

# *Retail Management*

## **Level 4 Higher Apprenticeships Framework Case Study**

Working with education partners to develop a framework  
for a unique retail management qualification



## Background

Mix Consulting has worked on Apprenticeship programmes for over 20 years and in some challenging sectors. Nicky Curtis has supported the retail sector as a local/regional adviser to public sector bodies to help raise the profile of the sector. This included working with local authorities, sector skills council, schools, colleges, universities, learning providers and the employment service.

With the launch of Higher Apprenticeship pilots we were asked by the Skills Funding Agency to provide consultancy for a complex partnership arrangement lead by Newham College to develop the framework and work through the consultation phase.



## The Role of Mix Consulting

Nicky Curtis and Julia Pearson were the key consultants on this project our task was to review their contract with the Skills Funding Agency and get the project back on track specifically in the area of marketing and employer engagement.

## Approach

1. Reviewed their contract and developed an Action Plan with timelines.
2. Provided sector market research.
3. Worked with all the Partners individually/collectively to ensure a common ground for moving forward.

4. Developed a marketing strategy to engage with 150 key retailers to discuss their views and commitment to employing Apprentices.
5. Engaged directly with key employers.
6. Supported the design of the marketing materials.
7. Attended strategic meetings.
8. Advised Newham College on contract management issues.

This was a challenging and complex project we were asked to consult when the project was reaching a crisis point and in jeopardy of non-achievement.

This would have resulted in a claw back of funding. As you can see from the attached letter they were delighted with the results of our intervention.





## HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP IN RETAIL MANAGEMENT

"Mix Consulting joined our project team at a time when the project was behind schedule in terms of targets. Their hard work, dedication and high calibre input played a significant role in getting the project back on track and to enable it to successfully deliver key targets. I am writing to express my thanks for all the hard work, dedication and expertise you have put into the Higher Apprenticeship in Retail Management project.

As you know, this hasn't been the easiest of projects in terms of creating employer demand and our timescale was extremely tight. Your efforts really helped get the project back on track and to help us satisfy the demands of the National Apprenticeship Service.

We now have a strong, viable approved qualification, which will hopefully be successfully utilized by retail employers both large and small. A lot of this is because of the work you two and your team have undertaken. It has been a pleasure working with both of you on this project and I hope that we will work together again in the future."

Julia Bollam  
Head of CIPS, Newham College of Further Education

The Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship in Retail Management is the first qualification of its kind for the retail sector. It has been developed to provide staff and businesses with the necessary knowledge and skills to support the future growth and success of the retail sector.

Designed with and for employers, this qualification will equip managers with a wide range of skills including customer service, management skills, e-commerce and social media, visual merchandising, buying, merchandising and retail operations.



88% believe that Apprenticeships lead to a more motivated and satisfied workforce.

72% of employers say apprenticeships boosted their productivity lifted staff morale, enhanced their image, and brought new ideas to the table.

More than ever before, great customer service and management skills have become vitally important to meet the rapidly changing demands of the retail industry.

To help meet these challenges the Higher Apprenticeship in Retail Management equips employees with the right skills for present and future retail needs

For more information, visit  
[www.retailmanagementskills.org](http://www.retailmanagementskills.org).

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