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**YOUTH JUSTICE PRACTITIONER
APPRENTICESHIP
(Level 5)**

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Foreword

A message from our CEO



JAYNE COWLEY, CEO

I am proud to be leading an organisation dedicated to positively impacting the development of practitioners who work with young people in the care and criminal justice systems.

Unitas has delivered the level 5 Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship since June 2023. It is a welcome addition to our extensive portfolio of courses, including the highly successful Youth Justice Effective Practice Certificate (YJEPC) and Youth Justice BA Hons.

Looking forward to 2024, my goal is to continue to build on our extensive knowledge of youth justice practitioner training and support undertaken since 2012, by continuing to equip all our students with the skills and knowledge they need to become agents of positive change within youth justice.

Unitas are delighted to be part of this important training development opportunity for the youth justice sector, continuing to build on our positive relationships working with Youth Justice Services and other employers who are able to support and strengthen their teams and offer career progression under the overarching Apprenticeship Scheme.

CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Introduction	4
Preparing for the apprenticeship	5
An overview of the YJPA	6
Core learning objectives	8
Enhancing essential foundations for success	10
The apprenticeship journey	14
Learning outcomes (KBS)	15

INTRODUCTION

Discover the Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship (YJPA)

Unitas is the largest provider of vocational youth justice distance learning courses and degrees in the UK. Our **Youth Justice Practitioner Apprenticeship (YJPA)** will combine academic rigour with practical relevance. All our courses are designed by leading academics in conjunction with experienced managers and practitioners.

Unitas will work with the employer and apprentice to equip them with the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) that they will need to perform their job role and ultimately attain the YJPA.

Apprentices may be completely new to the Youth Justice Practitioner (YJP) role. They may already be employed within the organisation and have some youth justice experience

and would therefore use the Apprenticeship as a development and upskilling opportunity.

The employer may appoint a mentor, and other colleagues may be involved in the apprenticeship learning journey. This will help the apprentice acquire the skills and behaviours that are necessary to perform their YJ role.

Unitas will provide all the learning materials, and it is important that apprentices, employers and Unitas work together to ensure the apprentice is supported for a successful outcome. The apprentice will gain a nationally recognised qualification and develop highly sought after knowledge and skills.

PREPARING FOR THE APPRENTICESHIP

What happens before an Apprentice starts the YJPA?

Before the Apprenticeship starts, a meeting is held between the apprentice, Learning Coach Assessor (LCA)/Unitas Representative and employer (manager in the YJS) to assess the current level of skill and knowledge mapped against the YJP apprenticeship standard. This assessment will ensure that any appropriate recognition of prior learning is taken into account and where any adjustments need to be made to the length of apprenticeship. Throughout the discussion an individual learning plan is created, taking into account individual needs and learning styles.

An initial assessment of English and Maths functional skills may also be required.

These initial assessments ensure that the apprentice is placed on the programme at the right time, which contributes towards successful completion and a good learning experience.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE YJPA

What apprentice will gain from the programme

An induction session will commence learning, linking the apprenticeship to the workplace.

Apprentices will complete 4 knowledge modules which are underpinned by the Child First Tenets and which align with the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) in the YJPA Standard.

MODULE 1:

- Introduction to youth Justice
- Child and Adolescent Development
- Relationship-based Practice
- Rights, responsibilities and the legal framework
- Education, training and employment

MODULE 2:

- Child and young person development in the YJ System
- Assessment
- Safety and well-being
- Risk of offending and risk of harm

MODULE 3:

- Why young people offend
- Working effectively
- Assessment and planning interventions
- Engagement and participation
- Custody and resettlement
- Desistance

MODULE 4:

- Engagement and communication
- Effective practice
- Multi-agency working and sharing information
- Transitions

Modules 1 and 3 of the YJPA focus on understanding of core youth justice principles and policies. Modules 2 and 4 **cover the eight areas of the Youth Justice Skills Matrix.**

In the workplace, the apprentice will learn on-the-job skills, and may be assigned a mentor or experienced colleague to work with.

Developing English and maths skills

English and maths functional Skills are a mandatory part of all apprenticeships. Apprentices must either already have GCSE English and maths at Grade 4 (C) or above, or attain a Level 2 Functional Skills in English and maths prior to taking the EPA (End Point Assessment).

[A British Sign Language qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL].

Apprentice who need to attain English and maths Level 2 Functional Skills will undertake:

ENGLISH:

- Reading – 60 minute online assessment
- Writing – 60 minute online assessment
- Speaking, listening and communication – will require an 8-minute presentation alongside a Q&A session, and a 20 minute group discussion.

MATHS:

- 2 online assessment papers
 - 30 minutes non-calculator paper
 - 90 minutes calculator paper

Note: Functional skills learning hours are additional to the Apprenticeship learning hours, and may therefore extend the length of time needed to complete the YJP Apprenticeship.

Teaching of functional skills will be a blended approach using the BKS Functional Skills online portal, 1:1 tutorials and independent learning.

Formal assessments will only take place when the apprentice feels confident enough and has

completed a successful mock assessment.

Throughout the YJPA, the apprentice will be encouraged to develop and improve their written and numerical skills, and this will also be documented.

CORE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

APPRENTICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE:

Discover:

The apprentice will learn the theory by exploring subjects and topics online, as well as from their organisation.

Practice:

The apprentice will practice their new-found knowledge by completing activities directly at work in their role.

Apply:

The apprentice will be able to apply what they have learnt at work, and they will actively contribute to their organisation whilst building their portfolio of evidence.

BLENDED APPROACH TO LEARNING

Study

Theoretical knowledge is delivered via Unitas' bespoke digital study materials and resources which are available online. The materials cover all the important areas of youth justice practice as identified in the **Youth Justice Skills Matrix**.

The digital study materials and resources have been designed to be used by anyone, no matter what their technical know-how. This study for the YJPA is classed as 'Off-the-job' (OTJ) training and learning and must be a minimum of 6 hours per week, and be documented. This is a requirement by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The off-the-job training is calculated according to the contracted employment hours across the whole YJPA. The ESFA defines off-the-job as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of an apprenticeship. Training can be delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work but not as part of their normal working duties.

The OTJ time is all about the apprentices personal development and is over and above their specific job role and operational requirements. It is vital that the apprentice can prove the time that they have spent investing in their training and personal development. The OTJ training record will also be regularly checked by the LCA and employer.

Learning methodology

Off the Job training can include:

- Theory – such as online learning, webinars, seminars, role playing, simulation exercises
- Practical training apprentices wouldn't normally undertake – such as shadowing or mentoring
- Learning support and time spent attending workshops

OTHER LEARNING

As part of the apprenticeship there will be access to additional Unitas workshops on other topics as follows:

- Safeguarding
- Prevent duty
- Health & Safety in the workplace
- Mental Health and Well-being
- British Values
- End Point Assessment information sessions
- Professional discussion planning and practice
- Project planning, report writing and presentation
- Project delivery and outcome analysis

There may be other employer-led workshops and training which also count towards the prescribed number of hours of OTJ training.

ENHANCING ESSENTIAL FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

Comprehensive support system

The employer will provide sufficient opportunities for the apprentice to fulfil the practice requirements for the Apprenticeship standard. Apprentices are unable to proceed into the end point assessment unless they have clearly evidenced all of the KSBs required.

Unitas will assign the apprentice a dedicated LCA. This person has extensive experience in Youth Justice. The LCA will review and support the learning journey progress, meet regularly with the apprentice and employer (virtually on-line, or in person), and give developmental feedback on assignments.

SAFEGUARDING

We ensure that our policies and processes promote and protect apprentice well-being whilst on programme. We will teach apprentices about types of risk facing modern British citizens.

PREVENT

We teach our staff and apprentices about the four British values: democracy, rule of law, individual liberty and respect and tolerance.

MENTAL HEALTH

Understanding how to protect mental health and promote emotional well-being is part of modern British citizenship.

Monitoring progress

How will Unitas, the apprentice and employer know that progress is being made?

It is important to keep apprentices and employers informed about the YJPA progress and for all parties to work together to ensure that the learning journey is kept on track, avoiding interventions (and time adjustments) wherever possible.

Every 8–12 weeks a Unitas representative will meet with the apprentice and employer to carry out a Progress Review. [This is a requirement in accordance with ESFA funding guidelines and must be completed by all parties.]

The Progress Review discussion will document how the YJPA is going, what has been learnt (including in the workplace), review the portfolio of evidence and OTJ record, and mutually agree any changes to the learning programme plan or pace of learning.

The apprentice will also be completing assignments and assessments which mean that regular milestone achievements are being met as the apprentice progresses through the knowledge modules. Constructive, developmental and informative feedback on assignments will be given, enabling the apprentice to continually improve their skills.

Preparation for the End Point Assessment (EPA) starts from **day one of the apprenticeship**. Throughout the YJPA there will also be the opportunity to talk about the project for the EPA, as it is also good to start planning this early. Project guidance and additional workshops about the EPA process will be available.

Assessment methods

Assessment of practice is a core component of the apprenticeship. Apprentices will be assessed on 3 key areas; their ability to convey knowledge, their ability to demonstrate practical skills and their capability of displaying professional workplace behaviour. These will be developed throughout the apprentices learning journey, with the goal of displaying all of these competencies during their EPA.

PORFOLIO OF EVIDENCE

Throughout the YJPA the Apprentice is required to compile evidence in a portfolio demonstrating their skills and behaviours in the workplace. The evidence can come from a variety of methods including:

- Case examples
- Observation of practice/ witness statement
- Review of written materials produced by the apprentice such as reports or client records
- Personal statements
- Identifying key issues in practice
- Reflective journals on practice including understanding of theory to practice and examples of personal/practice development

END POINT ASSESSMENT

To successfully complete the YJPA the apprentice will need to participate in an End Point Assessment (EPA) carried out by an independent End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). The EPA is made up of:

- Professional Discussion – underpinned by the portfolio of evidence (60 minutes)
- Project Report and Presentation with questioning (report limit 5,000 words, presentation approximately 20min, Q&A 40min)

Unitas, the apprentice and employer will agree when the apprentice is ready to take the EPA. This point is known as going through the **EPA Gateway**, and an agreed project proposal is submitted to the EPAO for their approval. The apprentice then has up to 8 weeks to complete the project, write up their report and create a presentation on the project.

The EPA will take place within 8–12 weeks (3 months) of going through the EPA Gateway. The overall EPA will be graded – this could be a Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction.

Additional support and guidance:

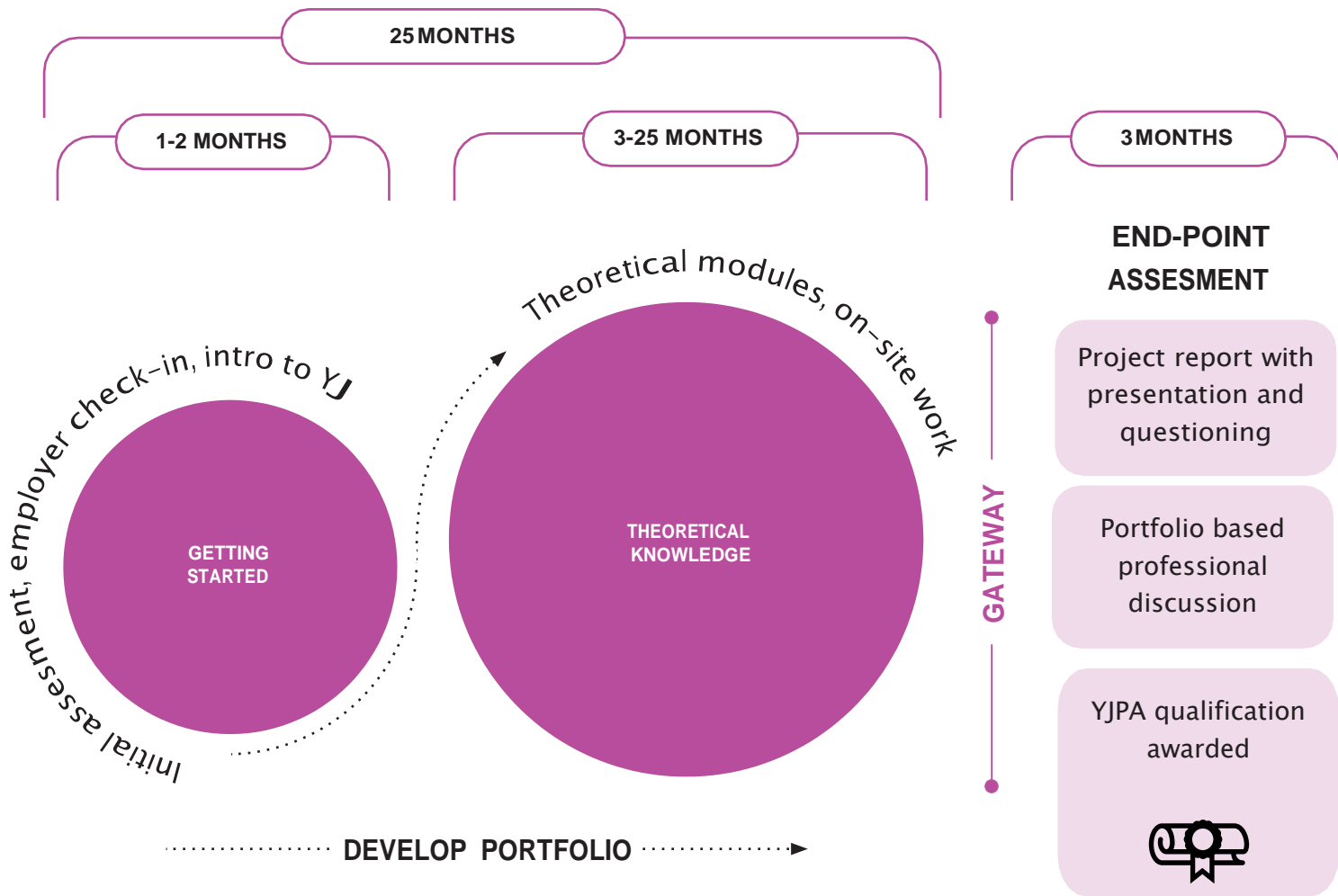
The apprentice will also receive additional support and guidance on the End Point Assessment.

This will include guidance on the project format and content, how to conduct research and report-writing. Practical sessions to help apprentices with the Presentation, and Professional Discussion will be available where required.



THE APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY

Blended learning approach combining work and study over the apprenticeship delivery period of 25 months.



DEVELOP PORTFOLIO (COMPETENCY EVIDENCE)

- Evidence of relevant KSs of the YJPA Standard
- Level 2 functional skills in English and Maths must be passed as part of the programme (if not already attained) and certificates presented, prior to taking the end-point assessment. This will be discussed at programme launch

LEARNING OUTCOMES - KSBS

Knowledge

K1: Legislation and corresponding guidance relevant to all aspects of work in youth justice, including sentencing, risk of harm, safeguarding, children’s rights and equality and diversity.

K2: Child and adolescent development and the full range of complex needs that can be detrimental to children’s physical, emotional and mental health and well-being.

K3: The range of factors (e.g. substance misuse and adverse childhood experiences) that may lead to offending and anti-social behaviour and the methods for promoting desistance from these.

K4: The principles of professional judgement, including defensible decision making, how to guard against conscious or unconscious bias and how to maintain professional boundaries.

K5: The key components of relationship-based practice and the evidence-base for them.

K6: The range and purpose of assessment and planning tools relevant to working with children in the youth justice system.

K7: The range and type of services available for children in the youth justice age group, including adult service providers and how these work in relation to young people who are in transition to them.

K8: Protocol and process arrangements in working with multi-agencies, including the sharing and safeguarding of information in line with data protection law.

K9: The emotional and practical needs of specialist groups of young people, e.g. Looked After Children, girls, LGBTQ+, BAME.

K10: The practical, emotional and psychological impact of key types of life changes and transitions between services affecting children up to the age of 18.

K11: Barriers to children's effective engagement with youth justice interventions.

K12: The contextual aspects of risk (risk of what, to whom and circumstances in which risk is likely to be higher or lower).

K13: Their own safeguarding responsibilities and those of others within and outside of their organisation.

K14: The principles of effective programme design and implementation for reducing offending and reoffending.

Skills

S1: Communicate effectively face to face and in writing (including digitally) with children who encounter the youth justice system.

S2: Identify the factors that may lead to offending and anti-social behaviour and the methods for promoting desistance, and use these to plan individually tailored interventions.

S3: Promote the physical, emotional and mental health and well-being of children in the youth justice system by recognising and building on strengths, identifying need and taking action to protect children where necessary.

S4: Use a range of engagement skills to promote trust, including clarification of role, purpose of intervention and boundaries of authority.

S5: Develop relationships that are collaborative, motivating and child-centred using a range of strategies to engage young people and families (e.g. motivational interviewing, solution focussed methods, participatory practice, pro-social modelling and problem solving).

S6: Make effective use of assessment and planning tools designed for use in youth justice settings to inform decision making.

S7: Develop, implement and monitor plans which reflect risks and needs, and build on positive human and social capital to promote desistance.

S8: Select interventions and approaches to working with young people based on the best available evidence about their effectiveness in promoting desistance from offending.

S9: Broker access to sources of human and social capital appropriate to the needs of children in the youth justice system.

S10: Be an effective social advocate for children and their families.

S11: Share and safeguard information about children and their families in line with data protection law.

S12: Identify, assess and meet the needs of children and young people where there are safeguarding concerns.

S13: Reflect on practice within evidence-based frameworks in order to continuously improve outcomes for children in the youth justice system.

S14: Identify any barriers to children's effective engagement with youth justice interventions and take steps to remove or mitigate these.

S15: Actively protect the rights of children, challenge disproportionality and promote equality of opportunity.

S16: Keep accurate and timely records of all interactions relevant to the assessment, planning, implementation and review cycle.

Behaviours

B1: Show consistency and fairness and be evidence-informed in making decisions.

B2: Model and reward pro-social behaviours, including respect for diversity and being inclusive, and discourage inappropriate language and behaviours.

B3: Be optimistic and hopeful; non-blaming; open and honest; empathetic; and patient and calm in all interactions, including situations that are stressful.

B4: Operate in accordance with the legal, ethical and contractual requirements of youth justice work and maintain professional boundaries.

B5: Commit to team working and engage proactively with partner organisations and agencies to maximise the engagement of children in mainstream services and other positive activities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

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