

# A SPECIAL REPORT ON TRAINEESHIPS

JULY 2013



## Trainees

Supporting you  
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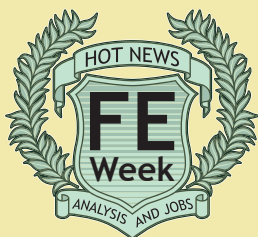
English Maths



Work placements

Work preparation training

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Traineeships

# Welcome to this *FE Week* special report



Rebecca Cooney

@RebeccaCooney

Since traineeships were first hinted at by deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in June last year, the sector has been asking what they will look like, who they will be for and who will be able to provide them.

Now, with just weeks to go until traineeship funding kicks in, some of those questions have been answered.

As *FE Week* editor Nick Linford explains (page 3), we now know traineeships will combine a high quality work experience placement with maths,

English and employability training, will last for anything between six weeks and six months, and will be aimed at unemployed young people who are looking for a job or apprenticeship but lack experience and qualifications.

The scheme was originally announced for 16 to 19-year-olds, but following last month's spending review, they will also be available for young people aged 19 to 24.

The updated Framework for Delivery announces that 19 to 24-year-olds must have a prior attainment below full level 2, but we await details of the 19 to 24 year-old funding rate for the work placement element from the Skills Funding Agency.

The work placement element is central to the scheme, so on page 4 we hear from colleges on what they think makes for meaningful work experience and how they are drawing on previous experiences to make sure their trainees get the most out of their placements.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock (page 5), points to Germany's high number of skilled young people and low unemployment, arguing that traineeships, if implemented well, could play a crucial role in solving the UK's youth unemployment problem.

Shadow Skills Minister Gordon Marsden (page 5) welcomes the arrival of traineeships saying they could "play a key role in supporting social mobility".

However, he warns "quality must remain paramount in the new traineeships and the Government must monitor their rollout vigilantly".

On page 6 and 7, Kari Hadjivassiliou, a policy expert from the European Social Fund apprenticeship and traineeship helpdesk tells us how the UK's programme compares to others.

Many of the questions which remain about traineeships will only be answered through implementation, and Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group takes up this theme on page 10.

Colleges, she says, are "impressively ready... at a system level however, more work is needed" to ensure the programme contributes to building a world class skills system.

Stewart Segal, chief executive of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (page 10) appreciates the government's emphasis on quality, but questions whether Ofsted grades should be the only measure of it. He suggests instead that grade three providers could "have a wider set of benchmarks to provide the evidence that they can deliver a high quality programme".

Ofsted director of learning and skills, Matthew Coffey, explains what it is that Ofsted will be looking for when it comes to inspecting traineeships (page 11).

He says key features will be how well

the programme ensures young people can progress, how those with learning difficulties are catered for and "whether the calibre of apprenticeships has improved as a result of traineeships".

Progression was a prominent theme when providers gathered at a parliamentary debate organised by *FE Week* to compare notes on their experience of preparation so far, and we've got coverage of that event on pages 12 and 13.

Finally on page 14, there's a sneak peak of what traineeships might look like, as *FE Week* speaks to providers, employers and tutors in our report from the OCR traineeship pilot scheme.

We also speak to the most important people involved in traineeships, the trainees themselves, about how they feel the programme is helping to turn their lives around and give them a better chance of getting into an apprenticeship or a job.

Despite the many remaining questions about traineeships, there seems to be a lot of positive feeling in the sector about their potential to help young people.

We hope our special report can help you make the most of your preparation time and give you food for thought as traineeships are implemented.

And don't forget, as always, you can add your own experiences on the *FE Week* website and tweet us @FEWeek.

# Your one page funding guide

Download from: <http://tinyurl.com/dydvndy>



Nick Linford

@NickLinford

Traineeships, unlike apprenticeships, are unique in that they have very different 16 to 18 and 19 to 24-year-old eligibility and funding methodologies. It seems 'streamlining' and 'simplification' was not much of a consideration during development, but I've done my best to cover the basics on this page.

However, as always do your own homework and reference the latest EFA funding guidance and SFA funding rules.

## Student eligibility

**Age:** Available for 16-24 year-olds and people with Learning Difficulty Assessments up to academic age 25 from August 1, 2013.

**Circumstances:** People not currently in a job, have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it and "a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship"

**Prior attainment:** 16-18 year-olds must be qualified below level 3 and 19-24 year-olds must be qualified below a full level 2 (equivalent to five GCSEs at grades A\*-C)

**Work placement:** Traineeships fall under an exemption to the National Minimum Wage so students are not automatically eligible for a wage. However, some trainees may qualify to access existing programmes of financial support, including the £180 million 16-19 Bursary Fund and Discretionary Learner Support arrangements for 19-24 year olds.

## Provider requirements

**Eligibility:** The traineeship 'quality criteria' means providers must be an Ofsted grade one or two and already hold a 2013/14 EFA or 16-18 apprenticeship contract to be directly funded for 16-18 traineeships. For 19-24 traineeships an Adult Skills Budget contract with the Skills Funding Agency is needed. The Skills Funding Agency have published a list of eligible providers.

**English and maths:** As with Study Programmes, provider will have to deliver "English and maths training, unless the learner has achieved a GCSE A\*-C in those subjects or, for those aged 19 and above, a GCSE A\*-C or a functional skills qualification at Level 2."

**Duration:** Maximum of six months, with an expectation that the work placement will be at least six weeks and no more than five months

**Benefit rules:** Providers will need to be mindful to fit in with DWP benefit rules when designing traineeship programmes.

## Employer requirements

**'Real' workplace:** The government "expects the lead employer for the work placement to be identified before young people are enrolled on a traineeship"

**English and maths:** Based on the general principles of the Study Programme, providers will have to deliver "English and maths training, unless the learner has achieved a GCSE A\*-C in those subjects or, for those aged 19 and above, a GCSE A\*-C or a functional skills qualification at Level 2."

**Interview:** The government expect the employer to offer a job or exit interview as well as a formal reference

## SFA 19 to 24 funding

Funding rates for qualifications delivered in a traineeship will be based on the new 2013/14 adult skills budget 'rates matrix', and a funding rate for the work placement element within traineeships is due to be published by the SFA shortly.

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*FE Week* is a newspaper dedicated to reporting on news, analysis, jobs and fun in the further education sector.

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## Education Funding Agency 16 to 18 funding example for 2013/14

$$\left( \begin{matrix} \text{Student numbers} \\ \times \\ \text{National funding rate per student} \\ \times \\ \text{Retention factor} \\ \times \\ \text{Program cost weighting} \\ + \\ \text{Disadvantage funding} \end{matrix} \right) \times \begin{matrix} \text{Area cost uplift} \end{matrix} = \text{Total programme funding}$$

### Traineeship programme example

Activity	Planned hours
Induction and work preparation - 3 weeks at 15 hours a week	45 hours
Functional Skills Level 1 Maths - 3 hours a week for 14 weeks (starts week 2)	42 hours
Functional Skills Level 2 English - 2 hours a week for 12 weeks (starts week 4)	24 hours
Work placement average of 20 hours for 16 weeks	320 hours
<b>Total hours</b>	<b>431 hours</b>

This programme would generate a base rate of £2,700 [see 360 to 449 annual planned hour band in the table on the right], which would be multiplied by the relevant funding formula elements [see above]

Example from an EFA presentation during an Isect data conference on June 18

### EFA national funding rates for 2013/14

Annual planned hours	National funding rate per student
540 or more (full time category)	£4,000
450 to 539 (part-time category)	£4,000*
360 to 449 (part-time category)	£2,700
280 to 359 (part-time category)	£2,133
Up to 279 hours (part-time category)	£4,000 / 600 per hour

\*This is an interim rate reflecting the change to the new funding system, and the EFA will review the position for 2014/15 delivery. Students recorded in the 450-539 band in 2013/14 will attract part-time funding in allocations for 2015/16.

Latest EFA funding rules and rates documents can be downloaded via this link: <http://tinyurl.com/pwbqjw>

# Making work experience meaningful

A central aspect of traineeships will be the work placement, which will last between six weeks and six months.

The traineeship framework requires work experience to be 'high quality' and 'meaningful', so what does this mean and how can providers make sure this is the case for learners?

"Clearly, the fundamentals are a safe environment, adequate supervision, mentoring and worthwhile tasks to undertake to give a fairly broad view of what working in that company typically involves," said Karen Taylor, work-based training manager at Bedford College.

"Trainees should be able see to how their job or department impacts upon people within the organisation and why it's important that certain things are done."

For MidKent College assistant principal Peter Webb, traineeships offer a way to reframe work experience.

"We talk about 'experience for work' rather than work experience, to change the emphasis to students," he said.

"Historically there's been a lot of bad press about work experience coming down to nothing more than simple admin duties.

"Traineeships will give students the chance to really get in and have a proper look at the work over a reasonable period of time, the type of work that's there, and whether or not the positions are correct for them."

**We've got to look at this more in terms of partnership between the FE establishment and the employers we work with**

Many colleges will be able to draw on previous experience of setting up apprenticeships and work experience to ensure workplaces are suitable and supportive for trainees, but, said Exeter College head of foundation studies Chris Petheram, there also needs to be a process of ensuring the student is suitable.

"Part of good quality work experience is making sure you're matching the right young person and their skillset, so we'll do some pre-assessment to make sure they've got the right skillset, to go into the appropriate programme," he said.

There should also be, he added, a constant mentoring of the young person throughout the placement.



Peter Webb, assistant principal at MidKent College

"I see it as a caseload of young people who'll move in and move out as they get and apprenticeship, so it's not like a traditional course," said Mr Petheram.

"We won't just be abandoning them. They'll be very much supported and we'll be visiting the employers and making sure the employers are happy, and we'll be doing some quality check to see what employers thought at the end of the process and see what we can change and develop — it's a quality process."

Mrs Taylor agreed monitoring of trainees was important and said part of that could be built into the course structure alongside workplace visits.

"The way the program will hopefully be moving forward, is when they are in their workplace it will be kind of a split week so they'll have some days of the week in the workplace and some time with us at college," she said.

"I think that is important, if we are addressing maths and English with trainees as well, what we can't do is a bit of block delivery at the beginning then lose them to work placement."

However, she added the college was planning to have three weeks in the classroom before the placement began to allow the trainee to get as much as possible from the experience.

"We will be working through what going to work actually means, expectations, things that they need to think about, interacting with colleagues, dress code and all sorts of things, and doing a bit of research on the workplace they're going to so it's not too much of a shock for them or for the employer who's going to provide the placement," said Mrs Taylor.

But students are not the only ones who could benefit from preparation, according to Mr Webb.

"One of the things we can look at is assisting our employers with possibly

training to ensure they give the best opportunities for work experience students — I think there's scope within the freedoms of the budgets to actually allow for that," he said.

"Rather than relying on employers to exactly know what is necessarily good experience, which actually sounds rather strange, it's an opportunity to work with employers to assist them with good quality work experience while students are there."

He added: "We've got to look at this more in terms of partnership between the FE establishment and the employers we work with."

Colleges can use their existing mechanisms to engage with employers, such as through their apprenticeship teams or through 'Job Shops', like the one at MidKent College, as well as reaching out to create new partnerships with employers.

These partnerships would be reinforced through workplace visits, employer debriefings and monitoring developing issues, but, said Mr Petheram, this also calls for co-operation and communication within the college itself to ensure work experience placements, and therefore traineeships, are a success.

"It's a big customer service and PR job to do, so it's customer-focussed through you working with the employer and there's internal stuff we need to do with the apprenticeship teams because we've got to get the right staff who can work with our internal systems and it's also about making sure you're recruiting and screening the right student as well," he said.

"That's why I think you've got to start off small and get your systems right, and then grow it.

"What we're hoping to do at the end of the process is to hand across to our apprenticeship team a number of things — we've got someone that's very focussed on



Chris Petheram, head of foundation studies at Exeter College



Karen Taylor, work-based training manager at Bedford College

hairdressing, for example.

"We've done the work with them, we know they're operating at level one and we've also got an employer who they've actually been working with so we know they're interested.

"I know it won't be for all of them, but for some it will be a gift to hand across to the apprenticeship route having made a massive difference to people who felt they could never do it in the past."

# Traineeships need to have a strong start

**The transition from unskilled to skilled could be key to answering the UK's youth unemployment problem, explains Matthew Hancock**

The German Chancellor Angela Merkel is by no means alone in regarding unemployment among young people as "the most pressing European problem".

However, in Germany the rates of youth unemployment are far lower than most of its European counterparts.

One reason may be that in Germany, where the majority of teenagers either go to university or into an apprenticeship, there are far fewer unskilled young people.

We want to follow Germany's lead and raise the importance of vocational education. So right from May 2010 onwards, the coalition has invested unprecedented effort and resources in increasing the number and quality of apprenticeships available to help set our young people on the path towards fulfilling careers.

Now, with some 1.3m new jobs having been created in the private sector over the past three years, and the latest surveys by the British Chambers of Commerce and others showing confidence returning to British business, it is no time to relax those efforts.

It is indeed the right time to redouble our efforts to ensure that as many of our young

people as possible are well prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that recovery is bringing as it takes hold.

Last month, this was clearly recognised in Chancellor George Osborne's spending review, which not only protected funding for apprenticeships, but also announced the extension of the new traineeships programme for young people aged up to 24, as well as 16 to 19-year-olds.

**The key to the success of the scheme will lie in how many training providers and employers come forward**

Traineeships are designed to give young people the skills and wherewithal to hold down an apprenticeship or a permanent job. For large numbers of our youngsters, that transition has never been easy. The Chancellor's announcement will mean that

more will be able to get practical help in overcoming it.

Employers tell us that many youngsters are keen to get a foot on the employment ladder, but lack the right skills, attitudes and experience to prosper immediately in the world of work.

That is why traineeships have been designed to last up to a maximum of six months and offer young people the opportunity to undertake a substantial work placement and vocational skills training, alongside support to improve the basic skills for employment of English and maths.

Depending on the young person's needs, a range of other support and flexible training may also be offered to help them develop and progress quickly onto an apprenticeship or into other employment.

All evidence suggests there will be substantial demand for traineeship places from motivated young people.

But the key to the success of the scheme will lie in how many training providers and employers come forward and show themselves willing to work together to offer the right kinds of opportunities.

We also need to get traineeships off to a strong start and that is why only training providers with an Ofsted rating of outstanding or good will be able to deliver them. I recognise this will be frustrating for some providers, but I am confident



this approach will give them even greater incentives to improve their existing provision.

The challenge is admittedly great. The updated framework for delivering traineeships has now been published and the first learners will be admitted in August. But despite the tight timescales involved, I am confident we can rise to the challenge.

Clearly, this bodes well for all those young people who ask only to be given a chance to make good and show what they can do.

*Matthew Hancock, skills minister*

# The Government must get this right



**The introduction of a training route to support young people without the necessary skills and qualifications to start an apprenticeship is a step forward, says shadow skills minister Gordon Marsden, but it must be implemented properly**

While I welcome the fact the Government are introducing traineeships for the 2013/14 academic year, the timescales involved concern me.

Although Matthew Hancock first put his proposals out to consultation in January, it took until May for the policy to be

confirmed, initially only for 16 to 18 year olds.

Under mounting pressure, Ministers used last month's spending review to announce a full rollout for 16 to 24 year olds from August.

I already thought the Government was cutting it fine for colleges and providers to put in place 16 to 18 traineeships, but now providers have little over five weeks to put in place traineeships for this larger age group.

Prior to the spending review, there had been no indication from Ministers this extension was imminent.

In my view, traineeships can and should play a key role in supporting social mobility by giving young people the chance to reach out for those top quality apprenticeships, like those at BAE Systems and Rolls Royce.

The urgent need for traineeships has been highlighted by last month's data on apprenticeship starts, which showed a 13 per cent fall in 16 to 18 starts, with the trend accelerating in the most recent quarter.

That's why it's so crucial traineeships are done properly, and there are several key areas Ministers must focus on. Firstly, traineeships must be underpinned by the key principle of progression. It's essential traineeships equip young people with the skills needed to bridge the gap into apprenticeships. They should also be

designed in close conjunction with the needs of employers, along the lines Doug Richard set out for apprenticeships.

Traineeships must be properly integrated into the employment and skills landscape. Staff at Job Centre Plus and the National Careers Service need to be up to speed and ready to direct young people towards them as an entry route to apprenticeships. The NAS and BIS must ensure they put resources into giving traineeships proper advertising and promotion.

There also needs to be clarity about just how traineeships will interact with the benefits system — especially the '16 hour rule' for benefit eligibility.

I was led to believe this was one of the major reasons they weren't initially rolled out for 19 to 24 year olds. In response to my detailed questions, Ministers are saying traineeships need to be designed in light of existing rules, suggesting colleges and providers will face an uphill battle to design programmes with enough contact time for learners while not falling foul of DWP regulations.

Quality must remain paramount in the new traineeships and the Government must monitor their rollout vigilantly. We cannot have the introduction of traineeships used as a front for the return of the models used

in the short duration apprenticeships that were brought to public attention by *FE Week* in 2011.

While I think it would be wrong to have all traineeships fixed at six months, as this would prevent colleges and providers from having adequate flexibility to respond to local needs, it would be deeply alarming if the vast bulk of traineeships merely turn out to last six weeks.

For many young people, that simply wouldn't be long enough to pick up the additional skills that are holding them back from apprenticeships.

It's crucial the Government gets traineeships right. Rolled out and delivered properly, they can play a vital role in supporting young people towards the skills both they and our economy need in an increasingly globalised world where the emerging economies are looking to rapidly boost their own skills base.

That's why Ministers need to rapidly give colleges and training providers the clarity they need to deliver this programme successfully and to help the countless young people who want to access apprenticeships but currently lack the necessary skills.

*Gordon Marsden, shadow minister for further education, skills and regional growth*

# How does our traineeship programme plan compare with other schemes across Europe?

So how does Britain's traineeship plan compare with other schemes across Europe?

According to Kari Hadjivassiliou (pictured), a policy expert from the European Social Fund apprenticeship and traineeship helpdesk, comparison is difficult because there isn't a single definition of traineeships.

However, there are similar programmes across Europe, she said, although they may be thought of as pre-vocational training programmes, rather than traineeships.

"Quite a lot of features that [UK traineeships] promote are currently promoted across Europe, particularly that traineeships should be part of an education and training programme and that's important," said Ms Hadjivassiliou.

"The other common feature is the specific and rather limited duration because the evidence shows that, say, three weeks are not enough... but then young people can get caught into successive internships which can go on for years — this is a problem in Italy, for example."

The focus on quality is important, too. "This is a big thing in Europe at the moment, and this is why the commission is putting together a quality framework which will be published in late 2013," she said.

"The UK programme seems to meet a lot of criteria which will be in the framework, such as the content — the fact that it has to be meaningful work experience, and the acquisition of functional skills, good literacy and numeracy."

However, there is great variation across Europe over payment for trainees. "In the current climate it's very difficult to introduce official trainee compensation, although in some countries, like in France, any placement above two months has compensation attached to it, so trainees have to be paid," said Ms Hadjivassiliou.

But she added that, even where employers are not obliged to pay compensation, governments, "should at least ensure there is some social welfare provision".

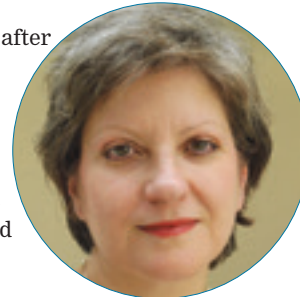
In terms of incentives for employers, she continued, countries such as Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg offered a subsidy to employers and sometimes a year's exemption from national insurance contributions if the trainee was kept on

for six months after the end of the traineeship.

Overall she said, it seemed the UK programme had been designed with previous experience in the UK and Europe in mind, drawing on features which have "come up time and time again as crucial to the success of the scheme".

"I wouldn't like to offer a better or worse comparison because it's a new programme and we haven't seen how it's going to be implemented or any results," she said.

"The UK programme has some distinctive features, but the elements which are common compare well."



## Austria

### Youth unemployment

Austria had the second lowest youth unemployment rate of the European Union in July 2011 with 7.8 per cent of young people aged 15 to 24 unemployed.

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

**Work training funded by national employment centre ('Arbeitstraining')** is aimed at providing participants with an opportunity to gain practical experience at an organisation, usually, but not always, during or after an educational programme. Lasts one to twelve weeks, and participants receive a daily allowance from the employment centre.

This is a way of funding traineeships rather than being about a particular type of school, study programme or educational stage.

### Traineeships as mandatory part of VET schools and colleges

Traineeships are included in the curricula of VET schools and colleges for all fields except business. The length varies between fields but is usually several months distributed over the holidays between school years. Trainees from VET centres are not legally entitled to remuneration but some do receive a voluntary allowance.

### How many trainees?

134,611 attended VET schools and colleges in 2009/10, so would have taken mandatory traineeships. No data is available for the national employment centre training.

## Belgium

### Youth unemployment

22.4 per cent (higher than EU average)

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

There are work placements in enterprise as well as social support for registered unskilled job seekers. The scheme is unpaid, but trainees remain entitled to their unemployment allowances.

Similarly, "plan formation insertion" traineeships target young skilled job seekers. No remuneration is offered, but trainees are entitled to benefits during the four to 28-week traineeship and must be hired by the company at the end of the scheme for at least as long as the placement.

In the Flemish community there are also traineeships for over 18-year-olds enrolled at secondary VET centres. They receive €676 to €922.

There are also traineeships for registered job seekers of any age or part-time VET students which can last up to a year. They receive €9.60 daily, can keep their benefits and get hiring priority if the company they work for is recruiting.

For recent VET graduates there is also a scheme involving a compulsory traineeship agreement between the training provider, the enterprise and the trainee. The trainee is given a €500 lump sum which has to last between three months and a year.

### How many trainees?

No data

## Bulgaria

### Youth unemployment

Youth unemployment was at 23.2 per cent in 2010

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

A new apprenticeship programme where people with low levels of education and entry school leavers receive an allowance, as well as the companies who employ them, to cover their salaries and contributions for a maximum of 12 months.

### Anti-crisis programme

Part of this programme included a component for six months employment provided by private employers for secondary education graduates.

### Apprenticeships and traineeships for drop-outs

This programme provides six month subsidised apprenticeships or traineeships for young unemployed people.

The remuneration and costs of traineeship are regulated by the individual contracts between the company, educational institution and/or trainees. However, in recent years the Bulgarian government has given subsidies for employers taking on trainees (usually those with lower levels of education covering their salaries and contributions).

It also encourages the trainees themselves by giving them an allowance for a maximum of 12 months.

### How many trainees?

No data

## Ireland

### Youth unemployment

Unemployment was at 14.2 per cent in the second quarter of 2011 with young people hit hardest.

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

There are many traineeship-style programmes available.

### Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)

Increases the participation of young people and adults with less than upper secondary education in flexible learning opportunities.

Many BTEI courses offer access to work experience. Students getting benefits before joining a course continue to receive payments.

### FÁS Community Training and Community Employment Programme

These offer vocational skills training to school leavers or long-term unemployed and socially excluded people. The Community Employment Programme contains an element of basic training, while FÁS Traineeships combine formal training with workplace coaching with an employer. On successful completion of both on- and off-the-job training, learners receive a level five or six nationally recognised award. Course lengths vary but are generally between 20 and 43 weeks.

### Local Training Initiative

The programme allows local communities to carry out valuable projects and train unemployed people aged 16 to 25 in areas related to the project work so they can go on to gain employment or progress to further training.

### National Internship Scheme – JobBridge

JobBridge provides up to 5,000 six or nine month work experience placements for people who have been on Jobseekers Allowance for at least 78 days. They continue to receive benefits, plus an extra €50.

### Skillsnet

State funded upskilling programmes across a range of sectors, but which must include at least 10 per cent of unemployed participants to train with those in employment.

### Specific Skills Training

Provides job seekers with employment-led training opportunities leading to specific job related skills and formal vocational qualifications.

### Return to work training

Aimed at the long-term unemployed. The courses facilitate entry to employment or progression to higher level programmes or traineeships.

### Youthreach

Offers second chance education and training to 16 to 20 year olds. Targets early school leavers and designed to give young people opportunities to engage in the formal certification process in an 'out-of-school' setting. Learners receive a weekly training and travel allowance.

### How many trainees?

Full-time training programmes for unemployed people and job seekers in Ireland were completed by 36,650 people in 2010.

## France

### Youth unemployment

At the end of the second quarter of 2011, the French unemployment rate for young people (15-24 years old) was 22.8 per cent, 2.3 percentage points higher than the EU average.

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

#### Second Chance School (E2C-Ecole de la Deuxième Chance)

The E2C provides vocational education and training to young people aged between 16 and 25 without professional qualifications or certified diplomas, with the aim of facilitating their access to employment.

### How many trainees?

Between June 2009 and June 2010 about 403,760 alternance-based traineeship placements were created, 82.4 per cent of the target of 490,000

## Sweden

### Youth unemployment

The youth unemployment rate in Sweden is among the highest in Europe. In the second quarter of 2010 the unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 to 24 rose up to 29.7 per cent from a 2008 unemployment rate of about 10 per cent.

### Similar types of traineeship offered?

'Youth employment guarantee' is for young people aged 16–25 years old who have been registered with the public employment service continuously for three months.

The scheme aims at helping young people find a job more quickly, or enter the regular education system.

The scheme focuses on jobsearch activities which can be combined with work experience placements and education. Participants in work experience schemes receive unemployment compensation.

### How many trainees?

In Sweden 98 per cent of those leaving compulsory schooling enter immediately upper secondary schools years, and around half of those, 192,856 people in 2010/11, will take a vocational qualification which includes a traineeship.

There is no data for those on the Youth Employment guarantee scheme.

The UK programme has some distinctive features, but the elements which are common compare well

# Get advice from the Traineeships helpdesk

With more than 5m people aged 15 to 24 in the 27 EU member states unable to find a job, traineeships and apprenticeships have become an important part of helping young people go from school to work.

A new Helpdesk service, offering advice on setting up, running and improving traineeships and apprenticeships has been set up by the European Social Fund (ESF).

### The Helpdesk offers:

- Enquiry service via a website form, email or phone
- One-to-one advice and tailored consultancy from specialist policy experts
- Regularly updated Frequently Asked Questions

### Who is it for?

- Policy makers at national, regional and local level in the areas of youth employment, education and training policies
- ESF Managing Authorities
- Relevant national and regional agencies
- Social partners





# OFF-THE-SHELF CAMBRIDGE TRAINEESHIPS AVAILABLE NOW

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To see which Cambridge Traineeships would suit your learners, visit [ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships](https://ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships) where you’ll be able to view the interactive Package Finder and register your interest by signing up to teach.

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*“The pilot is extremely well designed to focus on what it takes to prepare young people to become part of the workforce”*

**Lindsay Jardine, Director of Operations, KATO**



*“By partnering with an organisation like KATO, we can listen to what training providers and learners tell us, so that our one-stop-shop Traineeship package of qualifications is truly fit for purpose”*

**Mark Dawe, Chief Executive, OCR**



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# We're almost there but we still have work to do

Are colleges ready for traineeships? Yes, says Lynne Sedgmore, but there are still areas to consider.

We all accept that the notion of traineeships is a good idea for many young people.

In the post-Richard world of work-based education and training, and as the apprenticeship concept is being properly redefined, for many, the traineeship is simply a way to re-badge what was previously known as a pre-apprenticeship programme. But the expectations are that it will be much more than that.

Traineeships benefit from having much in common with their older sister, the study programme.

Across the country, colleges are training and preparing staff, engaging in new relationships and refocusing their timetables to bring maths and English to the forefront of students' learning. Trainees will benefit from this as much as everybody else.

And an army of staff is engaging with employers to develop further the commendable existing relationships to secure meaningful work experience. So, the building blocks of traineeships are most certainly in place already.

However, as is so often the case, the reality of 'readiness' depends upon some of the bigger picture issues, and, in this respect, traineeships are no different to many of the other new policy developments that colleges will be grappling with this autumn.

We are told that funding requirements have been relaxed and that requirements for assessment will be flexible, but, of course, we have yet to see what that looks like in practice. As with study programmes, it is worth considering whether arguments will ensue about the elements that are judged most appropriate for any given individual, or whether freedom really does mean genuine autonomy for colleges to decide. What is clear is that colleges are already investing significant time and energy into interpreting the rules that have been published.

Of greater concern is that in no less a place than the Queen's Speech, the government publicised the view that traineeships and apprenticeships should become 'the new norm' for those not going to university.

Yet traineeships do not include any compulsion to engage in study towards a vocational qualification. For many in the target market, at level two and below, a vocational qualification is both achievable and appropriate as the experience of general FE colleges amply demonstrates.



Moreover full-time vocational education is not only a route young people and parents understand but one which feels right to them. We would do well not to try and 'fix' an area of the system that isn't broken by focusing on traineeships at the expense of everything else.

Colleges will continue to explain to young people the full range of choices available to them and continue to deliver a full range of vocational qualifications.

Employer engagement, while something we take very seriously, is well documented as complex and employers are difficult to engage. We have no barometer for how willing employers will be to work to enable traineeships at the same time as they are being exhorted to engage more with apprenticeships and adult skills provision. And, even if they do, colleges are still unsure what the answer is to the question of how to support a trainee if, after six months, there is no job or apprenticeship for them to progress onto.

Finally, the 157 Group's concern about the quality criteria being (inconsistently) applied to delivery is well documented. For many young people this year, a traineeship will not be a reality on the basis of geography alone. It will once again be left to colleges to deal with their disappointment and confusion.

So – how ready are we? As colleges, impressively so, if you focus on the nuts and bolts of what is undoubtedly a good idea. At a system level however more work is needed to ensure that all the elements of a world class VET system are in place.

Lynne Sedgmore, 157 Group executive director

# Time to grasp this opportunity

The government's announcement that 19 to 24-year-olds will, along with 16 to 18-year-olds, be able to do traineeships has boosted hopes of tackling youth unemployment, says Stewart Segal



Let's be clear first that traineeships represent a major opportunity to tackle the NEET issue.

The Spending Review announcement that from August 2013, the programme will cover 16 to 24-year-olds is excellent news.

We may be disappointed that from the onset at least, the Ofsted grade requirements may be unnecessarily restricting the provider supply base. And judging by the size of the 2013-14 contract allocations for independent providers, only a limited number of young people are going to benefit to begin with.

But we have to start from somewhere and recognise that we are operating in the toughest spending round in 30 years. It is the potential of traineeships to make a major difference over the longer term which we should welcome.

## Using Ofsted grades alone for provider eligibility is not the best measure

For the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), the key win in the programme's design is the flexibility that it gives to providers.

They can give the individual a personalised programme of training and work experience based on the young person's real, identified needs and make the person attractive to employers.

This approach will help to secure young people either a place on an apprenticeship or a job where they should receive some form of further training.

Apprenticeships are the optimum outcome, but all job outcomes should be regarded as good.

At the recent AELP national conference, one of our North West members reported that his young clients want a job above all else and therefore it is pleasing that traineeships will give them the opportunity to secure one. The new programme adopts many of the principles we have supported: flexible structure (ie the 'black box' approach); firmly focused on work; mix of work skills and work experience; and key

skills such as English and maths. For it to succeed, it must be based on good initial assessment, flexible support for learners and a focus on outcomes.

The announced extension of the traineeship programme to age 24 will ensure a sufficient scale and profile to address the big issue of youth unemployment.

The extension should bring in many more work-based learning providers able to engage with enough employers who are willing to offer work experience to young people. The adding of the 19 to 24 cohort means that many apprenticeship providers and with them their very large employer client base should now be able to offer support.

We recognise the programme should be of high quality, but using Ofsted grades alone for provider eligibility is not the best measure. We are happy to work with the Education Funding Agency and the Skills Funding Agency to look at ways to widen the delivery while maintaining high quality.

Otherwise we are excluding employers who have good working relationships with providers that are restricted from delivering the programme. The other significant downside of the current restrictions is that they are encouraging more subcontracting than is necessary.

Our proposal is to maintain the Ofsted grade one and two as a first threshold, but for grade three providers to have a wider set of benchmarks to provide the evidence that they can deliver a high quality programme. Some examples of this evidence might be Ofsted grade one or two for this specific area of work, excellent success rates, and evidence of good delivery of Department of Work and Pensions programmes. Once approved, a grade three provider might also expect a more regular scrutiny of their outcomes.

Our member providers already engage with 638,000 employers on apprenticeships and other skills programmes. We believe that by working closely with the government to improve on the solid foundations already laid, a wide range of sectors and a high number of small and medium-sized enterprises can become involved in traineeships. We must grasp the opportunity.

Stewart Segal, Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive

# Living up to Ofsted's expectations

While providers gear up for the challenge of delivering traineeships, Ofsted has been looking at how to assess the scheme. Matthew Coffey explains what the education watchdog wants to see in action.

We're all too familiar with the young person who, for whatever reasons, hasn't excelled at school and runs the risk of joining the NEET ranks all too soon.

As we know, leaving education and training without qualifications and employability skills can lead such young people down a dead end.

So in light of this, I welcome the introduction of the new traineeships being rolled out in August.

These will also be particularly pertinent as we come up to the raising of the participation age to 17 in September.

A national priority for me is improving inspection grades relating to vocational training and the take-up of vocational qualifications.

And we will be grading traineeships when seen on inspection once the scheme is launched.

We'll be looking for robust data from providers to demonstrate the impact of what they're doing.

Our priorities reflect our aspirations for

learners. It can't be right that more than one million young people are unemployed. I would expect traineeships to offer a package of skills that helps young people move into apprenticeships.

And Ofsted is very supportive of the proposals for traineeships, including the core elements of the programme.

Providing people with the basic skills to gain fruitful employment is critical. Effective induction, the flexibility to tailor each of the core elements to meet individual needs, ensuring quality, and effectively involving employers, including SMEs, will be essential to the success of the programme. Gaining a mix of employability skills and work experience will be critical to a young person's success in finding and keeping work.

We know from our report apprenticeships for young people that providers and employers feel the most important attributes of a potential apprentice are the right attitude and commitment to employment. Many had negative views about the ability of some young people to apply for jobs; the poor standard of English and maths and weak punctuality and timekeeping. However, we found that good support was a common key factor in effectively engaging young people.

Employers are struggling to recruit to

skilled and semi-skilled vacancies across the country. And our report Ensuring quality in apprenticeships found that just over a third of 500 apprentices didn't consider themselves to be holding a permanent job during their apprenticeships.

No one can afford to take a disillusioned approach to this new scheme. This is a golden opportunity to improve the life chances of many young people. But we must also be realistic.

Industry needs to have confidence in the people coming out of traineeships and into apprenticeships. What Ofsted looks for in good quality apprenticeships we will also be looking for in traineeships. We'll be asking to what extent are people being prepared for apprenticeships and employment. Have they had the opportunity to experience work, develop skills and understand the industry they want to work in?

We'll be examining whether the calibre of apprenticeships has improved as a result of traineeships. And we'll be looking for creative programmes that provide young people with the skills they require.

Traineeships are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. We'll want to see how providers invest in those with learning difficulties; supporting them into employment and demonstrating their ability to hold down a job.



Ofsted's spotlight will be on how many of those on traineeships are successfully moving on to apprenticeships. The challenge for providers and employers will be how to track and evaluate those on traineeships into apprenticeships and beyond.

For the scheme to be successful it will need to demonstrate impact and results. Those young people moving into apprenticeships need to be as successful as the rest; if not more so. If our inspection results can confirm this, then we will have a very effective means of improving life prospects for many.

Matthew Coffey, Ofsted director of learning and skills

## ADVERTORIAL

# The edge in delivering Traineeships



### Make sure you're ready

Traineeships will be officially available from August this year and they represent a tremendous business opportunity for learning providers looking to build on their existing foundation learning provision.

The timescales are short but you can still hit the ground running for August.

### Cambridge Traineeships are ready now

– they have been developed to address all of the challenges that learning providers will face now and into the foreseeable future.

With aspects such as ease of administration, funding compatibility, success rates in English and maths, and adaptability for individual career focus at the core of our thinking, you can be confident in a Cambridge Traineeship.

Cambridge Traineeships are made up from a number of components – all of which have been given serious attention so that they fit seamlessly together into a high-quality Traineeship programme.

What's more, they've been tried and tested with leading learning providers and employers, gathering feedback and implementing recommendations along the way. This includes a dedicated pilot with the Kent Association of Training Organisations (KATO), where feedback is being used in the ongoing development of Cambridge Traineeships and the resources that support their delivery.

Here's an outline of what you get with a Cambridge Traineeship.

### English and maths skills

Functional Skills form the English and maths component of Cambridge Traineeships. If the learner does not have the core skills needed for Functional Skills, our Cambridge Progression suite of qualifications can help.

They support the core English and maths skills within a framework of bite-sized, credit-based units and support the underpinning skills needed in English and maths so that learners can progress to Functional Skills.

Cambridge Progression and Functional Skills both come with a free diagnostic tool so that you can assess which qualifications within the suite will address those needs.

### Employability skills

Demand for our Employability Skills qualifications is growing rapidly. Two new units are being developed to make the content more current by taking into account new technologies and developments in the world of work.

Our Employability Skills are also more flexible than before, so that providers and learners can better adapt the qualifications to suit individual learning requirements.

### Vocational qualifications

Cambridge Traineeships are especially suited to individual learning plans, because a vocational component can be added from our wide range of qualifications – meaning the learner gets to focus on an area that's relevant to their intended career path.

Areas of focus include Business and Administration, Customer Service, Retail, Bookkeeping and IT.

### It's easy to get started with Cambridge Traineeships

The less time you spend on administration, the greater your cost savings. Our systems have been designed with simplification in mind.

With Cambridge Traineeships, you can

choose between off-the-shelf packages or those that are specially developed to suit individual needs. If you want an off-the-shelf programme, it's a speedy way to get up and running. If you want a bespoke programme, you have the advantage of an approach that can fit with your centre's or learners' specialisms. You can see a range of the off-the-shelf programmes at [ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships](http://ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships).

They are also easy to administer through our new Single Point of Entry system, which enables you to make entries for the various components of a Cambridge Traineeship in one simple function.

If you have any funding-related queries, we can also make life easier by supporting you with our in-house funding expertise. Simply email [funding@ocr.org.uk](mailto:funding@ocr.org.uk) for support.

With every component of Cambridge Traineeships already accredited and the assurance that comes from working with an awarding body with over 150 years' experience, Cambridge Traineeships are ready and waiting to give you a new edge to your provision.

Web: [ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships](http://ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships)  
Phone: 02476 851509

# Preparing learners for work

**Rebecca Cooney**  
@RebeccaKCooney

With just four weeks to go until funding for traineeships begins, providers gathered at the Houses of Parliament to share their experiences of preparing for the first cohort.

A panel including Shadow Skills Minister Gordon Marsden MP, OCR chief executive Mark Dawe and new Association of Employment and Learning Providers president Stewart Segal addressed questions about the flexibility of the traineeship framework.



**We need to be out there convincing employers that young people are good to employ and the traineeship is the route to do that**

They also looked at developing a relationship with employers and ensuring each learner had the right experience.

John Hyde, executive chair of HIT Training, and Karen Taylor, work-based training manager at Bedford College, were also on hand in the Parliament committee

room, to give provider perspective.

Mr Marsden warned traineeships, “mustn’t be... a return to low quality” and to prevent this, he said, they “need to be underpinned by key principles of progression”.

“The skills young people pick up on them must be suitable to improve their job prospects and their ability to take on apprenticeships as opposed to merely offering employers subsidised work placements,” he said.

“That principle of progression, the journey from school to college, or college to work is a key one and that’s the perspective we should use to frame the application for traineeships.”

Mr Segal agreed, warning that traineeships should not be seen as being solely a pre-apprenticeship training programme.

“A lot of young people will get work

that doesn’t have an apprenticeships association with it, and we have to be careful that this is preparation for work, not just preparation for apprenticeships,” he said.

“We mustn’t forget that this is a cultural shift and that we need to be out there convincing employers that young people are good to employ and the traineeship is the route to a no-risk opportunity to do that.”

For Mr Hyde, progression into employment was particularly important in the service industry, where he predicted around 40 per cent of new jobs between now and 2020 were likely to be created.

“Fifteen years ago we had over 6,000 16 to 18 apprentices on our hospitality programmes. We are struggling today to place 600,” he said, pointing to an influx of trained labour from other parts of the EU.

“I think the traineeship programme

could be the opportunity to get over that because it takes the risk from the employer of taking somebody on.”

At Bedford College, the employer response to traineeships had been “mixed”, according to Ms Taylor.

“We’ve got some who are going to be quite happy to provide placements, then we’ve got some who feel they’re a little unsure at the moment,” she said, although she added she was optimistic that those who could provide placements would eventually do so.

Like many of the speakers, Ms Taylor stressed the importance of having a strong relationship with employers.

“Externally, it’s being promoted by our business development team — they’re actually in contact with employers each and every day, going out on visits, over the telephone, networking meetings and various events,” she said.

She added that the college would maintain contact with the employer and trainee throughout the programme, to address any “emerging issues” for each individual trainee.

“We do see it as being a very flexible programme and almost a bespoke programme for each trainee,” she said.

“We will do our best to meet their particular needs, so we do see that ongoing contact, that advice and guidance and emerging issues as being very important.”

The college began asking potential learners to register interest shortly after traineeships were announced, said Ms Taylor, so for colleges the immediate step would be to begin interviewing and testing those who wanted to be involved.

Mr Dawe said issues of flexibility and

tailoring had been paramount in designing OCR’s offering of small, “pick-and-mix-style” units, enabling the provider and the learner to create a programme suited to their level and needs.

“Traineeships need to be focussed on the learner so there needs to be some flexibility for the individual learning for the trainee — you’re going to get different individuals coming in with different needs, so this is going to have to be a flexible programme as well,” he said.

Like Mrs Taylor, Mr Dawe argued classroom learning needed to support trainees’ development on placement, in order for the programme to be successful.

“It’s about the whole experience of the individual, it’s not just about qualifications,” he said.



Gordon Marsden, Shadow Minister for Further Education, Skills and Regional Growth

## The employer’s point of view



Amanda Charlton, head of workforce development at 1610 charitable leisure trust, which runs 20 sports and activity centres across South West England, emphasised the importance of provider and employer communication.

### How did you find out about traineeships?

I’ve got an FE background, but we haven’t had a single call from a training provider about them.

We’ve written an employer ownership of skills (EOS) bid around traineeships along with two providers, but there’s another seven or eight other around us and we haven’t heard a peep out of them. That’s disappointing, because we were expecting

people to be hammering on our door:

We’ve got 32 apprentices. We see them as an investment, and fundamental to our future growth... and 85 per cent of our apprentices stay on with us.

If we don’t get our EOS bid and this isn’t being promoted, where are our future employees going to come from? That is the concern for us.

### Do you think the government should be promoting traineeships?

Absolutely. I haven’t found anything on any of our nearest training providers websites about traineeships, so even if employers do get to hear about traineeships, where are they going to get additional information?

### What would you like to see done?

I think training providers have to be much more able to engage employers.

Some colleges and training providers are absolutely superb, but I think an awful lot more could be done with the vast majority of training providers.

Lots of training providers talk about employer engagement, but that’s just sending a leaflet out or making the odd call. Without proper engagement, traineeships will fail.

But actually what’s going to make traineeships work won’t necessarily be the English and maths; it will be the work placement.

That’s what will get young people engaged.



# Helping hand for traineeship pilot scheme

With traineeships looming on the horizon, OCR and the Kent Association of Training Providers (Kato) have given themselves a head start by launching a similarly-themed pilot scheme. Rebecca Cooney went along to find out more

The 15-week Step2Work programme began in May and, like traineeships, includes work experience alongside basic maths, English and employability training provided by SET Training, in Dartford, and Profile, in Broadstairs, East Kent.

"The idea of the pilot is to see what works and what doesn't work, and to get feedback from the employers, providers and learners," said Lindsay Jardine, Kato director of operations.

The 35 trainees are working in placements ranging from insurance claim handling to frozen yoghurt making.

At Levicks Chartered Accounts, in Broadstairs, I met firm partner Michael Collier and Alexander Foster, 19, who has been training two days a week for around a month.

Alexander has been unable to find employment since completing his level three ICT qualification — and a key problem has been his lack of work experience.

"I'm sick and tired of sitting at home," he said.

**We always get them doing real work, relevant to the rest of the business, not just tea making**

"Since I started the course I've had something to do in the week — it's constructive... I've learned a lot in just eight days and enjoyed meeting new people."

The firm has a history of providing work experience.

"For young people who don't have much work experience, I think it's good to come into an office environment," said Michael.

"We always get them doing real work, relevant to the rest of the business, not just tea making, which is beneficial to them and to us in the long run."

Steve Revell, managing director of freight insurance company The International Claims Agency, has also seen benefits from taking on a trainee.

"We've had issues with employing school

leavers in the past," he said.

"We've had people leave after the first morning, or they've been out the night before and we find them asleep in the toilets... and some have terrible grammar and write in text speak."

He added: "If they're learning English and maths as they're applying it, I think people see a point to it."

His biggest problem with the scheme is that he can only take trainee Claire Moore, 22, on for two days a week without affecting her benefits.

"She has potential but she's got some growing to do," said Mr Revell. "It would be great to have her in for three days to get her learning more. It needs to be more flexible."

The Broadstairs employability class is eagerly planning an impressive family fun day in aid of CRY, Cardiac Risk in the Young — they've even added to their £50 budget with sponsorship from local companies.

Yazmin Muir, 19, a trainee at a Broadstairs seafront café, was enthusiastic

about the scheme.

"It feels endless, looking for jobs and being told you don't have enough experience," she said. "I'm not going to stay stuck in this cycle."

In the Dartford employability class, students role play job interviews.

Tutor Bev Neave said: "It's a different style of teaching — some students have become disengaged since they left school so it's about building self-esteem."

"They may not have been exposed to a work environment before... they're bringing what they're learning on placement into the class."

And the scheme has already had some successes.

Harry Cuthbertson, 18, has been offered an apprenticeship at Joov, a frozen yoghurt shop in Bluewater shopping centre, when his traineeship there finishes.

"It's really helped me a lot," he said.

"I have so much more confidence that I can go in and know what I'm talking about." Profile tutor Nicki Kelly said the response from employers has been positive.

"I think employers have an image of what a young, unemployed person is, because many said they weren't interested but now word's got around people are asking if they can get involved," she said.

"Hopefully, what these guys are doing will change that image."



Photo captions, clockwise from top of page 14: Tutors Bev Neave and Dilys Lawler, Sonia McCluskey, managing director at SET Training, Trevor Francis 19 (opportunity knocks), FE Week reporter Rebecca Cooney interviews Nicole Honeywood, 19, Lindsay Jardine, KATO Director of Operations and Louise Howard, OCR Business Manager Harry Cuthbertson, 18 Scott Denham, 23, and Terri Ann Blyth, 19. All photos by Nick Linford.







# A FRESH APPROACH TO ENGLISH AND MATHS SKILLS

**Cambridge Traineeships bring a fresh approach to securing English and maths skills.**

We recognise that achieving Functional Skills within six months could be a challenge for some learners – so some of our off-the-shelf Cambridge Traineeships incorporate our new Cambridge Progression suite of qualifications.

Cambridge Progression qualifications support core English and maths skills within a framework of bite-sized, credit-based units and develop the underpinning skills needed in English and maths so that learners can progress to Functional Skills.

They come with a free diagnostic tool so that you can assess which units within the suite will address your learners' needs. The Cambridge Progression suite is currently made up of the OCR Cambridge Awards/Certificates in English and Maths and ranges from Entry Level to Level 2.

To see how Cambridge Progression qualifications can form part of an off-the-shelf Cambridge Traineeship, visit [ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships](http://ocr.org.uk/cambridgetraineeships) and download the interactive Package Finder or call **02476 851509**.



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