A.	1.61%
F	Figure D expressed as a percentage of figure C.	0.83%
G	The number of apprentices who worked for the body immediately before the period.	3
H	Headcount on 31 March 2021	340
I	Figure B expressed as a percentage of figure H	0.29%

Return Section 2 - Apprenticeship Activity Return

The headcount in the organisation on 31 March 2020 was 360. During this period 1 apprentice began work for the Trust. The proportion of headcount constituted by apprentices was therefore 0.29% on 31 March 2021.

There are a number of reasons and mitigating factors as to why the target was not met over this period:

- COVID19 resulted in a number of lockdowns where the Academies were closed for significant periods. The types of apprenticeships that have been required in the Trust entail a high degree of support from existing staff and 'on the job' including shadowing which was not possible during lockdown periods. It would therefore not have been cost-effective or appropriate to employ apprentices at this time.
- COVID9 resulted in a decreased requirement for e.g. administrative staff as the Academy buildings were closed for significant periods.

- There have been issues in attracting suitable apprentices in some fields such as IT. This is a competitive market and Academies do not have the budget to offer competitive salaries therefore the quality of candidates was found to be lacking. It was decided that it was more cost-effective to shift the focus to employing qualified technicians.
- Many staff were furloughed during this period but the rules of the scheme meant that they still needed to be available should their employer require them so they were only available a very short-term basis which was not conducive to the needs to the Trust.
- There shortage of staff in areas such as IT, administration and similar posts has been an increasing since last Spring.
- The Trust has been through a restructuring process so our focus has been on existing staff rather than new appointments.

The Trust remains committed to apprenticeships, and we are taking steps in order to take advantage of the scheme and to address the challenges we have faced in this area. It should be noted that we have employed 13 apprentices in the following capacities since March 2017 who successfully completed their apprenticeships and some of whom went on to become permanent employees.

- Administrators
- Receptionists
- IT Technicians
- Science Technicians

We are currently engaged in recruitment planning and we are considering a number of options which may result in an increase in apprenticeship numbers over the coming period as follows:

- Encouraging staff to undertake higher level apprenticeships in order to achieve formal degree level and postgraduate qualifications (e.g. MBAs).
- Offering further accounting apprenticeships to Finance staff.
- Revisiting staffing requirements in the areas above where we have previously successfully employed Apprentices.
- We already pay a higher starting rate of pay than required but are considering increasing this further and maintaining a higher rate for the duration of the apprenticeship period.
- We are considering whether the use 'flexi-job' apprenticeships may be appropriate for some shorter term projects.
- We are looking at Creative and Design apprenticeships in the area of music and drama.
- We are assessing our options in relation to the use of apprentices in the following areas:
 - Teacher
 - School business professional
 - Business administrator
 - Teaching assistant
 - Sports coach