



touchline

News from League Football Education



The Apprentices Journey

We take a look at the apprenticeship structure and what is involved
page 8



LFE is a partnership between The Football League and The Professional Footballers' Association.

LFE technical partner 

news



LFE appoint Dan Jolley as Research Project Officer

In May 2006 LFE commissioned Dan Jolley, a student on The University of Liverpool's MBA (Football Industries) programme, to undertake a research project into improving the exit and progression support made available to apprentices reaching the end of the ASE programme.



Some of you may have met Dan (pictured above) during the summer when he visited a number of clubs to interview staff, apprentices and parents as part of his research.

The project is now complete and will form part of LFE's ongoing drive to develop and improve the ASE programme, as well as forming the basis of Dan's dissertation.

Thanks to great support provided by a number of clubs, apprentices and other partners, the project has generated some excellent recommendations for future action in this area.

These recommendations have been passed to the Learning Skills Council (LSC) who have recognised the project as virtually unique in work-based learning apprenticeships across the

country and across all major industry sectors.

This support and recognition has meant that Dan, previously a Business Development Manager for Hewlett Packard Ltd, has now been taken on by LFE as their Research Project Officer, initially tasked with implementing the exit and progression support recommendations outlined in his work.

This is a particularly important area for both apprentices and the ASE programme. If you have any questions, comments or feedback on exit and progression and how it can best be delivered, please do not hesitate to contact Dan via e-mail at djolley@lfe.org.uk or telephone on 07876 500350.



Puma Prize Draw

At the beginning of this year, LFE sent out a feedback questionnaire to be completed by all apprentices.

As part of Puma's partnership with LFE they offered to give away ten packs of Puma equipment to apprentices who completed and returned the questionnaire. LFE would like to thank all apprentices who took part - and congratulations to the ten lucky winners! Their names can be found at www.lfe.org.uk

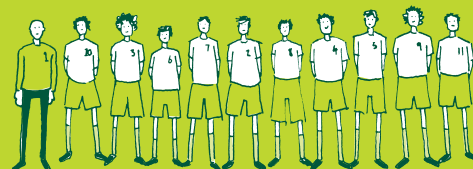
Handbooks now online

Key documents including the apprentice handbook and club guidance book can both be downloaded from the LFE website. The documents provide an overview of the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence framework and specific information on the content of the training including an apprentice's rights and responsibilities. Visit lfe.org.uk to download.



We need you!

This is your newsletter and we welcome any contributions from all apprentices, coach, clubs, parents and partners. If you have a story, email droe@lfe.org.uk



LFE Inspection dates announced

LFE will be inspected by the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) from the 11th-15th December 2006.

The inspection will make judgements about the ASE programme, equality and diversity, quality improvement and leadership & management.

The inspectors will interview staff, apprentices, club and college staff in arriving at their judgement. We will provide further information to anybody directly involved prior to the inspection.



Football League Clubs embrace the NVQ

The requirement to deliver the NVO at Football Clubs was made all the more difficult as many Club staff had little knowledge of the evidence and assessment requirements and practices.

With the financial assistance of the LSC, LFE has delivered a series of courses for the A1 assessor qualification and the L20 expert witness qualification which have been well attended.

infrastructure to successfully deliver the NVQ. More than 100 people have already passed the L20 and by the end of the year 40 people will have passed the A1.

Thanks to the enthusiasm and dedication of so many coaches we now have in place the

Thanks to everyone who has or who are currently undertaking the courses.

Key Skills Outcome

At the end of June, following a meeting with the Apprenticeship Approvals Group (AAG), LFE received confirmation that the three wider key skills are to be removed from the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) framework.

The new intake of apprentices and existing apprentices will benefit from the decision, which leaves just two key skills at Level 2 - Communication and Application of Number.

If apprentices have A-C grades in Maths and English at GCSE they will be exempt and will not have to do any key skills within the framework.

This news will certainly be welcomed by clubs, colleges and apprentices and will hopefully be of benefit to us all.

Thank You

LFE works with many different partners in the delivery of ASE. We are of course thankful for the help and support received from everyone.

However, a special note of thanks must go to the LSC and WAG for the financial support provided to run ASE.

Funded by:



LFE Launch Development Fund

From 1st July 2006 LFE has introduced a Development Fund, which is a new financial opportunity open to all Football League clubs participating in the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) programme.

The fund is open to all clubs participating in ASE through LFE. Clubs with between six and nine apprentices can claim up to £1500 and clubs with over nine apprentices are able to claim up to £3,000.

Introducing the Fund

Clubs will have the chance to claim up to £3,000 from the Development Fund for improvements in delivering the ASE programme and additional support for the apprentices at the club. The basic question we will ask when making a judgement is: does this improve and support the apprentices at your club in delivering the ASE programme?

Who can apply?

The fund is open to all clubs participating in ASE through LFE. Clubs with between six and nine apprentices can claim up to £1,500 and clubs with over nine apprentices are able to claim up to £3,000.

It is anticipated the additional funding will make a real difference to the apprentice experience.

From the applications received to date it is already proving both a popular and flexible way to engineer additional resources and support within clubs.

The first club to claim from the development fund was Wrexham who used funding for heart rate monitoring systems and weight training equipment. Apprentice Neil Taylor said the monitors ensured there was "no hiding place!" and that the data produced was, "very revealing." Steve Weaver, Head of Youth, commented that the programme could not have been enhanced without the development fund.

The second claim was from Leeds United who used the funding for a smart board, video and IT equipment. The third claim was from Nottingham Forest who utilised the funding for an outward bound course. Nick Marshall, Academy Director, claims the course has had a positive impact on the apprentices with: "improved confidence, teamwork, working together, problem solving, learning and performance."

The application form for claiming from the Development Fund can be downloaded at www.lfe.org.uk



Application Criteria

There are certain criteria that must be met when making an application:

- A maximum of £3,000 is available to each Football League club supporting ASE.
- Clubs should apply in writing providing a full breakdown of items & costs.
- Claim forms to be submitted by 31st May 2007 and signed by Club Director / Company Secretary.
- Reimbursement will only be made against original invoices. Please note that VAT will not be paid by LFE.
- Cannot be taken in cash.
- Minimum of 10 Apprentices to access £3,000.
- Minimum of 6 Apprentices to access £1,500.

For more criteria, visit www.lfe.org.uk



“LFE provide a lot of support. We only need to ring and we get immediate answers.”

Nottingham Forest's 100%

Not only were Nottingham Forest the first club to be able to claim completed ASE Frameworks from SkillsActive but they also managed to achieve a 100% success rate.



Of the four Apprentices in Sporting Excellence starters in the summer of 2004 at Nottingham Forest FC, all will achieve full frameworks by the summer of 2006, which is testimony to the professionalism of the apprentices and the club staff at Forest.

Success in separate ways

The four apprentices have now all gone in separate directions, which goes to show the breadth of the qualification and how it can be used to help pursue a variety of careers. Forest staff, justifiably proud of the success, also paid tribute to LFE. Jim King, Education & Welfare Officer

at Forest said: “LFE provide a lot of support. We only need to ring and we get immediate answers.”

He also praised the role that LFE Regional Officer, Keith Leighton, has played in the success of the club's apprentices. “Keith Leighton builds relationships with each apprentice, he's superb.”

More to come

LFE will be claiming many more full frameworks over the coming weeks and once they are certified will make achievement payments to both clubs and apprentices.

We would like to thank all the apprentices, club staff, sub-contractor staff and others who have worked so hard over the last two years to achieve this success.



James Cullingworth

Place of Birth: Nottingham

Date of Birth: September 18, 1987

James Cullingworth who has been given a professional contract still realises the value of the educational element of the apprenticeship.

He commented, “Whilst I have been fortunate to get a pro contract, it is reassuring to see how the other lads have been able to use their qualifications to pursue career options outside of the game.”

the gov'nor speaks

Keith Leighton,
LFE's Chief
Education Officer,
looks to the future.



Implementing change to succeed

The apprentices of today and the achievers of tomorrow have Keith Leighton's vision to thank for their success.

In the Spring of 2004, following five years as academy manager at Stoke City Football Club, Keith was asked by LFE's chief executive Alan Sykes to spearhead the introduction of the apprentice programme. Keith said: "It's been a difficult but enjoyable two years which has certainly been challenging for myself, LFE staff, club staff and apprentices.

"When I arrived my priorities were to analyse the qualifications we delivered, how we delivered them and the costs associated with this. I quickly realised that we needed to bring education costs down and rationalise the way in which courses were delivered and assessed.

"The next priority was to put an NVO infrastructure in place for the



Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) programme and address the training needs of coaches and LFE staff. The industry was about to embark on ASE and we didn't have this in place."

Developing the programme with input from all sides has meant the evolution of a superior training programme and a closer working relationship between coaches and apprentices.

This new dimension has enabled greater emphasis to be placed on sports science, the development of fitness training and psychological techniques to improve performance.

Apprentices are also clearer about their technical, tactical, psychological and personal and social development.

Input from all resulted in a superior programme and a closer working relationship between coaches and apprentices.

Experienced on and off the pitch

Keith knows the business of football inside out. He was a promising

schoolboy in his home town of Stoke playing at county level. At 16 he was offered terms by Stoke City and West Bromwich but due to family circumstances he had to turn them down.

He achieved a combined honours degree in Business Management, Sport and Sociology at Manchester University under the tutelage of former Middlesborough assistant manager Bill Beswick and played for the British University Football Team.

After working in leisure development for a local authority and in a senior management role at college, Keith's interest in coaching developed. After acquiring his full badge he was approached by the FA to work in its 'Excellence and Community' programme, which later led to his appointment at Stoke City.

A Great Result

Keith's experience has helped him develop the ASE programme with both apprentice and staff in mind. He has reduced the workload and pressure on apprentices by initiatives such as using one piece of work as evidence to fulfil several criteria on the course.

Said Keith:

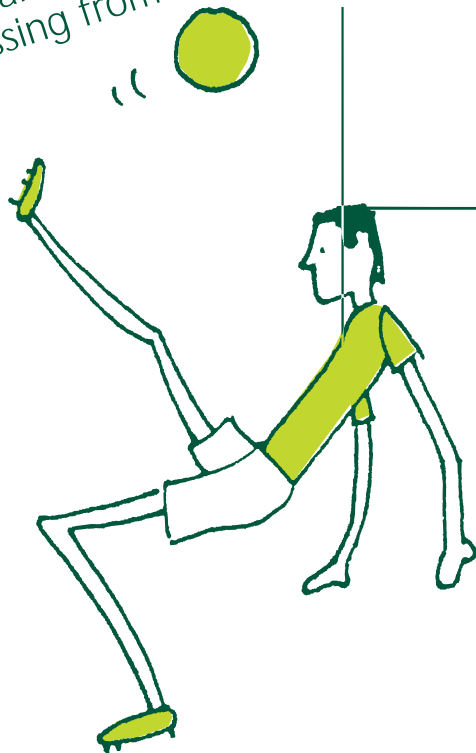
"Apprentices' achievements are improving all the time and we try and set the boys challenging educational targets so they can lift their attainment levels.

"At the same time we really work to lift the aspirations of individuals from simply passing courses to achieving merits or distinctions.

"We take the view that every apprentice matters."

The Apprentice Journey Explained

Here we outline the key stages on the two-year journey from being offered an apprenticeship to progressing from the programme.



The Apprentice Journey Explained

There are many essential stops on the journey from new apprentice to graduation from the course.

Every apprentice desires to fulfil their dream of becoming a professional footballer but qualifications are essential to complement their activities on the pitch - and provide increased options off it if their career takes a different course.

The Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (ASE) programme has been devised to provide the perfect combination of interlinked work based and academic experience over a two year period.

Success in all aspects of the course means apprentices are perfectly placed to forge non-playing careers both in and out of football, armed with the practical qualifications today's employers expect.

College Course - Technical and key skills

Those lucky enough to have received the offer of an apprenticeship will work to achieve vocational sports related awards during 780 hours of learning.

Top tier students can also take academic awards such as A-Levels and AS-levels but must fit these studies around their football club commitments.

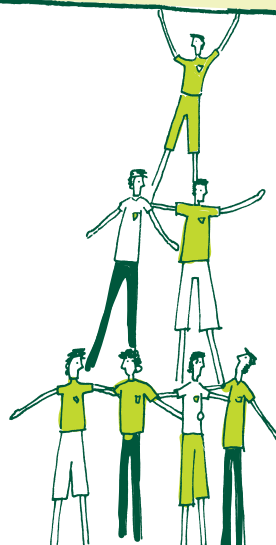
Communication and application of number key skills will also be studied unless equivalent GCSE's have been obtained.

Coaching

Students will achieve the Certificate in Coaching Football Level 2 following tuition from experts from the Professional Footballers Association.

This qualification has proved invaluable to

“Success in all aspects of the course means apprentices are perfectly placed to forge careers both in and out of football”



apprentices both during and after the course - often forming the basis of a non-playing career within football.

Other aspects of the certificate include child protection and the laws of the game.

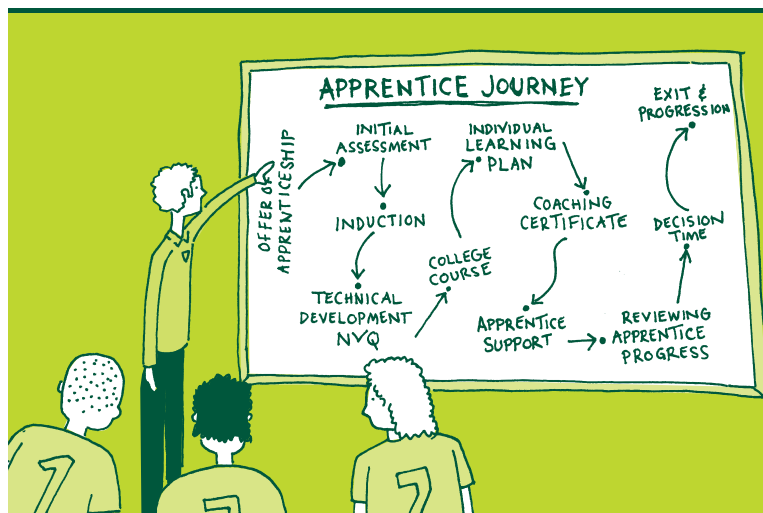
Practical

Many former apprentices have described how the disciplines and structure they gained during their time with LFE helped shape their personal and professional future.

The NVQ Level 3 in Achieving Excellence in Sports Performance teaches

technical and lifestyle skills which would provide a solid grounding for anyone of any profession.

From planning and managing their own lifestyle to maintaining the health and safety of others, apprentices complete the course well equipped for life in the working world.



Apprentice journey at a glance

Initial Assessment
Establishing the apprentice's needs and experience

Induction
An introduction to the working environment

Technical development
Club coaching staff develop the apprentice's talent

College course
Apprentice starts technical certificate and key skills

Individual learning plan
An agreement between apprentice and LFE to ensure learning aims are met

Coaching certificate
Apprentice undertakes level 2 coaching certificate

Apprentice support
Ensuring that each apprentice is given any help necessary to achieve their aims

Apprentice reviews
Regional Officer and apprentice meet to ensure on target to achieving learning aims.

Decision time
Apprentices made aware who will be offered a procontract

Exit and progression
Was the apprentice offered pro contract? Where can the apprentice go next?

Meet Roger Gibbins Regional Officer, South West



Inspirational football guru Roger Gibbins' job satisfaction comes from simply seeing his protégés make it on their own.

On the pitch

As regional officer for the South West, Roger has 120 apprentices under his wing at nine clubs in England and Wales including Cardiff City and Swansea.

He is realistic with his students and instills in them the importance of sporting and academic qualifications so they have options both on and off the pitch - as he himself

enjoyed. London-born Roger left school at 15 and joined Tottenham Hotspur as an apprentice.

Two years later, in 1972, he signed as a professional and went on to score the winning goal in the FA Youth Cup final against Huddersfield.

Roger made his League debut playing for Oxford United in 1975 before totting up 596 appearances for various clubs including Norwich, Cambridge and Cardiff where he became player/coach and assistant manager.

Staying in the game

He begrudgingly ended his professional career aged 37 - blaming "old age" - but managed to stay in the

game after hearing about a job vacancy with the Footballer's Further Education & Vocational Training Society which subsequently became LFE.

Said Roger: "I could not have a better job - working within the sport I love and helping steer our young apprentices in the right direction.

"It is vital that our students have positive role models and have as many opportunities as possible presented to them.

"My sporting hero was Pele as he was a great player and a fantastic example to young people. The values he stood for and the way he conducted himself on and off the pitch is what I would wish for all our apprentices."

"It is vital that our students have positive role models and have as many opportunities as possible presented to them.



The rewards

Roger gains the greatest rewards from seeing his apprentices make it in the world.

"It is fantastic to see the lads I've supported for their two years, using the qualifications they've gained to get good jobs or to move into coaching, playing, or other careers," he said. I tell the boys to always enjoy what they're doing and make the most of their time with LFE because it only comes round once!"

Get a piece of Roger!

Roger's fame even stretches to ebay, where you can buy signed pictures of his glory days (pictured left!) for the bargain price of £2.99!

click and kick!

LFE's new interactive website provides 24/7 access to the apprentice experience.

Students, parents and teachers can log on for key information and assistance or to discuss any aspect of League Football Education.

Launched in May the site - www.lfe.org.uk - is an integral part of LFE's overall communication strategy.

The website was developed to ensure more efficient and effective communication between LFE and a wide range of stakeholders: such as apprentice's parents. It provides an opportunity to enhance the learning experience without reducing football time.

The internet is also a more environmentally friendly way to communicate - in line with LFE's sustainability policy.

**find out for yourself today,
visit www.lfe.org.uk**

For strangers to the programme the site sets the scene about LFE, what it does and who it's partners are.

As well as general news and contacts it provides information on the Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence course and allows LFE staff and apprentices to access important documentation online.

Would-be students can assess their academic ability prior to the start of their apprenticeship via the online initial assessment tool. This area of the site will soon be developed to create a more comprehensive virtual learning environment.

Whats online:

- Latest News
- Download Area
- Access online learning
- Apprentice Profiles
- Online Polls
- Contacts
- Useful Links

**and much more
coming soon!**



Guy Bonwick

Apprenticeship at: Ipswich Town FC
Now at: Loughborough University
and Marketform, London



Guy Bonwick's tenacity and drive have helped him achieve results in circumstances where many might have failed.

The mental and physical strengths he developed during an apprenticeship with Ipswich Town, were called upon to aid his recovery in the aftermath of the July 7th terrorist attacks in 2005 - just four days after he embarked on a new career in London.

Guy was riding in the same carriage as one of the suicide bombers who targeted the London underground that day. Though he escaped with blown eardrums and cuts and bruises, the experience will stay with him forever. He considers his journey with Ipswich Town to have played a major role in his

recovery. "The scholarship helped me to develop my mental strength, every ounce of which I needed when faced with the situation on the tube that day," said Guy. "There is no doubt it shaped my life for the better."

Youth team winner

Guy played for Ipswich Town from 1996 until 2003, signing a professional contract on his 17th birthday. Through his scholarship with The Footballer's Further Education & Vocational Training Society - now LFE - he achieved two A-Levels and one AS Level.

His most memorable achievements at the club include captaining the youth team up to U19, winning the U17 Premier League in 2001, lifting the trophy at St James' Park and going to the FA Youth Cup final.

Progressing at university

Guy said: "When I was released from Ipswich I had to make decisions about my future. I was injured at the time and knew it would be impossible to make it for pre-season at any club so I came to a mutual agreement with Ipswich that it would be best to use the qualifications from my scholarship to go to university.

"With help and advice from both the club and my training officer, I began my studies at Loughborough University in 2003. I am currently working towards a business degree in Management Sciences (BSc), with a sandwich year in industry."

Guy was made chairman of the Loughborough University Football Club between 2004/05 and helped steer them to their second consecutive British Universities Sports Association gold medal.

"I feel the scholarship provides lads with a secure platform on which to stand when trying to pursue aspirations of becoming a pro and making a living in the game."



A new direction

Still backed by Ipswich, in July 2005, Guy was offered a place at Lloyds' underwriter, Marketform, in London. He had been at work four days when he was caught up in the terrorist tragedy.

"My scholarship helped direct my life. I hope to graduate from Loughborough with a 2:1 or a first and have already been offered a position with Marketform as an underwriter in the personal accident department where I will be working with amateur athletes" he said.

"Although the football did not work out quite as planned, the experience that I gained on the scholarship is something that no-one can take away from me. I would not hesitate to recommend the scholarship to others".

We need you

To be profiled in a future issue, email droe@lfe.org.uk