
Apprenticeships and Raising of the Participation Age (RPA)

What is RPA?

Raising the Participation Age is the Government's approach to increasing the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training until they turn 18.

So basically they're raising the school leaving age?

No! The objective is not necessarily to keep people at school, but to increase the number of young people who are participating in some form of training or learning; which could be at school, in college or in the workplace, such as through an Apprenticeship.

Okay. So when does this start and who is affected?

All young people due to leave school in or after June 2014 will be required, by law, to stay in education, training or work with training, for a full academic year after their compulsory school leaving age.

Does it affect Apprenticeships?

Not particularly other than it should see an increase in the demand for Apprenticeship training among young people affected but also from employers who will be encouraged to offer Apprenticeships in place of jobs without training.

Does an employer 'have to' offer Apprenticeships under RPA?

No, not at this stage but as the Apprenticeship programme grows and develops, we hope that more employers in Oxfordshire will see the potential benefits of taking on Apprentices, regardless of legislation.

What does the Statutory Guidance say?

It says exactly this;

10. Entering into a contract of Apprenticeship satisfies the duty to participate and no further monitoring of that young person's training or employment is needed. Apprenticeship providers are included in the requirement to notify a local authority if a young person is no longer participating ('drops-out' of learning).

Apprenticeships are also specifically named as one of the three primary routes to 'participation'.

Who monitors and reports this?

Oxfordshire County Council has existing responsibilities for supporting young people into education and training which includes collecting information about young people's current activity, and targeting resources at those who need it. RPA becomes part of those responsibilities and puts particular emphases on promoting, monitoring and reporting participation for those affected by the legislation.



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How can Apprenticeship training providers help?

Firstly, they can work with *Oxfordshire Apprenticeships* to ensure that information about local Apprenticeship opportunities is available and that vacancies are promoted widely. By working with OA, they will also ensure that their services are made known to employers with whom we engage, thereby hopefully matching local employers with good quality training.

Secondly, they should be aware of the requirements on them by the Statutory Guidance here; http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/p/participation%20of%20young%20people%20-%20statutory%20guidance%20-%20annex%202%20duties%20on%20other%20organisations_001.pdf

Specifically to;

“Inform local authority support services if a young person (aged 16 or 17) has dropped out of learning. This is so the young person can be contacted swiftly and offered support to help them re-engage.”

Data sharing arrangements will be co-ordinated by Oxfordshire County Council.