

# Apprenticeship Reforms – progress so far



# Forewords



Apprenticeships offer amazing opportunities to young people and to businesses – almost nine out of every ten apprenticeship employers hoping to achieve business benefits tell us that apprenticeships deliver.

But in a competitive global market, we cannot stand still. We want to go even further to make England’s apprenticeship programme the best in the world. We are putting employers in the driving seat in designing apprenticeships so that they focus on exactly the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are required in your workforce of the future.

Just over a year after its initial launch, our Trailblazers are already supported by over 1,000 employers in 100 sectors who have designed more than 120 published apprenticeship standards. This is a fantastic achievement from all involved.

I want to continue to build on this momentum and enthusiasm, with more employers recognising the benefits of apprenticeships, getting involved in designing standards, testing our new funding approaches and employing apprentices. This will help young people’s skills, our businesses and the wider economy to continue to grow.

**Nick Boles MP**  
Minister for Skills and Equalities



The reforms have shone a bright light on the value of apprenticeships and come at the perfect time when businesses are increasingly looking to grow. More employers are realising the connection between business growth and apprentice employment. How else can you grow if you don’t have the right raw

talent? Apprentices are exactly that. I am a fan of apprenticeships and that’s because I have seen for myself that a strategy for growth is best combined with a strategy for skills – for me that has always involved employing apprentices.

A positive from the reforms are Trailblazers. A chunk of my 2014 was spent helping shape the new craft apprenticeship. With the help of colleagues in the sector and hundreds of small businesses we considered what needs to be delivered and how. This element is the heart of the reforms which are truly employer led. They also provide a perfect springboard for businesses to take the leap and hire an apprentice. By being involved in Trailblazers a business will have greater ownership of the apprenticeship standard and therefore a better understanding of its value.

I am optimistic that we are at the cusp of moving the number of apprenticeships to the next level thanks to the recognition of their value by SMEs and the overwhelming commercial benefits.

**Jason Holt CBE**  
CEO and Apprenticeship Ambassador, Holts Group



Toyota Manufacturing UK is pleased to have been involved in the early development of the new apprenticeships and we are currently training 24 of the first apprentices against this new standard. This has given us a number of benefits.

Whilst our apprenticeships were already highly effective we recognised that by working with colleagues from across our industry we could share best practice and increase the quality of apprenticeships to the very best international standards. We now have apprenticeships that meet the needs of a whole range of employers, from large companies like ourselves to our supply chain and smaller firms, ensuring consistent high quality and transferable skills.

This collaboration has enabled us to work with companies, some of whom are our competitors in the marketplace, to ensure that we all have access to the best possible training for our industry. This is providing widespread benefits, to us as a business, to the manufacturing industry and to the economy as a whole.

I believe passionately in the value of apprenticeships. As a former apprentice myself, and as a member of the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network, I would urge you to get involved with apprenticeships. If you are not already part of a group developing new apprenticeship standards then it is worth investing the time to do so. If you have not employed an apprentice before then now is the time to do so.

**Tim Freeman**  
Director and Apprenticeship Ambassador, Toyota Manufacturing UK

# 9 out of 10

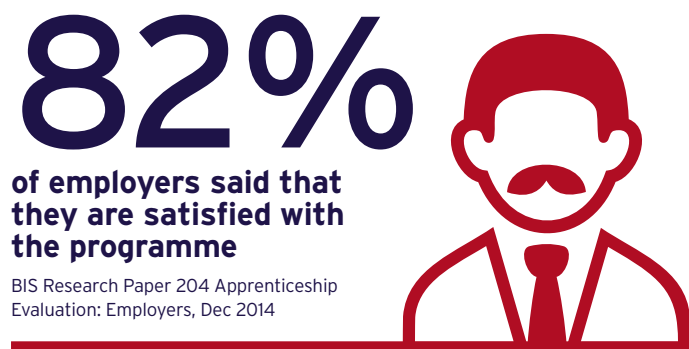
apprenticeship employers hoping to achieve business benefits tell us that apprenticeships deliver.





# Overview of the reforms

**Apprenticeships already offer great opportunities for business and young people with consistently high satisfaction rates but we want to go even further to make England's apprenticeship programme the best in the world.**



We set out our plans for implementing reforms to apprenticeships in **The Future of Apprenticeships in England: Implementation Plan** (Oct 2013), to make the programme even more rigorous and responsive to employers' requirements.

We said that	Progress to date
Apprenticeships will be based on standards designed by employers	Over 1000 employers are involved in developing standards for their occupations in over 100 sectors through Trailblazers.  Published standards have been in a broad range of sectors from journalism to law, banking and dental health.
Apprentices will need to demonstrate their competence through rigorous, independent assessment designed with employers	8 sectors have developed agreed assessment plans for 15 standards.  Where professional registration exists, these apprenticeships will provide all the evidence required.
Apprentices will be graded rather than simply passing or failing	All agreed assessment plans include grading. Employers designing the plans have the flexibility to grade all or some of the apprenticeship.
We will simplify the system and reduce bureaucracy for employers	Apprenticeship Standards are generally no more than 2 pages long.  Funding trial has reduced the rates from hundreds to 5 caps.  Giving employers direct control of apprenticeship funding remains a core and non-negotiable part of our reforms.
More will be done to promote the benefits of apprenticeships to both employers and potential apprentices	The <b>Get In. Go Far</b> campaign has had a major focus on young people but also small businesses. To date visits to the apprenticeship website are up by over 95% on the previous year.

# Why Apprenticeships?

## Supporting growth in your business

Thousands of employers, large and small, have given young people a great start to their careers. These employers are seeing the benefits of investing in their apprentices as the future of their businesses.

We want this to continue and for more employers to take on apprentices to give them a competitive edge, helping them to grow and compete both in the UK and internationally.

We also want employers to continue to work together to develop the new standards for apprenticeships, ensuring that they truly meet the needs of large and small businesses.

“I’ve been involved in the Digital Industry Trailblazer as chair from the outset, working with representatives from many different companies. The close collaboration between business and government, competitors and partners, has been a key to the progress we have made.”

The pace at which new standards have been developed has been nothing short of astounding. There are clearly so many passionate supporters of apprenticeships engaged that we have made great strides in defining standards. These will underpin digital and technical skills development in a consistent manner for *all* employers in *all* industries for many years to come. The quality and standard of learning will be ensured for all participants, whether you’re an employer taking on a single apprentice or a large enterprise taking on hundreds. For employers and students alike, this quality and consistency are essential for securing the future skills of our workforce.”

**Jez Brooks**  
Professional Development Manager/Apprentice Scheme Leader, IBM UK Ltd

# 65%

of employers say there was improved productivity in their business as a result of employing apprentices



BIS Research Paper 204 Apprenticeship Evaluation: Employers, Dec 2014

## Supporting growth in the economy

By benefiting businesses and individuals, apprenticeships also benefit the wider economy, helping to keep us competitive on the global stage. The National Audit Office estimates that every pound of government investment in apprenticeships delivers £18 of economic benefits through increasing skills, productivity and economic growth. We are ambitious to increase the returns to the economy by growing the programme and increasing the skills gain of apprentices.

“The UK is facing a critical engineering skills shortage. Increasing the quality and quantity of engineering apprenticeships is vital. If we don’t, we are facing a huge hole in our economy. Not only will Trailblazers help drive the skills needed for our future prosperity, they are key to ensuring the UK has the engineers for the future to keep our vital infrastructure working.”

I am excited by the opportunity engineering Trailblazers present. By providing engineering apprentices with professional recognition as registered Engineering Technicians, it provides them and employers with the assurance that they have the highest quality skills and training which is universally recognised as the national and international benchmark.”

**Stephen Tetlow, Chief Executive of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers**

# Employer leadership – making sure apprenticeships work for you

The first eight Trailblazer employer groups were announced in October 2013. Their success and enthusiasm has spread since then and there are now Trailblazers in over **100 sectors**.

Employers can genuinely 'hold the pen' to set out the skills, knowledge and behaviours that they expect in their future workforce. For the first time, this allows employers across a sector or a range of sectors to come together and ensure that their future apprentices will have exactly what they need to help their businesses flourish.

Businesses of all sizes are working closely together to design apprenticeship standards. They also consult with their sector to ensure that what they produce meets the needs of employers of all sizes and in every area of the country.

**||** As a former apprentice myself I was delighted to become involved with Trailblazers last year. Together with nine other dedicated employers of all sizes and from a wide area we have been working on setting the new standard. Our collaborative approach has made the process so much easier and rewarding.

Working as a team we have ensured views from all areas of our industry have been considered. The whole process has been rewarding for all of the members involved, many of whom are also former apprentices themselves.

We all appreciate and acknowledge that the apprentices of today will be the industry of the future. It is therefore imperative that we set world class standards for these young people as we have with Trailblazers."

**Robert Moss**  
Head of Mechanical Services, Seddon Construction Ltd

## Open policy making

We are implementing the apprenticeship reforms using 'open policy making'. Open policy making is about better policy making: being open to new ideas, new ways of working, new insights, new evidence and experts.

This means that from the start of this process, we haven't sought to impose a one-size-fits-all approach to the reforms. Instead, we've worked directly with hundreds of employers as they have designed the first new apprenticeship standards.

We have learned a huge amount from these pioneers and adapted the process as a direct result of their experiences - for example, introducing a new simplified template for standards based on their designs and the option to include an apprentice's behaviours within the standard. We will retain this open approach with employers as we continue to implement the reforms.

## Myth busting



**"Employers are happy with the current system and no-one supports the principles of your proposals."**

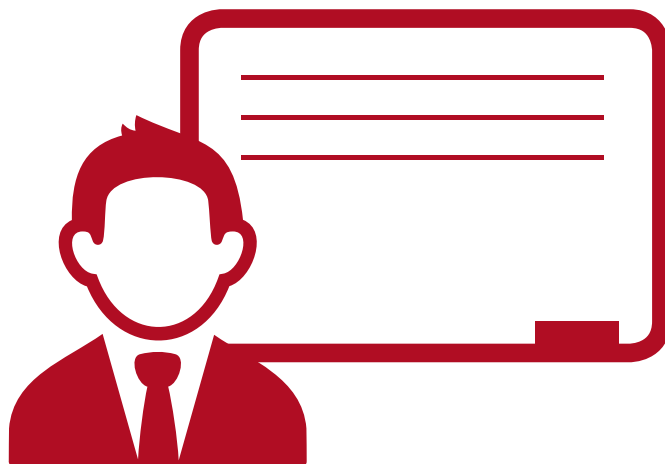
Employers certainly recognise the value of current apprenticeships. These were offered in 20,000 more workplaces last year meaning that over 240,000 workplaces now employ apprentices. But employers are also keen to have more control over the design of apprenticeships and are leading the way through the Trailblazer projects. Over 1000 employers are already

involved. A letter of support for the proposals was published in the Daily Telegraph signed by major employers and employer organisations. These organisations together represent over half a million employers, from the smallest micro businesses to the largest FTSE 100 employers, and represent well over a third of the private sector workforce.

## Small businesses

The majority of our existing apprenticeships are in smaller businesses and we recognise that it is essential that the reforms work for them.

We expect a wide range of employers to be involved in every single Trailblazer, including large employers, their supply chains and small businesses and we look at each Trailblazer group to ensure that it is reflective of their wider sector. We also expect Trailblazers to consult more widely and one of the criteria we have set for approving the apprenticeship standards is proven support from smaller employers.



## Training provider engagement

Providers have a vital role to play in the reform of apprenticeships to ensure that what is delivered meets the needs of employers. At a national level, provider representatives have attended employer workshops and we have loaned officials to the Association of Colleges (AoC) to support engagement with Trailblazers. Many providers have been keen to get involved and AoC along with Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) and University Vocational Awards Council (UVAC) have helped to coordinate input and support from providers to make things as simple as possible for the employer groups.

■ All types of providers are keen to engage with the Trailblazer process. We recognise the terrific work that the employers have been putting in to get things right for their industries and we want to help ensure that what gets delivered truly reflects what they want.

We also need to ensure that the new approach can be easily understood and delivered effectively to a consistently high quality. AoC, AELP and UVAC have been working to ensure that providers are involved in the process, but there is more to do to ensure that all providers feel confident to engage with the new approach to apprenticeship delivery across the array of new standards being developed.

We firmly believe that bringing providers used to working with specific sectors together with the companies engaged in Trailblazers will significantly enhance the delivery of the standards.

We sincerely hope that the employers involved will see the tremendous value of this and enter into a dialogue that will bring employers and providers together in devising deliverable programmes that meet the needs of the sector, the employer and the apprentices."

**Teresa Frith**  
Association of Colleges (AoC)

■ The British Fashion Council is pleased to be able support the Trailblazer programme by calling on businesses within the UK fashion industry to unite and drive apprenticeships that provide real financial and career fulfilment as an alternative to academic university routes into the workplace "

**Simon Ward**  
COO British Fashion Council

## Myth busting



The changes will create a lot more bureaucracy for employers, particularly small employers, and providers will no longer be able to help with recruitment and 'wraparound' services.

This is untrue. It is not our intention to make it more difficult for employers and providers. Training providers will continue to play a vital role in helping employers, especially small businesses, engage with apprenticeships. We will continue to involve

employers of all sizes and training providers in our work to design the new approach, to make sure we get the balance of accountability right and that the new system is as user-friendly as possible for all employers.

## Apprenticeship reform: from standards to starts

Since September 2014, and less than a year after the start of the reforms, employers tell us that more than 300 apprentices have already started on the new standards in the Automotive, Energy and Utility, Life and Industrial Science and Financial Services sectors.



Clea Yeates, 18, is one of 29 recruits chosen from 749 applicants to join UK Power Networks' apprenticeship programme. She is working for the company which distributes electricity supplies across London, the South East and East Anglia. Clea, who is based at Deaconfield Industrial Estate, Guildford, is training to become a cable joiner. She said: "I wanted to be with a good company that had a good reputation and where I would be guaranteed work for life. I studied electrical installations at college but didn't want to remain working on household electrics. I wanted to go bigger. It's always going to be different and the way the company is organised is really professional."

Our apprenticeships are top class, developing the next generation of experts to run our electricity networks. There couldn't be a more exciting time to join the electricity industry, with new technology bringing faster changes in the next 10 years than ever before.

We look for people with a great attitude, keen to serve their communities and critically safety conscious, which is the baseline for the electricity industry. The average age profile of our workforce is now 50-plus so this is an excellent time for young people with new ideas to make their mark. We are one of the few long-term industries where, if you perform well, your future is secure. If you've got talent and you are prepared to work hard, you could have a really promising future with us."

**Patrick Clarke, Director of Network Operations at UK Power Networks**

Toyota Manufacturing UK works closely with small businesses in order for them to take advantage of the company's skill, resource and expertise in the recruitment, training and development of apprentices in their Apprentice Development Centre (ADC). Although many of these come from Toyota's supply chain, others are from local businesses not connected to the automotive industry.

As part of the reform of apprenticeships, Toyota along with other employers and professional bodies, formed the Automotive Trailblazer and in consultation with small businesses developed a standard for an 'Automotive Mechatronic Advanced Apprenticeship' at Level 3. The first apprentices started on this new standard in September 2014.

**Ian Harpham**, Manufacturing Director of Pektron Ltd, one of the small businesses whose apprentices are trained at the Toyota ADC said "Our apprentices have now entered Year 1 of the maintenance apprenticeship. The curriculum is meticulously planned, expertly delivered and completely relevant. On completion of Year 1 our apprentices will re-join Pektron with a comprehensive 'tool kit' of skills that can be moulded and developed over the remaining 2 years of the apprenticeship. They will join our maintenance team as truly multi-skilled Engineers, able to support the future growth of our hi-tech business"

More than

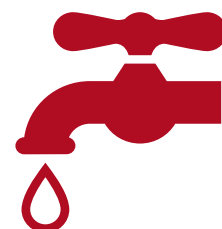
# 300

apprentices have already started on the new standards including the following sectors...



## Automotive

## Energy and Utility



## Life and Industrial Science

# Simplification

## Standards replacing frameworks

The new employer-designed standards are short and easy to understand because they are written by employers. They describe the skills, knowledge and behaviours that an individual needs to be fully competent in an occupation.

Standards are generally two sides long. They act as a 'shop window' for the apprenticeship, providing a specification of what the apprentice needs to be able to demonstrate at the end of their apprenticeship to show that they are a fully competent professional.

There is one new standard per occupation and the standards and assessment plans will replace existing apprenticeship frameworks.

Standards and assessment plans produced by employers and agreed by Government are published at: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards)

### Apprenticeship standard

Gives a short, clear description of the main activities that someone in this occupation would do. Also includes a definitive list of skills, knowledge and behaviours that you as employers would expect from someone who is fully competent in this occupation.

### Assessment plan

Sets out how you would like apprentices to be assessed at the end of their apprenticeship to ensure that they meet your rigorous standard and are fully competent.

There are a number of standards under development in a wide range of occupations. Standards in development can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-in-development>

## Funding

As part of the reforms, we want to give employers control over the funding of apprenticeship training so that they can take on the role of demanding customers and ensure that their company receives the highest quality service in training apprentices against the standard.

We are trialling a simple funding model for apprenticeships based on standards starting in the 2014/15 and 2015/16 academic years. Its key elements are:

- A single government co-investment rate for core funding. This means that for every £1 employers contribute to the external training and assessment costs of an apprenticeship, we will pay £2.
- This will apply up to a clear cap for each standard. There are five caps.
- There will be three additional payments for small businesses with up to 50 employees; for taking on a 16-18 year old apprentice; and for successful completion.

This trial funding system simplifies hundreds of rates down to just a single table.

Having consulted extensively, we are also considering what might be the most effective and non-bureaucratic mechanism for routing Government funding for apprenticeship training to employers.

For every £1 employers contribute to the external training and assessment cost of an apprenticeship

we will pay **£2**





## Quality

One of the central aims of the reforms is to improve the quality of apprenticeships. So far this has been driven through the rigorous employer-led process of developing new standards and assessment plans, and the continued requirement for every apprenticeship to last at least 12 months and to include substantial on and off the job training and at least 20% off the job. The commitment of those employers involved in the trailblazer process to ensuring high quality apprenticeships has also been, and will continue to be, absolutely essential.

New mechanisms such as our Register of Assessment Organisations and Register of Training Providers will help to improve quality further, and more work is underway to consider what else can be put in place to ensure all apprenticeships are high quality in future.

## End point assessment

Every apprenticeship must have an end-point assessment. This tests the apprentices against the standard to confirm whether or not they are fully competent. As with apprenticeship standards, we have given employers and professional bodies a high degree of freedom to set out what should be assessed, how it should be assessed and by who at the end of the apprenticeship to meet the needs of their occupation. It is important to have independence and consistency in the assessment of apprenticeships to ensure recognition and transferability.

Some really innovative approaches to end point assessment have come through the early Trailblazers. This includes involving Professional Bodies or other employers in the end point assessment process, practical trade tests, extended projects, professional interviews or University-style vivas and more.



Being involved in Trailblazers and the process of agreeing standards and assessment plans has been actually quite liberating - not only in the design sense which has been much quicker and efficient than in the past, but in terms of the collaboration with others in the sector to shape something that benefits not just those involved in Trailblazers, but the whole industry and the future of apprentices who work within it.

**Emily Austin**  
Apprentice Lead  
Lloyds Banking Group

## Myth busting

The end point assessment must assess every aspect of the standard.

The end point assessment does NOT have to assess every aspect of the standard. It must be synoptic, assess knowledge

and skills, and assess across the standard, but it is for employers to determine what is assessed in the end point assessment.

## Grading

We have introduced grading to apprenticeships to stretch the most able and to recognise the additional progress that they have made during their apprenticeship. As part of our commitment to 'open policy making', we have developed and simplified the policy on grading throughout the Trailblazer process, listening to what employers have said to us. We now allow employers to make a case for an exemption to grading.



## Professional bodies and professional recognition

We want to ensure that all successful apprentices are fully professionally competent at the end of their apprenticeship. Where professional registration and standards exist, employers are aligning their apprenticeship standards with these.

This means that by completing an apprenticeship, an apprentice will have gained all of the skills and knowledge they need to achieve professional status, giving employers the confidence that their workforce meets these high independent standards.

Trailblazer groups have worked closely with professional bodies throughout the process of designing and developing new apprenticeship standards and assessment plans to ensure that professional recognition is embodied within the process where required in a particular sector.

“ The Professional Engineering Institutions supporting our Aerospace and MRO/Airworthiness Trailblazer Groups have been fantastic supporters of our work. They have played an instrumental part in helping us develop the Standards and ensuring a greater degree of professional rigour in the apprenticeship by aligning full competence to Engineering Technician status in particular for our core level 3 apprenticeship programmes. The employers involved have very much valued their contribution.”

**Richard Hamer**  
Educations Director BAE Systems Plc

“ RICS UK is delighted to be part of the apprenticeship reforms which means for the first time that we will provide degree apprenticeships for trainee surveyors, leading to chartered status (MRICS). Apprentice degrees are being met with huge enthusiasm from the property, land and construction sectors who are well aware of the skills shortage and need for skilled professionals.

The first Chartered Surveying degree apprenticeships will be open to entrants from September 2015 in England. Surveying apprentices will undertake a part-time undergraduate degree and gain in-work experience & training over a period of four to five years.”

**Kim Worts**  
Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Director, UK External Affairs

## Higher and Degree Apprenticeships

We want young people to have the option to choose between equally prestigious routes to a career - University, an apprenticeship or an apprenticeship that includes University. We have a successful and rapidly expanding Higher Apprenticeships programme with employers interested in developing more apprenticeships at higher levels, including in the professions.

Apprenticeship standards are agreed and will soon be ready for delivery for occupations including Professional Accountant, Civil Engineering Site Manager, Software Developer and Solicitor.

“ I have been involved with Trailblazers since March 2014, acting as the Chair for the Law Trailblazer. We are in the process of developing assessment plans for the Solicitor, Chartered Legal Executive and Paralegal standards. It has been a challenging process but worthwhile as standards will provide an alternative to the traditional route into law - opening the doors to a more diverse talent stream entering the profession.”

**Gun Judge**  
Head of Resourcing at Addleshaw Goddard LLP

Degree Apprenticeships are a new model bringing together the best of higher and vocational education, and see apprentices achieving a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of their apprenticeship.

Employers, universities and professional bodies can come together to co-design a fully-integrated degree course specifically for apprentices, which delivers and tests both academic learning and on-the-job training. Alternatively, sectors may wish to use existing degree programmes to deliver the academic knowledge requirements of that profession.

Degree apprenticeships will be available in aerospace, automotive, construction, defence, digital industries, electronic systems, financial services and surveying. With more to be announced in 2015/16.

# How to get involved



We hope that after reading this document you would like get involved by employing an apprentice or working on the development of a new standard.

If you would like to employ an apprentice then please contact the National Apprenticeship Service either by calling



**08000 150 600**

or via the following link:



<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/employer-online-enquiry-form.aspx>

If you would like to join a group already developing a standard or would like to develop a new standard then please see the guidance at:



[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/366063/bis-14-p194b-Guidance-for-developersofapprenticeship-standards-and-relatedassessment-plans.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/366063/bis-14-p194b-Guidance-for-developersofapprenticeship-standards-and-relatedassessment-plans.pdf)





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