

Dear colleague

You may be aware the Government have introduced an initiative of increasing the number of new Apprenticeships by 2020 to over 3 million, alongside this, employers are re-writing current Apprenticeship Frameworks to simplify them and ensure they are more business focused, this work is being competed by employers for employers and taking into consideration all sizes of businesses whether they employ one member of staff or a multisite business who employ thousands.

The Optical sector steering group is supporting the Optical retail Trailblazer and this is now starting on the new apprenticeship standard for Optical Retail which will replace the current Apprenticeship framework that supports the QCF for Optical Assistants, and was originally created over 9 years ago for our non-clinically qualified colleagues who support in our Practices and Stores. Building the new standard is a great opportunity to redesign and improve current apprenticeship framework to enable it to meet the needs of businesses of all sizes, once the standard is produced it will be the only optically based apprenticeship available for optical retailing in the UK

A number of Opticians and Optical Bodies who form the Optical Sector Steering Group are already on-board to support the development of this new Standard and your support would be greatly appreciated and extremely valuable. Your support could be for the input into the design and development of the standard or proof reading and giving feedback and builds at the various milestone points, however much you can invest in this will be greatly appreciated, our first milestone is to submit an initial expression of interest and we need a minimum of ten employers to endorse, this will be sent to BIS re: the standard development.

Other Optical businesses and Bodies supporting this work are currently:
Specsavers (Co-chair of the trailblazer Group)
Boots (Co-Chair of the trailblazer Group)

We definitely need more employers to be joined up in this piece of work and we hope you will consider joining us in creating a formal qualification for our non-registered colleagues, the level of commitment can vary from an hour or two per month to review and feedback on the standard, to a larger involvement in designing the standard itself.

If you are interested in working with us please send either Peter Pavitt or myself an initial email expressing your interest to

Jayne Johnson at jayne.johnson@boots-opticians.co.uk

or

Peter Pavitt peter.pavitt@specsavers.com

Please ensure that expressions of Interest are sent in by Friday 17th June in order for the trailblazer to progress

Kind regards

Peter Pavitt

Jayne Johnson

Co-Chairs Optical retail trailblazer