

## **Introduction**

SSG is an Independent Training Provider delivering a range of Apprenticeships, Study Programmes, Traineeships and stand-alone qualifications in a number of vocational sectors for our local communities. We believe that engaging and working in partnership with the employer in their employees learning and development assists the learners in their training qualification journey whether they are undertaking work experience as part of a full-time study programme, newly recruited apprentices or an existing employee. Employer engagement ensures each individual learning plan provides the skills, knowledge and behaviours individuals and employers need to achieve their aspirations and goals.

## **Aim**

The aim of SSG's Employer Engagement Strategy is to increase the engagement of employers in workforce development to ensure training provision meets the needs of local, regional and National needs of employers and provides individuals with the knowledge, skills and behaviours that enable them to contribute to the workplace, progress and achieve their career aims.

## **Scope**

SSG engages employers in all aspects of the development, delivery and evaluation of training across the breadth of the curriculum. Qualitative and quantitative feedback relating to each stage of training is continuously collected and reported to ensure SSG's curriculum offer remains responsive to employer current, emerging and future labour market needs and gaps in training provision.

To ensure those seeking an Apprenticeship are able to access up to date information SSG publishes employer vacancies on the Government's online 'Find and Apprenticeship Service' and uploads details of the curriculum offer to the ESFA's Course Directory Provide Portal.

## **Approaches to working with employers**

### **Labour Market Analysis (LMA)**

SSG engages with a wide range of stakeholders and employers at National, regional and local level to collect external LMA this, together with internal LMA, is analysed by Directors and Senior Managers to identify key customer groups and ensure the curriculum provision continues to deliver employer-responsive solutions.

### **Staff recruitment and development:**

SSG provides high quality training and trainers through robust safer recruitment and selection and training development processes. These ensure the staff designing and delivering training have the competencies to deliver up-to-date vocational and technical subject knowledge that reflects expected industry practice and meets employers' needs.

### **Marketing and Communication:**

The SSG Marketing Plan is reviewed annually by Directors and Senior Managers to ensure SSG engage with all stakeholders. Delivery of the plan is overseen by the Marketing Director who is responsible for the design of marketing materials, management of the website, social media, press releases, employer forums and joint marketing campaigns. These incorporate innovative ways to promote

current and future training opportunities, including employer case studies, tailored to the needs of each client group.

Service Area Managers also disseminate marketing information, advice and guidance through face to face meetings with Employer Managers, workplace mentors and learners.

### **Managing enquiries**

SSG's dedicated team of Service Area Managers attend a wide range of events to provide information on training available. The team respond to enquiries from employers and learners and record all engagement on SSG's Employer/Learner Relationship Management system that is then monitored and followed up by administrative sales staff and our Business Manager.

### **Information, Advice and Guidance**

The organisation's Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) policy has been developed in line with the Gatsby Career Benchmarks and Matrix Quality Standard criteria for advice and support services.

SSG keeps up to date with Government, External Quality Assurance Agency, Sector Skills Council, Awarding Body and Qualification Framework policy and informing partner employers of all changes relevant to their business.

Service Area Managers are responsible for cascading changes/updates to Trainers/Tutors at regular Team Meetings, CPD and Standardisation events. Trainers/Tutors are responsible for disseminating changes to employers.

### **Curriculum Design**

All training programmes are individually designed to meet the needs of the employer and learner(s). Employers actively participate in the organisational and individual training needs analysis process. Each Individual Learning Plan records the content, delivery methods, short, medium and long term objectives and clearly sets out the expectation of high levels of employer involvement throughout the training programme.

### **Training Delivery**

Learners have the opportunity to learn from employers about work, employment and the skills that are valued in the workplace. Employers actively participate in the design and delivery of full-time programmes. All learners on full-time study programmes or traineeships undertake work experience as part of their vocational programme.

Trainers delivering workplace training take a flexible approach to the delivery and assessment to meet the needs of the business and individual learner.

Employers have access to learning records throughout the training journey via SSG's online learning management system (VQ Manager). They are also actively involved in the review of training meetings held every 6 – 8 weeks with the learner and Trainer to identify progress, measure impact and agree further training delivery.

Quality managers carry out observations of teaching, learning and assessment to ensure teaching and learning strategies motivate, stimulate learners and deliver relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours which meet the employers' requirements.

### **Training Evaluation**

Employers are encouraged to feedback to SSG throughout the learning programme and are required to participate in the regular face to face progress meetings. Feedback is collected via face to face meetings, SSG's online learning management system (VQ Manager) and progression/completion surveys. SSG's Quality Processes include clear guidelines to ensure Senior Managers to respond promptly to feedback in order to improve services.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Directors Review the Employer Engagement Strategy effectiveness annually as part of the whole organisation Self-Assessment Process and ensure all staff have access to this document. Directors and Senior Managers are responsible for ensuring the adherence to the policy by all employees.

Senior Managers are responsible ensuring Trainers/Tutors liaise with employers effectively, feedback is gathered and issues are resolved appropriately in order to improve services.

Marketing Team Are responsible for the reviewing the effectiveness of SSG's Marketing Strategy providing with bi-monthly reports to the Senior Management Team.

Staff from this team are available to run joint marketing campaigns and events with employers to promote the sector and workplace opportunities to sector skill gaps. Recruitment and Careers Advisors continue to work alongside Trainers to provide employers and learners with ongoing information, advice and guidance on further learning opportunities and, where appropriate identify alternative employment opportunities.

Trainers/Tutors are responsible for involving employers (or their representatives) in progress reviews and maintaining good working relationships with learner workplace mentors. Each individual is required to act in accordance with SSG employer engagement processes. Failure to do so may be considered as an act of misconduct and may result in disciplinary action.