
National APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

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Welcome to this *FE Week* supplement



Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

Thousands of apprentices, from hairdressers to aeronautic engineers, will this week show off all that apprenticeships have to offer.

More than 800 events, including an international conference, have-a-go activities and a radio broadcast — even apprenticeship speed dating — will celebrate what it means to “earn and learn”.

This, the sixth National Apprenticeship Week, is designed to highlight apprenticeships and the positive impact

they have on individuals, businesses and the economy, and comes as employers pledge to take on more, with vacancies rising (see page 3).

But as we beat the drum for the achievements of apprentices, it is also a good time to reflect on a year when this vocational training route has come under scrutiny with four major reports.

Over the past year *FE Week* has reported on the findings of successful entrepreneurs Doug Richard and Jason Holt, both commissioned by the government to look into apprenticeships and who both write in this supplement.

We’ve also covered Lord Heseltine’s views on growth, as well as the report from the Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee.

There has been much debate in the past year, from Lord Heseltine’s suggestion that skills funding should come from a single pot of money to be dished out to Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), and employer ownership of the apprenticeship system, to tax breaks for employers as incentives to take on apprentices.

FE Minister Matthew Hancock tells us how the development of higher apprenticeships is one of his “personal priorities” (see page 4).

He says: “As well as ensuring that each apprenticeship is for a minimum of a year and that English and maths are a priority,

we are also offering apprenticeships as an alternative to university into professions such as insurance, accounting, and law.”

He points out how important it is to make it easier for employees to take on apprentices and says he will shortly publish details of how the government plans to take forward recommendations from Doug Richard’s review.

The over-arching theme for National Apprenticeship Week 2013 is that “apprenticeships deliver”. The week’s events aim to showcase how apprenticeships can benefit apprentices, their employers and the economy — and to inform and persuade others to get involved, says the National Apprenticeship Service, which oversees the campaign that ends on March 15.

A T-shirt competition has helped to launch proceedings and the winning design, created by 18-year-old fashion designer Jessica Tshoukas, shows a hot air balloon with the words ‘the sky’s the limit’ across the front.

Major conferences and business breakfasts hosted by premiership football clubs are planned, as are apprenticeship buses touring cities and regions. And Mr Hancock is planning a job swap with 23-year-old BAE manufacturing engineer Jenny Westworth at her factory workplace near Preston.

Jenny, apprentice champion of the year

2012, will shadow the minister before he then tries his hand at manufacturing on the final assembly line for the Typhoon aircraft.

A huge range of organisations and individuals, including employers, apprentices, business support and sector organisations, learning providers, colleges and schools will support the week by hosting activities, ensuring the event is “bigger and better” than ever before.

David Way, chief executive of NAS, says: “last year was a huge success and we look forward to showcasing the value high-quality apprenticeships bring to individuals, businesses and the wider economy and celebrating England’s apprentices again this year.”

This supplement, produced by *FE Week* and sponsored by NCFE, is a celebration of apprenticeships.

Inside you will find a calendar (page 12) that picks out some of the national events. Read on and you’ll find news of our competition that will give an apprentice the chance to win a top-of-the-range camera.

And that’s not all, you’ll find words of wisdom from Ofsted chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw, NUS vice president Toni Pearce and MP Adrian Bailey, chair of the BIS Select Committee.

Finally, make sure you stay up to date with National Apprenticeships Week by following the hashtag #NAW2013 on Twitter or by following @feweek online.

This supplement was produced by FE Week, in partnership with NCFE

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Front page picture. From left: Apprentices Shannon Lloyd, 17, Kirsten Lucas, 19, Abbie Godbold and Shanice Godwin-Samuel, both 17. See page 10

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FE week news

Online vacancies and applications soar

Eleanor Radford
@EleanorRadford

The boss of the National Apprenticeship Service said that more consumers and employers “are recognising the benefits of apprenticeships”.

David Way, chief executive of the service, spoke out as new figures revealed that 26 per cent more places were open to apprentices applying online from November 2012 to January 2013 than the previous year.

There has been a huge boom too in the number of online applications, which make up 80 per cent of those submitted. They were up to 277,40 — a 41 per cent increase in a year.

Mr Way said: “It is great to see such significant growth in both apprenticeship applications and vacancies submitted, and advertised online in just one year.

“Apprenticeships are a great way for young people and adult learners to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a

real qualification; and setting them on the road to success in their chosen career. For employers, hiring apprentices is a way of attracting new talent and developing a motivated, skilled and diverse workforce.”

Business and administration continued to be the most popular apprenticeship, with 82,290 applications made, followed by childcare with 21,760 applications. IT, software, web and telecoms kept its number four slot with 16,840 applications, while hospitality and catering leapt up a place after being the sixth most popular choice the year before.

Business and administration apprenticeships topped the vacancy list with 6,460 posted online, followed by customer services, then IT. Childcare came in fourth; hospitality and catering, fifth.

The data also showed that employers in London advertised the most vacancies during the winter period with 3,970, followed by the West Midlands with 3,040 and Greater Manchester with 2,810.

London registered the most

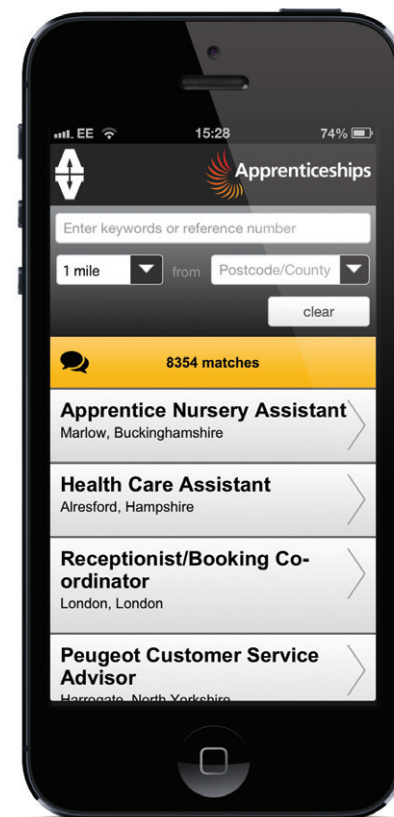
apprenticeship applications with 60,490, followed by the West Midlands (36,130) and Greater Manchester (26,690).

The Liverpool City region had the biggest increase in apprenticeship applications in the past year, up 59 per cent from 10,160 in Q2 2011/12 to 16,160 in Q2 2012/13. The second highest leap was 54 per cent in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Mr Way also pointed to a new app (see right) that makes it easier to look for a vacancy. “As apprenticeships continue to grow in popularity, it is important we can offer a range of ways for people to find and apply for vacancies. AV Search makes that process even easier and as accessible as possible,” he said.

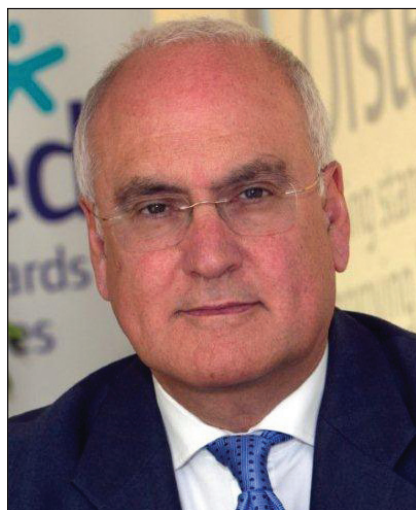
The AV app is targeted at 16-24 year olds and potential apprentices aged 25 and over. However, it can also be used as a tool for parents/guardians, training providers, careers advisors, schools and colleges as well as employers.

The app can be downloaded from the iTunes and Android app stores and is free from adverts.



The new AV app available from iTunes

Q&A with Ofsted's Sir Michael Wilshaw



Sir Michael Wilshaw

Why did you visit Germany?

When preparing my first annual report for learning and skills, I was keen to see how England fared on the international scene. It was striking to note that youth unemployment was low in the Netherlands (7.7 per cent), Germany (8.5 per cent) and Austria (8.3 per cent) compared to the UK, at 20 per cent. I decided to explore apprenticeships in Germany as it had such a good reputation for high quality manufacturing.

What can England learn from the German model of apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships have a very high profile

Sir Michael Wilshaw, Ofsted's chief inspector, tells *FE Week* of his experiences looking at Germany's apprenticeship system

in Germany among employers, as well as the young people and their parents.

During my visit, the young people I spoke to were very proud to be apprentices and saw it as a real achievement. They felt they were on a pathway to a secure future.

About 70 per cent of school leavers who do not go into higher education are apprentices. Compared to the UK, the figures are stark, with only 6 per cent of young people aged 16 – 18 participating in an apprenticeship in 2011.

What is it about the German model that's so much better?

In Germany, about two thirds of young people enrolled completed an apprenticeship by the age of 25.

The German system is very effective at getting people involved in apprenticeships at a younger age. But, it is interesting that the school system supports this progression with a greater focus on vocational training earlier on.

Over 50 per cent of all young people undertake apprenticeship programmes. In England, 40 per cent of the apprentices who started their programme in 2010/11 were aged 25 or over. In Germany, 8 per cent of those

starting an apprenticeship were over the age of 24.

How are German companies involved with apprenticeships?

The involvement of employers is light years away from what we have in this country.

The employers we spoke to really did seem to 'own' the system as they knew what skills they were looking for, so are fully involved in designing the programmes. They also took some of the responsibility for quality.

They actively involved themselves in monitoring what was happening in the colleges to check that it matched their requirements and industry standards. I believe there is much more we can do and should do with employers.

What does England need to do to move forward?

We need to ensure we get more people involved in apprenticeships from a younger age and provide clear pathways for progression.

The vocational route should have equal status to the academic route in the eyes of schools, young people and their parents.

I know there are some outstanding opportunities for young people to enter on a high status vocational pathway, but there needs to be more of them and young people need to have more exposure to the range of vocational routes that already exist in this country.

What do you think are the real strengths and weaknesses in England's apprenticeships?

The good and outstanding practices can show us the way forward.

At these providers, the apprentices rise to the challenge of learning in a completely new environment and are motivated to achieve.

Employers and providers work very well together to ensure that trainers and assessors have excellent expertise as well as in working with young people.

A recent Ofsted survey, Ensuring Quality in Apprenticeships, found that the subcontracting system was often weak, with inadequate monitoring of the quality of provision by the lead contractor.

We are also concerned that too many apprentices did not have real and sustained employment during and after their apprenticeship.

FE week experts

New jobs, new business and new growth



The sixth National Apprenticeship Week is a chance to reflect and look forward to the changes that will drive up the quality of apprenticeships, says Matthew Hancock

Apprenticeships are booming with more than a million starting since the last election. But there is much more to tell in this success story.

As well as ensuring that each

apprenticeship is for a minimum of a year and that English and maths are a priority, we are also offering apprenticeships as an alternative to university into professions such as insurance, accounting, and law. The development of these Higher Apprenticeships is one of my personal priorities.

Doug Richard's review last year will play an important part in safeguarding the programme's quality and I will shortly publish details of how we plan to take his recommendations forward.

The figures show that people who complete an apprenticeship at intermediate level – GCSE-equivalent – can expect to earn £74,000 more over their lifetime than people with similar backgrounds and qualifications. With an apprenticeship at advanced level, the rewards become even greater.

A report by the Association of Accounting Technicians shows that while 44 per cent of 2012/13 graduates are predicted to be either underemployed or unemployed six months after leaving full-time education, those with vocational qualifications such as Higher Apprenticeships can earn an estimated £150,000 more over their lifetime than someone with no qualifications —

comparable to the earnings advantage a graduate could expect.

Employers of apprentices also have an interesting story to tell. Nearly three-quarters of them find that having apprentices improves productivity. And around two-thirds say that they improve staff morale and retention. On average, they make back the money they spend on an apprentice's salary and other costs within two years.

We must make it even easier for businesses to take on apprentices

The rest of us might do well to reflect that every pound of taxpayer's money spent on apprenticeships has been variously estimated to generate between £18 and £28 of benefit to the economy, helping to create new jobs, new business and new growth.

In the light of facts like these, I quickly learned that my job was not to sell

apprenticeships, but to ensure that they met the widest possible range of needs.

At the other end of the scale, we are all aware of the dangers of high youth unemployment. That is why we are establishing a new programme of traineeships to help young people aged 16-24 to develop the skills they need to secure and succeed in employment, including through apprenticeships. I expect the first places on the new programme to be available from this September.

Finally, we must make it even easier for businesses to take on apprentices. I started out in a small family business, so know how daunting this can be. The Apprenticeship Grant for Employers provides £1,500 per apprentice to support smaller employers, who haven't taken on an apprentice in the past 12 months, to take on up to 10 apprentices aged 16-24. The grant, now available until the end of this year, will encourage even more employers to find out how much apprentices can strengthen their business.

I hope, too, that many people will find out about the scheme this week. Events are being held in all parts of the country and are well worth seeking out.

Matthew Hancock is FE Minister

Give employers ownership via tax system

More employer ownership (and tax credits) will help to ensure that apprenticeship schemes drive the economy forward, says Doug Richard

National Apprenticeship Week provides the perfect opportunity to reflect on how valuable but undervalued apprenticeships are in this country. I am a big believer that they need to be both championed and reworked for their ultimate importance to be appreciated.

Employer ownership is key. It not only ensures that those with expertise in a particular industry are taking the lead in shaping the training of future experts, it also means that employers have a greater sense of accountability to make apprenticeships – and, as a result, their apprentices – as impressive as possible.

We must start by giving the purchasing power to employers and keeping it that way. Rather than the state taking the lead in funding apprenticeship training, employers should have a direct working relationship with providers. Employers need to be given the money and the authority to buy the training that they think is best.

It makes perfect sense for those who ultimately require and benefit from the skills that apprenticeships are delivering, to be the main decision-makers surrounding

training. A high standard can then be monitored and controlled by the people at the heart of the business.

However, this funding should not be given to employers unconditionally. The payments should be granted depending on whether workers pass an external examination at the end of their apprenticeship. This is a great incentive to ensure that the training is effective.

Apprenticeships must be made as attractive as possible to employers

This, in turn, proves how essential it is for apprenticeships to be measured more accurately. We need to follow a similar technique to the university degree system, whereby students' achievements are recognised because they have either met or exceeded a clear criteria. This is an area in which current apprenticeship schemes are falling short.

To ensure value for money, employers should be allowed to buy from approved suppliers – and then would only receive money if their apprentices passed an external examination at the end of training.

This concept builds on the increase in employer ownership and ensures that the achievements of apprentices and employers are more easily and successfully judged. It is the prime incentive for employers to make a success of apprenticeships.

The government is already testing a similar programme that allows employees access to subsidies. This is certainly a step in the right direction but much more thinking needs to go into empowering employers.

We need too to focus on securing workforce tax breaks. The Association of Employment and Learning Providers quickly rejected my recommendations; however, I am still convinced that tax credits are integral to the success of apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are valuable initiatives and must be made as attractive as possible to employers. Offering workforce tax breaks is an excellent way to make that happen. This would allow the state to play a significant part; it could show its support for the work employers are doing whilst the ultimate authority on training and designation of funding is left with the employers.



I am proud to have been so heavily involved in the development and progression of apprenticeships into the 21st century workplace. An increase in employer ownership and a change in enforcement around tax credits will go some way to ensuring that these schemes continue to produce talent that will feed into the success of a business, and, in turn, the wider economy.

Doug Richard is an entrepreneur and author of The Richard Review of Apprenticeships

FE week expert

Why the introduction of FE loans is wrong



It's folly to try to transfer a university funding model to FE, says Toni Pearce

National Apprenticeship Week celebrates the success of a system that creates education and employment opportunities for thousands of young people and adults. That's why it is so worrying that the government is introducing initiatives that haven't been proven to work or to save money.

From August this year, prospective apprentices aged 24 and over will be expected to pay for their own training or to take out a loan of up to £4,000 per year. Research from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) last year revealed that only 11 per cent of respondents would be willing to take out such a loan.

The decision to place sky-high prices on training almost certainly will reduce the number of adult apprentices – workers who already get a lower wage, justified as a trade off for free training. So how can it be acceptable that they not only pay for their education, but also for the privilege to go to work for a lower wage?

The government constantly fails to acknowledge the unique nature of FE and those who participate in it. FE is not 'baby-university'; carbon-copying a system that doesn't work in HE over to FE and to apprenticeships is surely headed for failure.

A university funding model cannot be transferred, not least because of the lack of student financial support available to adults in FE. It is absurd to expect students who are working for less than the minimum wage to take out a loan for their study without the opportunity of maintenance

grants or loans, especially since the removal of the adult learner grant.

Last year, the Department for Education conceded that it was unacceptable to force students who complete access courses and progress into HE to take out two loans, and agreed to write off FE loans for those students. That we now have to make the same arguments for those who take vocational routes through FE into HE is typical of the government's failure to offer parity between academic and vocational options. It also risks making the academic route more attractive.

Skills and education at this level should always be free

On top of all this, many of our members say that their institutions, and their prospective students, are not aware of the new system or how it will work. With just over a month to go until applications open,

it is deeply worrying that providers haven't yet been properly briefed.

Over the past two years the sector has become used to fighting battles with a disengaged and ill-informed secretary of state, but this wrong-headedness is up there with his worst moves. Skills and education at this level should always be free, particularly for those who have been failed by the system the first time around.

The NUS is working with Unison, the University and College Union and the Association of Teachers and Lecturers to campaign against FE fees and loans, and is delighted to have had the support of so many MPs. But we are incredibly disappointed that so few have been made fully aware of the policy and the impact that it could have on their constituents, especially in terms of employment prospects through apprenticeships.

I would love to use this week to celebrate apprenticeships, to promote them as a real alternative to academic learning. But instead I worry that National Apprenticeship Week could soon look less like a party and more like a memorial.

Toni Pearce is the NUS Vice President for Further Education

Advertorial

Accessing apprenticeships – a passport to a successful future

Apprenticeships are good for business, in every sense of the word, says David Grailey

National Apprenticeship Week is a time to celebrate the true value of apprenticeships in terms of stimulating the economy, increasing workplace productivity, developing staff, and providing exciting opportunities for young people to get their foot on the career ladder.

It's my belief that education doesn't need to stop when you enter the workplace. We're all on a journey of learning and development and apprenticeships allow people to formally achieve qualifications, whilst gaining work experience and earning money, without accruing debt.

When it comes to education, one size doesn't fit all. Doug Richard states in his review that "no single means of learning will ever suit everyone" and this echoes my own thoughts – it's essential that we embrace a wide variety of skills and find the right route for each individual. Whilst higher education is the preferred route for some learners, others get more satisfaction from learning on the job.

At NCFE, the learner is at the core of everything we do and it's our primary aim to prepare them for the competitive labour market and support them in

accessing apprenticeships. With this in mind, I find it encouraging to hear that additional funding has been secured from the apprenticeship application support fund to give learners a head-start in their apprenticeship applications.

Through this investment, up to 17,000 young people will be supported on to apprenticeship schemes. Support will include practical skills, such as interview preparation and CV writing, to raise the quality and success rate of applications for vacancies.

Similarly, I welcome the recent proposals for the traineeship programme to be launched in September 2013, which will help young people to boost their skills and confidence before an apprenticeship.

NCFE already has a large range of qualifications that fit well into the traineeship model, giving structure to the programme and motivating learners by recognising their skills.

For example, qualifications such as Employability Skills help learners to make the leap from education to the workplace via apprenticeships, through building the core transferable skills that all businesses are looking for. These skills enable learners to be "competent and confident beyond the confines of their current job".

This is something that Richard specifically highlights in his

apprenticeship review and it's an issue that we're keen to address.

It's fantastic to see work experience featuring so highly on the traineeship agenda – it's through genuine interaction with business that learners get a feel for the workplace. What's more, by displaying this experience on their CVs, learners will become more appealing to employers. At NCFE, we offer a range of qualifications such as our Level 2 Award in Developing Skills in the Workplace that support the work placement itself. Qualifications such as these provide a framework so that employers can see the quality and the value of the experience for the learner.

When it comes to an apprenticeship, sometimes the value of the experience for the learner speaks for itself – it's always heartening to hear of young people who've completed an apprenticeship and gone on to succeed in the workplace. For example, I was proud to hear about 20 young NCFE apprentices in London who were recently recruited as ambassadors at The View from the Shard, welcoming in visitors on opening night.

The learners are currently completing an NCFE Apprenticeship in Customer Service and have gained NCFE qualifications in Employability Skills.

It was a big first day for the talented group who rose to the challenge, took their



chance to shine and showcased their skills.

Overall, with youth unemployment figures remaining at the one million mark, it's clear to see that further steps need to be taken to support this 'lost generation' and set them on the road to a brighter future. It's my hope that quality modern Apprenticeships will continue to gain prestige as a gateway to a successful, skills-based career.

Through initiatives such as traineeships, we can ensure that young people are well prepared to be a positive addition to any workforce, offering employers real, tangible benefits to their business.

David Grailey is NCFE chief executive

FE week experts

A strong apprentice brand is invaluable

Schools and businesses must both play their part in reinforcing apprenticeships, says Adrian Bailey MP

National Apprenticeship Week is an opportunity to underline the crucial role that apprenticeships play in the skills base of our country, to celebrate the achievements of many of our young people and to campaign for the changes needed to get more.

For too long, successive governments have paid lip service to the notion that apprenticeships are as important as higher education — although this is not reflected in public attitudes or in the relentless concentration of our education service to get young people into university.

The proportion of unskilled jobs will fall as the economy grows. Getting young people into apprenticeships is vital if we are to overcome this. Government investment is driving up numbers, but is it attracting the sort of highly motivated, able young people who will fill this skills gap?

After a nine-month inquiry into this issue, my committee has identified a number of measures that must be adopted if we are to succeed.

We must reinforce the 'brand'.

Schools must in part be judged on their ability to get students into vocational training

Apprenticeships must be clearly defined with courses closely monitored and accredited. They must command confidence and recognition of quality, and be recognised as a passport to a job.

It follows that schools and the careers service must recognise their potential too. Schools are judged by their ability to get exam results and university entrants. Who can blame teachers if they work to that agenda?

Advising a bright student to leave to take an apprenticeship deprives schools of potential talent and risks their position in academic league tables.

My committee met an apprentice who said he got no support from his school once he said that he wanted vocational training. Similarly I have had complaints from FE colleges that schools are



dissuading young people into taking their courses. These could be isolated and unrepresentative examples, but I fear that they are not.

If apprenticeships are to enjoy parity of esteem in the public eye, schools must in part be judged on their ability to get students into vocational training as well as HE. Only then will we get more rounded careers advice and teachers that understand the benefits of an apprenticeship.

Then there is the role of business. A constant complaint is that young people are not work ready. More work experience is one answer, but the government has removed the obligation on schools to provide this. The other is for enlightened businesses to engage with schools. Many blue chip companies already do this, but most small businesses that would benefit, do not. The British Glass Trade Association is pioneering initiatives to overcome this, likewise the Cast Metal Federation, but much more needs to be done.

National Apprenticeship Week provides an opportunity to reflect on and celebrate progress. It must also ram home the message that government, business and schools must work together to demonstrate that apprenticeships will provide fulfilment for the young, the skills needed for our economy and the maximum value for our investment in them.

Adrian Bailey MP is chairman of the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee

Schools and employers need to get together

The needs of employers should be running through the veins of the school system, says Jason Holt. Young people should be fully informed about their choices – and have the vital skills for the world of work

Apprenticeships have barely been out of the headlines over the past six months. There have been two major government-commissioned reviews – my own (into making apprenticeships more accessible for small businesses) and Doug Richard's independent report on the future of apprenticeships.

It is gratifying to see that recommendations from both reports are beginning to come to fruition. For instance, trade associations, professional bodies and banks now act as brokers, with Barclays Bank today connecting its SME client base to would-be apprentices. Communications have been simplified and web navigation overhauled to make the journey more intuitive for employers.

Local employers need to develop partnerships with schools

I particularly welcome the announcement that a programme of traineeships – designed to help young people develop the skills they need to secure apprenticeships and other sustainable employment – will be launched later this year.

This chimes with what many SMEs told me: that they were reluctant to take on apprentices because the young people who turned up at their doors were simply not work-ready.

For too long vocational training has been regarded as the 'poor relation' of HE. The tide is turning, but much work is still to be done, particularly in encouraging schools and industry to work together more closely.

We need to plant the seeds that encourage young people to think about careers in areas such as manufacturing, engineering and product design early on, possibly as early as primary school.

Local employers need to develop partnerships with schools, offering



work experience, vocational placements and giving information about career opportunities in their field.

We have embraced this approach at Holts Academy, a social enterprise set up by Holts to provide vocational training for the sector. There are a host of career opportunities in the jewellery industry, from design and manufacture to retail and administration. Jewellery is, however, a 'hidden' industry and we recognised that to ensure a supply of young talent, we had to get out and tell young people about the opportunities on offer.

Our academy team regularly host 'have a go' sessions in schools, at careers fairs and at community events. We give young people the chance to get 'hands on'; to get a real sense of what jewellery manufacture is all about. Young people can experiment, for example, with making a key fob out of a piece of sheet metal.

We also work closely with specific schools in our area, informing young people about jobs in the trade, but also giving them much-needed help with job applications, CV writing and interview skills. We welcome pupils into our academy for day-long workshops.

From this September we will work with five schools in a number of London boroughs. Pupils will spend three days a week at school studying for their academic qualifications and two days at our academy working towards our nationally accredited Jewellery Retail diploma. We are also working with schools in Birmingham (a regional hub for the jewellery trade) on a series of mini, pre-apprenticeship programmes.

This is a prime illustration of how industry and education can join forces, to make a real difference to the economic future of our country.

Jason Holt is chief executive of Holts Group of Companies and author of the *Making apprenticeships more accessible to SMEs* review

A man who came in from the cold

Eleanor Radford

@EleanorRadford

The employer services director for the National Apprenticeship Service talks to *FE Week*

Richard Marsh remembers his first job well. “It was the Eighties, just after the Berlin Wall had come down, and loads of construction work was being done,” he says of working in post-Cold War Germany.

“I was part of a roving gang of builders, tarmacking roads and improving infrastructure, which felt a bit like an episode of *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet*.

“We had troubles with neo Nazi groups — they’d come to our campsites at night and protest, and throw things like bricks, trying to get us to leave.”

The 40-year-old says that he’d probably be intimidated now, but “wasn’t really worried” as an 18-year-old. “We used to go out to the local villages to dances,” he recalls.

Born in Birmingham, his straight-talking, laid-back attitude has probably led him to his job today heading the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) employer services team, travelling the globe and visiting ministers to promote UK apprenticeship models.

Was it these early experiences that sparked an interest in different work ethics and methods?

“Looking back, there was a real difference in our working approach and that of the many other nationalities who were there, attracted by labour demands,” he says.

“The Brits were notorious for their labour speed and work ethic, but also for not having the right equipment and the right training.

“There were workers with us from Ukraine and Eastern European countries who were really scared about secret police and identity papers . . . but these were of no concern to us. It was an interesting time.”

Growing up in the Midlands, Marsh went to Hagley Roman Catholic High School before studying A-levels in English, history and sociology — which he “never finished” — at the now closed St Philips FE College.

He left without knowing what to do and ended up trying his hand at construction as a slinger and banksman — someone who guides cranes.

But after his third winter working outdoors across Europe, the Birmingham City fan says he’d “had enough” and packed it in to become the first “two-wheeled pizza delivery person in Birmingham”.

He soon tired “of all these jobs” and ended up at Edge Hill University in Liverpool when he was about 20 or 21 to do a degree in European business and politics.

“I’d enjoyed the travel and thought I could end up with a nice job working for the EU or something,” he explains.

That was the plan, and while it might not have worked out exactly as he envisaged, Marsh did meet his Spanish wife Victoria who’d come to study in Liverpool. The couple, who now live in Edgbaston, Birmingham, have two children, Isabel, 10 and Elena, 6.

Marsh’s next foray into the world of work led to a stint at travel company, Seligo, joining as a sales representative before finding his niche in training. At 25 he was on to another venture; this time training for Vodafone, a job that fostered his love of apprenticeships.

“At the time they were expanding massively,” he recalls. “It was a great British story as they went from having one million customers to having 100 million around the world — and I was part of the team training up the call centre.”

He taught Vodafone’s first modern apprenticeships, implementing its customer service programme and soon realising the potential of giving people who’d missed schooling in English and maths the chance to get qualifications, gifting them structure for the start of a career.

He stayed at Vodafone until 1999 when he took a post at Volkswagen UK as head of content for training qualifications.

“At the time we had lower unemployment than Germany, and the Germans were asking ‘why can’t we have a flexible workforce like in the UK?’,” says Marsh.

“Germany was the sick man of Europe economically and all the German

There’s no better job satisfaction than helping someone realise their potential

employers would say to me ‘in this country you have to train for three years to work as a waiter,’ whereas in the UK we used to talk about how thin our training programmes were.

“We reported back to Berlin every month on what our country was doing, so together we could set a European-wide standard on training programmes. We quickly realised no country had a monopoly on good ideas and you had to find a balance.”

This was Marsh’s last job in the private sector as he then moved into the public domain working for the Learning Skills



Council (LSC) [now the Skills Funding Agency].

“I felt I had something to offer to a public sector organisation from my commercial training . . . I think it was something that came from my parents. They were both public servants in a very literal sense,” he says.

While Marsh went off to school his mum trained as a nurse while his father worked as a probation officer. “He had a real gift for helping young people reintegrate into society and was very successful,” he says.

“There’s probably no better job satisfaction than helping someone realise their potential. They had very satisfying careers and were very much an influence on us growing up.”

Marsh’s older sister also became a nurse while his younger brother went on to work in drug and alcohol counselling.

Ever drawn towards a challenge, however, the fan of vintage motor scooters then moved to take his current role at NAS. He has since given presentations on apprenticeships in countries such as China, which has invested in vocational training.

“They’ve opened 1,000 vocational schools with state-of-the-art equipment, but still employers are saying the young people are not ‘work ready’ because they don’t have work experience,” explains Marsh.

There’s a lot of pressure on Chinese youngsters to go to university as most families have just one child.

“We’re trying to get across the message that you can’t ‘over-train’.”

Marsh wears his heart on his sleeve when it comes to apprenticeships, whether he’s talking in China, writing a chapter on the subject in books such as *Apprenticeships in the Modern Economy*, or back on home turf.

Explaining his motivation he recalls a recent graduation ceremony for IBM apprentices.

“Their parents were so proud they were in tears,” says Marsh.

“These were some of the brightest, hard-working young people in the country who would have had the opportunity to go to a really good university or start a business, but instead chose to work incredibly hard and study at the same time, getting a massive reward for it.

“In England we’re probably half-way towards a world-class apprenticeship programme because we’ve rediscovered our love of apprenticeships and built up our capacity again.

“We’ve got to allow time to refine and develop the programme until it reaches the standards that our best universities and schools have through 100 years of continuation and refinement.

“Apprenticeships aren’t for everybody but they do work for lots of young people. Where they do, the results are tremendous.”

At NCFE we're passionate about developing Apprenticeship qualifications. We're also committed to providing you with an excellent level of on-going support and service to help you deliver your Apprenticeship programme.

Building blocks to Apprenticeships

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to see how we can help you with your
check out our website: ncfe.org.uk

FE week campus round-up

Apprenticeship was 'best choice'

A Lancashire engineer named Britain's first "champion apprentice" said her vocational pathway was "the best possible career choice".

Jenny Westworth, 23, (pictured right) completed her advanced apprenticeship in aerospace engineering for BAE systems before picking up the apprenticeships champion of the year prize at a national apprenticeship awards ceremony last year. She scooped 1,777 of the 7,000 votes cast by the public.

The manufacturing engineer now acts as an education ambassador for the global aeronautics firm, giving talks in schools and colleges to promote science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"My dad was an apprentice joiner so he got me thinking about apprenticeships," said the Morecambe engineer who works at BAE Systems' factory in Warton, near Preston.

She originally applied for university because she'd done well in A-levels and "it was just what you did at school," but once she started to delve into apprenticeships she "was hooked and the uni fees didn't really appeal".

Jenny said design technology was her favourite subject and she'd always enjoyed



helping her dad with projects in the garden and garage.

"In a way my dad was my very own apprenticeship champion," said Jenny.

"He encouraged both me and my sister to take up apprenticeships as a further education route, and we both have no regrets."

At 18 she started her three-year training

course at Military Air and Information in Warton, finishing in 2011.

"My apprenticeship was the best possible career choice I could have made. For me, there was much more opportunity from an apprenticeship and it's given me the chance to see and understand a business from different angles."

She said she felt being an apprentice

gave her the chance to "make mistakes and work hands-on" ensuring she "grew-up quickly".

"It is the best thing that ever happened to me and opened up so many doors. It has helped to make me a far better engineer and has provided me with the foundations to a really exciting career," added Jenny.

"What I am trying to do now is encourage more young people to consider taking up an apprenticeship as I wish I had considered it earlier."

The award-winner now works on the final assembly line for the Typhoon aircraft having also worked on projects to support the Hawk and Tornado aircraft.

Her boss at the plant, Ian Bradbury, described her as "an outstanding talented individual" with "total commitment to the company and her career".

He said: "As an apprentice she was enthusiastic, focused, willing to learn and a great asset to the teams and parts of the business she was involved in throughout her time."

"These were great qualities that assisted Jenny in becoming apprentice champion and will continue to help her to progress and to achieve her goals."

Poster has designs on the high street

Budding designers are boosting a campaign to attract big names in the high street to fashion apprenticeships.

Apprentices at manufacturers Fashion Enter (pictured right and on the front) feature in an eye-catching poster reminiscent of the rousing Second World War images used to promote the war effort.

The colourful posters, with their rallying call 'We Can Do It!', have been used to attract applications for Creative Skillset's new higher level apprenticeship. Now British global fashion retailer New Look, fashion designer Jonathan Saunders and John Cotton Home Textiles have all signed up to appoint new apprentices.

As the first employer to sign up for the new apprenticeship in fashion and textiles, David Bannister, group director for New Look, described apprenticeships as a "fantastic way to grow new talent".

He said: "Having seen the success of apprentices in both our quality assurance and store planning teams, we are pleased to be expanding our apprentice proposition. Apprentices benefit from 'on the job' learning that supports both parties by receiving structured development, meeting their needs as well as ours."

He said he could "definitely" see the company expanding apprenticeships "in

the future".

Fashion Enter is increasing its intake of apprentices following the success of its Made in Britain clothing label, which has allowed it to relocate to larger factory premises in Haringey, North London.

Jenny Holloway, managing director of Fashion Enter, said fashion and textiles apprenticeships just kept getting "better and better".

"The level four has been launched and it's excellent for project management, combining finance and the functions that buyers and merchandisers need," she said.

Creative Skillset deputy chief executive, Kate O'Connor, said: "Apprenticeships provide businesses with savvy, work-ready, highly motivated individuals who will help grow the business. New Look, Jonathan Saunders and John Cotton Home Textiles recognise the significant advantages of hiring an apprentice and we hope many more employers will follow their lead and start reaping the benefits."

ASOS, the UK's largest online-only fashion and beauty store, helped roll out Creative Skillset's first national apprenticeship scheme in apparel in January 2011.

Sophie Glover, head of technical services at ASOS, said: "ASOS prides itself in being passionate about people and



From left: Shannon Lloyd, 17, Kirsten Lucas, 19, Shanice Godwin-Samuel and Abbie Godbold, both 17

developing talent for the future.

"It was because of this that we jumped at the opportunity to roll out of the first Creative Skillset scheme."

She said the company's first apprentices had successfully completed their courses.

One was "such an asset" that she was now an assistant technologist for the company.

"We would like to consider that we have developed a solid partnership with a collaborative approach to this fantastic opportunity for young people," she added.

Let the Brathay battle commence...

More than 800 apprentices in 90 teams will this week battle for a final place in a nationwide competition to find an apprentice team of the year.

Teams in the Brathay Apprentice Challenge — supported by the National Apprenticeship Service — in the past two months have visited schools, carried out interviews and taken part in community projects aimed at promoting the vocational training route.

Entries have quadrupled for the second year of the contest, which is aimed at building non-technical work skills and the personal attributes of competing apprentices.

Godfrey Owen, chief executive of the Brathay Trust, a charity that aims to improve the life chances of children and young people, said this year was a “tough competition” that would give apprentices the chance to “strengthen on both a personal and professional level”.

Teams of nine have entered from businesses, training providers and colleges across England. They include HR



Cobham apprentices cross the finishing line in last year's Brathay challenge to claim apprentice team of the year prize

companies and local authorities through to high street store chains, household names and engineering firms. All are trying to raise money for a local charity as well as use social media to raise the profile of their company, the trust and apprenticeships.

Boots Opticians, Marriott Hotels and Rolls-Royce are just some of the big names wanting the winner's trophy, but they will

have to edge out last year's winners from aerospace firm, Cobham (pictured).

The finalists will be announced early next month with the top two teams from each of the four regions — central, London and South East, Northern and Southern — raising funds and awareness — culminating in an adventure challenge at Brathay Trust's Windermere headquarters from June 10 to 12.

Jaine Bolton, chief operating officer at the National Apprenticeship Service, said: “This competition gives apprentices the opportunity to shine and be recognised for the great contribution they offer to their employers.

“We also know that the skills they gain from this competition will stay with them for the whole of their working life and lead them to grow professionally.”

WIN!
Nikon D5100 DSLR
Camera Kit
worth £650

National APPRENTICESHIP WEEK PHOTO COMPETITION

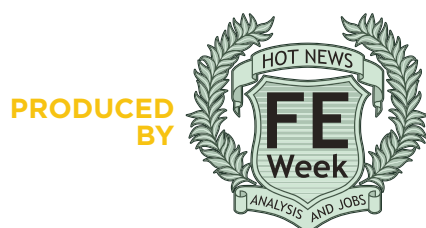
If you provide
apprenticeships
then encourage
your learners to
enter!

Take a photograph that represents your apprenticeship and be in with a chance of winning an absolutely fantastic prize!

Email one entry before March 18th to photos@feweek.co.uk, including contact details, the apprenticeship qualification, employer and college or training provider

A selection of submissions will be published on the FE Week website. Our readers will vote for the winner, which will be announced on 29th March 2013

The competition is open to current apprentices only



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National APPRENTICESHIP WEEK

EVENTS CALENDAR

“We hope this year’s National Apprenticeship Week will be the biggest yet, showcasing the excellent work delivered by apprentices in businesses and organisations around the country and the first rate training they receive”

David Way, chief executive of the National Apprenticeship Service

JUST A SMALL SELECTION OF WHAT'S ON

11th

MONDAY

What: Multiple Events
Where: Henley College Coventry
When: All day
More info: Henley College Coventry’s senior managers will shadow some of the college’s apprentices. Henley’s apprenticeship team will be at the local shopping centre, giving advice and guidance. Their apprentices will also be available, to share their experiences with potential students

What: Apprenticeship Careers Event
Where: North Warwickshire & Hinckley College
When: 4pm – 8pm
More info: North Warwickshire & Hinckley College is running an apprenticeship careers event at its Nuneaton Campus. The event is aimed at people aged 16-24 who would like to find out more information about studying an Apprenticeship at the College

What: Apprenticeship Bus
Where: Outside John Lewis in Liverpool
When: 10am – 4pm
More info: Liverpool Apprenticeship Team and NAS will be promoting their current apprenticeships/Liverpool Youth Contract to Liverpool Residents and companies. Also available, careers advice for young people, employer engagement specialists ‘getting job ready’ sessions etc

What: Open Week
Where: Sunderland College
When: All week
More info: Sunderland College’s Vocational Skills Centre at Hylton will be opening its doors to anyone who is interested in vocational training. This may be employers who would like to employ an apprentice, Young people who would like to look around or parents who would like to discuss apprenticeship provision with the experts

12th

TUESDAY

What: The Apprenticeship Roadshow
Where: TBG Learning, West Bromwich
When: 8am – 10am and 2pm – 5pm
More info: TBG Learning is hosting an apprenticeship roadshow comprising of an Employer Breakfast (8am – 10am) focusing on the theme apprenticeships deliver and an Apprenticeship Day (2pm – 5pm) aimed at 16 – 24 year olds. Visit www.tbglearning.com/tbg-learning/news/The-Apprenticeship-Roadshow-March-2013

What: Brighton Your Futures initiative
Where: Corn Exchange in Brighton
When: 10am – 4pm
More info: The Brighton Your Futures initiative will be launching at the Corn Exchange in Brighton with the South Coasts’ largest careers fair aimed at 16-25 year olds

What: Social Care and Childcare
Where: Age UK Training, Derby
When: 1pm – 7pm
More info: Age UK Training Derby is holding a Social Care and Childcare event. Schools welcome 1pm – 3pm. Young people/parents welcome 5pm – 7pm. Activities designed to give young people an insight into working with children and young people or adults in social care

What: Apprenticeship ‘Have a Go’
Where: Heywood Civic Centre, Rochdale
When: 4pm – 7pm
More info: Over 100 live apprenticeship vacancies will be available for residents of Rochdale, who will be able to apply on the night. Visitors will also be able to ‘Have a Go’ at some Apprenticeship activities. Most opportunities will be for 16-24 year olds including some for school and college leavers in the summer



Apprenticeships

National Apprenticeship Week

11–15 March 2013

13th WEDNESDAY

What: The Voice of Apprenticeships conference
Where: The Tower Hotel, London E1W 1LD
When: 9am – 5pm
More info: Conference by Apprenticeships 4 England.
 Chaired by *FE Week* editor Nick Linford.
 Speakers include FE Minister Matthew Hancock, UKCES chief executive Matthew Davis and Channel 4 People Development Specialist Simon Devereux

14th THURSDAY

What: Apprenticeships Deliver in West Sussex
Where: Field Place, Worthing West Sussex, BN13 1NP.
More info: Businesses, schools and the general public will be invited to participate in a free business breakfast, have-a-go activities and benefit from apprenticeship information and guidance

15th FRIDAY

What: Open Day Event
Where: Creative Support Ltd, 35 Dale St, Manchester
When: All day
More info: Creative Support Ltd is a national health and social care provider. The open day is for people aged between 18-24 who are interested in becoming an apprentice in support work or a care assisted roles.

What: Apprenticeship Open Day
Where: Solihull
When: All day
More info: Solihull Apprenticeship Show is a fantastic opportunity for young people aged 14 - 24 and their parents to find out more about apprenticeships. Talk to employers and training providers about the opportunities and training they offer and chat to real apprentices

What: Parent Information Evening
Where: Havering College – Ardleigh Green Campus in Ardleigh Green Road, Hornchurch RM11 2LL
When: 5.30pm and 6.30pm
More info: Two apprenticeship information sessions aimed at parents

What: An apprenticeship bus that's been touring the South West will make its final stop in Bristol
Where: Bristol Science Museum
When: 10am to 4pm
More info: The tour will showcase how apprenticeships deliver for employers. Employers, current apprentices and the National Apprenticeship Service will be on hand to provide information and advice.

What: Health and Social Care Selection Day
Where: East Midlands
When: All day
More info: Care Training East Midlands (CTEM) are supporting a local employer to recruit for health and social care apprentices by holding a selection day for vacancies in and around Nottingham City. If you are interested, call 0115 9599 544 for info

What: Skills Showcase
Where: New College Durham
When: All day
More info: The event will showcase the talents of the college's apprentices within brickwork, painting and decorating, maintenance, catering and hairdressing. Throughout the day there will be 'Have A Go' activities to try

The National Apprenticeship Service say they are "looking to use social media more than ever".

The daily social media themes are:

Monday, March 11: Proud

Tuesday, March 12: Growth

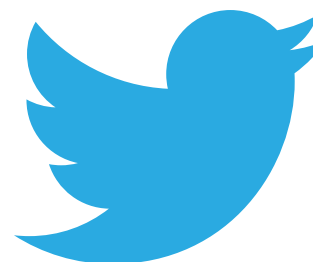
Wednesday, March 13: Choice

Thursday, March 14: Hall of Fame

Friday, March 15: Apprenticeships Deliver

What: Leeds College of Building apprenticeships Open Day
Where: Leeds College
More info: Leeds College of Building are hosting an open event for employers and students to find out about the benefits of apprenticeships with the college. There will also be a talk about the latest developments within the construction industry and the opportunity to take a tour of the college

What: Apprenticeship Speed Dating
Where: Bath Rugby Club
When: 6pm – 8pm
More info: Finding your perfect apprenticeship match! Free for future apprentices to just turn up. Bring copies of your CV. For more details: www.facebook.com/apprenticeshipsbanes



Be sure to tweet using the hashtag #NAW2013

Apprenticeships around the world

As we celebrate the achievements of apprentices across the country this week it is a good time to consider how the oldest form of work training plays out across the globe.

The picture changes dramatically from country to country with almost two-thirds of young people in Germany and Switzerland taking part in apprenticeships compared with none in Sweden.



In some countries, such as the UK and France, perceptions about taking up an apprenticeship might still need to be challenged as MP Adrian Bailey reports, whereas in Germany, from where Ofsted's chief inspector Sir Michael Wilshaw recently returned, apprenticeships enjoy "a very high profile among employers, as well the young people and their parents". Sir Michael said the young people he spoke to were "very proud to be apprentices and saw it as a real achievement".

Germany



History

The public authorities have been involved with employer-apprenticeship agreements since the 19th century and over the years acts have insisted education is provided in apprenticeship programmes. During the 20th century apprenticeships were the main entry into work in Germany while countries such as England steered away from them.

How it works

Germany follows the 'dual-system' model, which represents two learning locations — the school and the workplace. Firms recruit the best-qualified candidates for apprenticeship at 16 or 17 (around 40 per cent of apprentices); the less well-qualified normally do a full-time preparatory course at a vocational college or wait to re-apply for an apprenticeship. Around a fifth do a specific technical A-level type qualification then take an apprenticeship before continuing to a degree at a technical university.

Costs

All employers, whether apprentice employers or not, contribute to the cost of local chambers of commerce through a compulsory levy that pays for the provision. The upside is they benefit other services through this levy.

40 apprentices per 1,000 employed

Apprenticeships last 3 years

Youth unemployment

(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 8.1 per cent

Interesting fact

Almost all German large firms offer apprenticeships. The route is the main source of post-compulsory education and training for the 70 per cent of school leavers who do not enrol in higher education.

England



History

Apprenticeships have been part of English life for the past 850 years. Until the 1960s when the manufacturing sector shrunk, they were the main route for vocational training. Some argue a reliance on the service and financial sectors and a focus on higher education over the past 30 years led to a huge decline. On the upside they have enjoyed a revival with vacancies increasing in recent years, despite tough economic conditions.

How it works

Apprenticeships are now available in almost 200 job roles, with retail or healthcare trainees more common than apprentice engineers. The government has historically imposed few, if any, requirements on employers to train. Just over 5 per cent of school leavers are in apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships or Entry to Employment and National Vocational Qualification learning — these last two are designed as preparation for getting a job or onto an apprenticeship.

Costs

Most apprentice employers outsource their training to providers who receive payment directly from the government. Some employers with 5,000 or more employees receive government funding for apprenticeship training without using the services of a training provider.

11 apprentices per 1,000 employed

Apprenticeships last just over 1 year

Youth unemployment

(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 20 per cent (UK)

Interesting fact

Whereas in most countries just an employer and off-the-job teaching institution are involved, in England a network of 'specialist training providers' has been created and with a third organisation comes extra administration costs other countries don't experience.

Australia



History

Apprenticeships have massively increased over the past 10 years. Under apprenticeships now comes traineeships, recently introduced and for the training of non-trade occupations. Both use the same training model and are called Australian Apprenticeships. More than 500 apprenticeships are available across 50 sectors.

How it works

Students in Years 11 and 12 can gain a recognised vocational qualification while on a school-based apprenticeship. Unlike in many European countries, apprenticeships don't dominate vocational training. On average around one fifth of those in vocational training leading to a recognised qualification or part-qualification, were apprentices.

Costs

Australia is the only country to pay incentives on a large scale to employers of apprentices and trainees. The government covers practically all the cost of the off-the-job training and most employers are eligible for tax exemptions. Australia's government also pays extra incentives to employers of apprentices with disabilities or the disadvantaged.

39 apprentices per 1,000 employed

**Apprenticeships last 3 - 4 years
Traineeships last 1-2 years**

Youth unemployment

(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 11.3 per cent

Interesting fact

Less than 50 per cent of trade and a little over 50 per cent of non-trade apprentices and trainees successfully complete.

Switzerland



History

The Swiss apprenticeship model known as Vocational Education and Training is similar to Germany's 'dual-system'. The Swiss Confederation (state) works with its cantons (member states) as well as professional organisations such as trade associations and companies. The overall management of the system is the responsibility of the confederation and the cantons lead the apprenticeship programme. The balance between employers and trade unions means the interests of local businesses (through chambers of commerce) and employees are well represented.

How it works

Apprenticeships are well-established, employers are heavily involved in their planning and provision is very high. An in-school programme and out of school centres provide careers advice and guidance on apprenticeship. Two-thirds of school leavers start an apprenticeship aged 15 to 19 but some must wait a year or more for a place. Completion rates are high and progression to university-level courses is possible after further study.

Costs

Swiss firms do not receive a direct subsidy for taking an apprentice but the costs of the training is covered out of a mix of state and local government funds. Trade and professional associations funded by the whole sector develop training plans, support training firms and bear the cost of assessment.

43 apprentices per 1,000 employed

Apprenticeships last 3 - 4 years

Youth unemployment

(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 7.7 per cent

Interesting fact

It is the only European country where there is reliable evidence showing that firms end up with no net costs after taking on apprentices.

Sources

Youth unemployment figures: Guardian Datablog 2013 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2012/oct/31/europe-unemployment-rate-by-country-eurozone#data> cross-referenced with OECDiLibrary 2012 http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/employment/youth-unemployment-rate_20752342-table2 and Overview of Apprenticeship Systems and Issues by International Labour Organization 2012 http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/---ifp_skills/documents/genericdocument/wcms_190188.pdf

Other information has come from a report The State of Apprenticeship in 2010 by the London School of Economics by Hilary Steedman <http://cep.lse.ac.uk/pubs/download/special/cepsp22.pdf> and City and Guilds and Centre for Skills and Development portal http://www.skillsdevelopment.org.uk/knowledge_portal/briefing_notes/2apprenticeships/apprenticeships_models.aspx

France

History

Numbers in apprenticeships in France have doubled to almost 500,000 since a period of reform was started in 1980.

How it works

Apprentices in France must be aged between 16 and 25. At age 18 just under 80 per cent are still in full-time education or in apprenticeship with around 50 per cent following an academic route, 25 per cent doing vocational studies and 25 per cent doing general technological courses (industrial sector, business and service sector, medical/social services sector, agriculture, hospitality). Apprentices at all levels sit the same exams in general and technical subjects and the same practical tests as students on the same course in full-time education. Completion rates are good.

Costs

Apprenticeships are partly funded by a tax on corporations. While companies can direct part of their contribution to the schools they want to support, the bulk of public spending allocation power rests with local government. The 'apprenticeship' tax is set at 0.05 per cent of the salaries for firms with 250 employees and 0.06 per cent for firms with more than 250 employees. Exemption from the tax is conditional on firms training a specified number of apprentices.

17 apprentices per 1,000 employed

Apprenticeships last 3 - 4 years

Youth unemployment

(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 22 per cent

Interesting fact

France has suffered high youth unemployment for many years and as a result there is statutory provision for schools to arrange meetings of teachers, parents and pupils to discuss options open to the pupil as well as careers and advice centres in every town and every school has at least one careers guidance counsellor.

Denmark

History

Denmark follows a dual-system model similar to Germany. The Ministry of Education sets the apprenticeship framework, however, training institutions together with local trade committees have a huge amount of power in adapting the curriculum to meet local demands and needs.

How it works

A key feature of the Danish system is its 'individualisation'. It is the teacher and apprentice who decide together the length of the basic programme, which is conducted at the college or workplace training centre. Also Danish apprentices often get to take work placements abroad, especially in construction and hospitality.

Costs

In Denmark all employers, both public and private, pay into a fund called the employers' reimbursement scheme, regardless of whether or not they provide training placements. Funds are then allocated to the places of work taking in apprentices so they do not bear the cost of training alone. These employers receive wage reimbursement for the time the apprentice is back in college.

27 apprentices per 1,000 employed

Apprenticeships last 6 months - 4 years

Youth unemployment

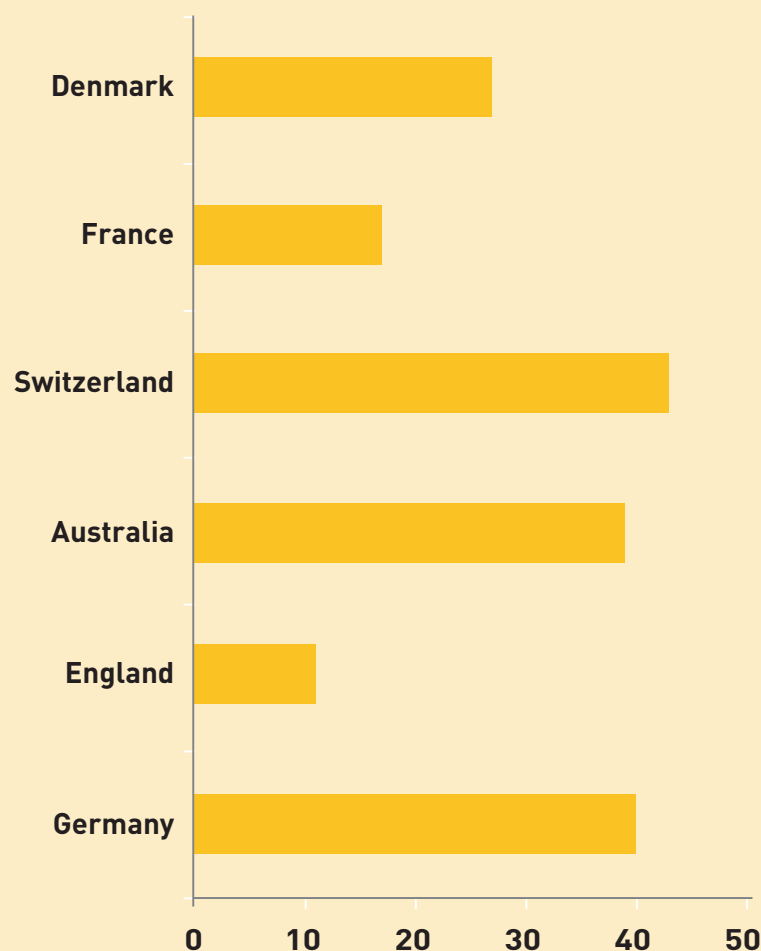
(15 to 24 year-olds 2012): 14.2 per cent

Interesting fact

In Denmark, like in England and Australia, apprenticeships are not restricted to young people and many apprentices are aged 30 or over. By contrast in France, Germany, Austria and Switzerland the scheme is aimed at under 25s.

Researched and written
by Eleanor Radford
and designed by Dan Duke

Apprentices per thousand employed persons



Source: Hilary Steedman, The State of Apprenticeship, 2010



"In Switzerland, two thirds of young people leaving compulsory lower-secondary education choose the path of Vocational Education and Training (VET). With one of the lowest youth unemployment rates in Europe, the aim of the VET system — to fit the needs of the labour market — seems to be successful."

Omar Luthi, director of undergraduate programmes at European Business School in Switzerland



"During the past six months the government has had a number of reviews. That culmination of wisdom has helped us to come to a consensus that we want an all-age, all-sector programme which is one of the unique things about apprenticeships in the UK. We have a more diverse and transient workforce than most countries so we don't ever want a completely rigid system. We want to gravitate the meaning of the programme back up to the advanced, high-skilled technician level and put employers in the driving seat of apprenticeships."

Richard Marsh, employer services director for the National Apprenticeship Service

**Their success,
is your success,
is our success.**



NCFE Apprenticeship Resources - Now Available

NCFE is committed to providing you with easy access to a variety of useful resources and support to help you with the delivery of NCFE Apprenticeships.

- Our Qualification Support Packs are **FREE** downloadable resources that provide examples of how to prepare for delivering our qualifications and include templates which can be adapted by you for different delivery contexts and circumstances.

We also have a range of quality support materials available from our partners:

- Working in partnership with Nelson Thornes we now offer a complete package of learning resources for our Health & Social Care Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships. Once registered with NCFE, you'll receive the full package of resources, worth over £250, absolutely **FREE**.
- Our Functional Skills are supported by our partners ForSkills and Nelson Thornes. All NCFE Apprenticeship customers who register candidates on our Functional Skills qualifications will receive **FREE** access to the ForSkills initial assessment and online diagnostic tool and access to Nelson Thornes' Functional Skills Progress range.

To find out more about any of the resources above, contact a member of our Business Development team today **0191 239 8000* or visit our website at **ncfe.org.uk****

*To continue our levels of customer service, telephone calls may be recorded for training and quality purposes.