

# Apprenticeships

## Find your inner Superhero

### Assistant Buyer and Assistant Merchandiser – Level 6



#### Overview

This occupation is typically found in the retail sector, across a range of different types of companies and employers such as those selling direct to the public / customer and those selling to trade. It is also found across different types of retail operation, including those who trade from traditional stores, those who are exclusively on-line, and those who operate through a variety of channels.

The purpose of the occupation is to understand the brand and customer in order to source, select, maintain and deliver the right products to meet demand and business objectives. Using effective business forecasting, risk and opportunity analysis, creativity and business insight, they anticipate and shape customer demand and market trends.

The overarching purpose of buyers is to identify and source the right products and services, in line with the organisations strategic objectives, for the organisation to sell to customers. The overarching purpose of the merchandiser is to maximise sales and profit by ensuring that the right products are available to customers in the right place at the right time and in the right quantities. They achieve their objectives by developing and implementing buying and merchandising strategies to ensure current and future customer demand is researched, anticipated and satisfied. They anticipate and prepare for new markets through customer insight and research activities, and they contribute to company profit through efficient, effective and sustainable buying and merchandising.

In this occupation, individuals would normally interact with a wide range of internal and external colleagues, including but not limited to, their wider buying and merchandising team, designers, manufacturers, suppliers, distribution centres, stores, marketing, finance and IT departments. This is normally an office-based role, but may involve remote working, travel to stores, trade fairs, supplier meetings etc.

There may also be a need for travel to other countries for supplier and factory meetings. There will usually be a significant leadership element to the role.

In this occupation, they will typically be responsible for the management of a team. They will be responsible for an assigned 'assortment' or product range. They will have budget responsibility, which varies significantly across different employers and departments, but could reach £100m+.

Length of Programme:  
24 Months



## Benefits:

- Stepping stone to a career within Buying & Merchandising
- Knowledge Builder – helps understanding the knowledge and skills required to work successfully within the Buying and Merchandising Departments
- Earn as you learn
- Government Recognised Qualification - equivalent to a Degree



These modules are all underpinned by a set of behaviours.

## Generic Modules Include:

- Creatively manage a portfolio of products / services and create a critical path
- Applied detailed knowledge of the global markets to select and develop an appropriate product/service
- Through effective leadership, develop and contribute to the B & M Strategy to ensure organisational objectives are met
- Understand emerging technological changes to maximise market share and profitability
- Make informed managerial decisions that manage risk, drive sales and profitability
- Drive sales and profitability through effective negotiations with suppliers on key deliverables such as: capacity, cost price and flexibility
- Manage and collaborate with key internal stakeholder functions to agree appropriate promotional strategies
- Deliver robust range building and planning for the assigned assortment
- Lead, coach, manage, motivate and develop self and team members to achieve personal and business success
- Ensure all channels to market are considered and the most appropriate channel(s) is/are selected to maximise the sales and profit potential

### Buying Modules:

- Developing own brand products to meet current trends and customer requirements
- Ensure department is set up to maximise sales and profitability
- Ensure they and their team deliver in an ethical, sustainable and legal way
- Analyse and evaluate overall performance of the Buying function
- Ensure ranges are sourced to comply with relevant safety and quality standards
- Source and select 3rd party products to meet current trends and customer requirements, linked to strategy and financial targets



### Merchandising Modules:

- Uses analysis to develop range framework identifying commercial opportunities
- Ensure they and their team, work in an ethical and legal way in the supply of product ranges
- Trades effectively delivering to sales and profit targets
- Analyse and evaluate overall performance of the merchandising function
- Ensure the availability of appropriate product range to meet customer demand and expectations across all delivery channels



### End Point Assessment:

End Point Assessment or EPA as its known has been created to assess the knowledge, skills and behaviours gained throughout the qualification. EPA is conducted by an external independent body chosen by the employer. EPA offers the chance to showcase your skills and be awarded a grade that reflects your performance. For this qualification the EPA consists of the following:

- Work Based Project including a presentation with questioning
- Professional Discussion, underpinned by a portfolio of evidence