

# Apprenticeships for young people

A good practice report

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This report presents some of the common factors that have led to high performance in the work of 15 providers who are extensively involved in delivering apprenticeships to young people. It explains how the providers have successfully recruited young people as apprentices: introducing them to the world of work; supporting them in developing vocational skills and completing their apprenticeship frameworks; and supporting their progression into employment and further study.

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## Executive summary

Apprenticeships have a key role in the government's strategy to develop the skills of the workforce and to promote the growth and rebalancing of the nation's economy. Recent government investment has given priority to helping more young people into work and training through apprenticeships. Of the 457,200 people who began an apprenticeship in 2010–11, just over a quarter (131,700) were under the age of 19.

The government's ambition that all young people will participate in learning up to the age of 18 will rely critically on the sector's expertise in designing and delivering high-quality programmes, including pre-apprenticeships and intermediate and advanced apprenticeships, to engage and meet the needs of these learners and prospective employers.

Between September and November 2011, inspectors visited 15 providers to identify the key features of successful apprenticeship provision. These providers had been judged to be either good or outstanding for their overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection and had a recent history of working well with young people taking apprenticeships. Eight of the providers worked particularly effectively with young people who had not achieved well at school and who had not been engaged in education or training subsequently.

Providers and employers felt that the most important attributes of a potential apprentice were the right attitudes and commitment to employment. This was often viewed as more important than good academic qualifications. Employers welcomed work experience as a way of evaluating young people's work ethic. Young people who had undertaken well-organised work experience, or some form of vocational taster courses while still at school, were more successful in making good progress with their apprenticeship framework than those starting straight from school without such experience.

All the training providers surveyed took time to understand fully the needs of their employers. Providers used initial assessment effectively, not only to identify individual needs for learning support early on, but to support the effective matching of learner to employer. Induction to the requirements of the apprenticeship was thorough and often carried out over an extended period. Younger apprentices appreciated being mentored in the workplace by former or more experienced apprentices as part of their induction.

Good support from the employers in the survey was a common key factor in effectively engaging young people in their training. Employers who had a good understanding of how the apprenticeship programme was being delivered were better placed to help their learners capture a wide range of work-based evidence and link their workplace training to the off-the-job training with the training provider.

Effective training and assessment included teaching young people in small groups; giving them the chance to apply theory to practice quickly; careful planning of assessment in the workplace; and monthly reviews of progress. These approaches

engaged young learners fully in learning and assessment. In many cases, online resources encouraged extra study and meant that learners could more easily catch up if they missed training.

Teachers and assessors were fully conversant with contemporary vocational working practices and expected apprentices to work to exacting standards and at commercial speeds in areas such as bricklaying, catering and hairdressing. They were able to demonstrate practical skills at a high level in ways which not only made young learners see just what could be achieved, but which also reinforced the principle that skills development was mainly down to dedication and practice rather than exceptional innate ability or natural talent.

Assessors' regular pre-arranged visits to the workplace kept young learners on task to achieve their targets. Apprentices generally had one key assessor throughout their training. This encouraged a productive relationship with employers who understood their part in supporting training and assessment. The work of providers in coordinating all components of the apprenticeship, both on and off the job, was most effective when reviews occurred frequently, usually monthly, and were planned at the most appropriate time for the learner and employer. Extra support was put in place quickly for young learners who had begun to slip behind in meeting their planned targets.

The framework components of apprenticeships that were additional to the main national vocational qualification (NVQ), such as employment rights and responsibilities, personal, learning and thinking skills, and key or functional skills, were understood and valued by the young people and their employers. Experienced tutors put key skills and functional skills into context. They made them relevant to employment or everyday life, so improving young people's expertise and confidence, particularly in mathematics. Many apprentices also benefited from gaining extra experience, skills and qualifications which were not required by their frameworks, as part of their apprenticeship training.

The providers and employers visited encouraged progression in employment and in further training. Almost all the young people in the survey were motivated by their experience of training to take more advanced qualifications. However, progression pathways beyond advanced apprenticeships in work-based learning are currently limited, and not all apprentices have a recognised level 4 progression pathway.

Schools, providers and employers have an important role in making sure that young people are well matched to the vocational area and apprenticeship they wish to pursue. Despite the clear benefits of work experience, the employers in the survey said that the number of students they could accommodate on placements was restricted. This was because too many local schools tended to ask for placements during the same short period at the end of the academic year. Although six of the providers in the survey offered work-related learning in vocational areas to 14–16–year-olds through courses such as Young Apprenticeships, funding had largely ceased and fewer schools were taking up the offers of alternative vocational training that the providers were making.

## Key findings

- In the providers visited, young people who had previous experience of vocational training were more successful in making good progress with their apprenticeship framework than those starting straight from school without it.
- Work experience in the area that interested the young person was a recurring theme mentioned by providers, young learners and employers as a positive force in equipping young people with an appropriate work ethic and basic employment skills.
- The negative views of employers in the survey about the ability of some young people to apply for jobs, along with their poor punctuality and timekeeping, were forestalled by the providers working to develop these skills in the young people before they applied for apprenticeships. A small number of the employers complained about the apprentices' poor standard of English and mathematics when they arrived from school, even those with grade C at GCSE.
- All the providers in the survey had improved their initial advice and guidance, including work tasters, to recruit young people into the area of learning that matched their interests. Provided during recruitment events, in interviews or online, this had a positive impact on increasing the completion of frameworks and eventual progression into employment and further training.
- When online applications were included as part of the selection process, many of the young people had not been sufficiently well prepared by their schools to make the best possible application.
- Effective initial assessment had a positive impact on the providers' capacity to put appropriate support in place and secure a more successful match between apprentices and employers.
- Educational statements from schools did not always follow students to their training providers who then had to reassess their needs. Where data were available, apprentices who received learning support had overall success rates as good as their peers.
- Well-planned inductions increased young people's understanding of how they would be trained and assessed, and what would be expected of them in their employment. They particularly liked hearing from former apprentices to whom they could relate and who acted as mentors in two thirds of the providers surveyed.
- The most effective teaching was well planned, engaged learners and enabled them quickly to put into practice what they learnt in theory sessions. The strong vocational backgrounds of the providers' staff together with small group sizes ensured good and sometimes outstanding skills development.
- Flexible training and assessment, including additional workshops, group training at a distance using webcams, and ease of access to online resources, met the needs of employers and apprentices well. Apprentices did not always have to miss training and were often keen to do extra work when resources were readily

available. Assessment was often available almost 'on demand' by employer staff or, when planned with the employers, by the provider's assessors.

- Almost all the providers in the survey provided good training in key and functional skills that improved young people's English and mathematics and was delivered by appropriately qualified staff. The key skills were contextualised to the areas of learning and therefore seen as relevant by the young people and their employers.
- Young people had a good understanding of their employment rights and responsibilities through studying them as part of their apprenticeship. They valued the personal, learning and thinking skills that they were developing, as did their employers.
- Many of the young people gained additional experience, skills and qualifications outside their apprenticeship framework. This added value to their programmes and improved their work skills. Learners and employers particularly valued customer service training.
- Regular contact between provider staff and the employers in the survey focused on reviewing progress, providing constructive feedback and setting new targets to provide work-based evidence, so that apprentices knew what they had to do to continue making good progress.
- Progression into sustained employment and promotion at work were linked by many employers to gaining qualifications. Almost all the young people in the survey were keen to gain more advanced qualifications. Some of the training delivered by employers to their employees who have completed advanced apprenticeships is of an advanced level but does not lead to recognised accredited qualifications.

## Recommendations

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the Department for Education should:

- improve the national availability of careers guidance on post-16 options so that young people can make informed and independent choices about their education and training
- promote clear pathways for young people not engaged in education or employment that lead to apprenticeships
- gather data on the number of young people who apply for an apprenticeship but who are unsuccessful in securing a place
- encourage the development of more recognised progression routes for advanced apprentices such as higher apprenticeships and foundation degrees that meet the needs of employers.

Secondary schools should:

- provide students with a broader range of training and guidance to support applications, particularly where employers require online applications
- improve the local coordination of work experience so that willing employers can respond to more requests for such experience across a wider time frame
- improve the information about learners who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that there is better planning to meet their needs when they leave school and progress into work-based learning.

Providers of apprenticeships should:

- develop pre-apprenticeship programmes with progression routes to apprenticeships for young people who are at risk of not being engaged in education or employment (for example, as part of Foundation Learning programmes or 14–16 links with schools)
- continue to improve the promotion of apprenticeship training to under-represented groups, particularly by ensuring that young people encounter effective role models in promotional materials and when they meet the providers' staff
- develop more effective ways of sharing good practice in teaching and assessing young people undertaking work-based learning
- encourage monthly rather than quarterly reviews of their young learners with their employers in the workplace so that they are kept on target to succeed.

## Features of effective practice

### Effective recruitment and guidance

1. The ways in which young people were recruited to apprenticeships varied, depending on the type of provider and the vocational area. Young people in employment were recruited to an apprenticeship directly by their employer or by a training provider, or through a combination of these methods. Where training providers recruited young people who did not have a job, they were provided with work experience and helped to prepare for job interviews.
2. Few of the providers surveyed set prohibitively high entry requirements. Most of the providers or employers did not see pre-entry qualifications such as GCSEs as a deciding factor in choosing applicants. They attached greater importance to a young person's attitude and commitment to employment. A director of one training provider said:

'Our best learners are often those who are not particularly academic and did not do well at school – here they find an environment where they are treated as individuals and are valued for what they can do, not for what they can't do.'



3. Employers saw successful work experience at school as an important factor. In the most effective work experience, there were clear expectations of students' involvement in useful work and a requirement for them to complete workbooks that set targets. The hairdressing company Sassoon attracted half of its annual recruits through work experience.
4. However, because most schools in an area select the same weeks for Year 10 students to undertake work experience (because of restrictions caused by dates for modules of GCSE examinations), the numbers that employers can accommodate in the more popular vocational areas are limited. Young people who completed their work experience in their preferred area valued it highly. Those who had to make do with a placement in an area in which they had not expressed an interest were often negative about the experience. Many in this group felt that it had been left to them to find an employer as their schools had limited contacts. One headteacher felt that she was competing directly for placements with other nearby schools.
5. Work placements, trials or taster days had been a success with some employers and providers. These varied from placements alongside an employer-based apprentice, to 'hands on' tasters of a day's training, usually focusing on interesting, practical activities. A childcare employer who used placements said:
 

'All apprentices have to do a placement before they are recruited. This gives me the opportunity to see how they work and their attitude. I can also set out what I expect from them as an apprentice and employee. The apprentice can ask questions and consider if the setting is right for them.'
6. Some employers used group recruitment events, followed by individual interviews. Several employers reported that although many young people had been given interview practice, they still found it difficult to describe why they wanted to work in particular industries. Examples of careers events involving job application techniques were given, usually run by individual schools, with representatives from employers and providers engaged in mock interviews. Young people who had experienced these events valued getting face-to-face advice from an employer. They also valued large careers events with representatives from a range of employers and post-16 training providers, especially when they had not decided what they wanted to do on leaving school. Such events, however, had not been available to all the young people interviewed as part of this survey.
7. Employers who had large numbers of applicants were making greater use of online applications, sometimes with sophisticated inbuilt safeguards that indicated whether a young person (rather than an adult) had completed the application. Employers felt that some potentially good apprentices did not get through this initial sifting because their schools had not prepared them for this type of application. They knew how to write a CV but they responded to online questions poorly as they felt pressured and unsure how to answer.

8. Providers were investing in improving the recruitment of young people. Twelve of those surveyed were employing or training staff who specialised in recruitment and were qualified to a minimum of level 3 in advice and guidance, with many achieving or working towards level 4. Providers felt that impartial advice and guidance helped the overall retention of young people on their apprenticeships.
9. Inspectors found several examples of providers who were engaging with young people at school as early as Years 8 and 9 to stimulate interest in work-based learning. Inviting them subsequently to open days and sending them newsletters kept these young people interested. Cornwall College offered tractor driving courses and then maintained contact with young people until they left school.
10. Four providers reported that young people were deciding on their post-16 options and making applications at an earlier stage than hitherto. This indicated young people's earlier research and their awareness of competition for apprenticeship places, as well as the perceived value of securing a job that involved recognised training.
11. Almost every young person interviewed during the survey said that the internet was their first step in finding information and researching potential employers and apprenticeships. The majority of the providers surveyed had dedicated web pages illustrating what they offered, including up-to-date case studies of successful apprentices and links to external sites such as the National Apprenticeship Service. One college had uploaded a video entitled 'The Apprenticeship – A Team' to YouTube and had had several thousand hits.
12. Providers' promotional literature or their websites used case studies of successful apprentices effectively to attract potential applicants. These included apprentices from under-represented groups. The best case studies were those where the language used was suited to a younger audience and featured photographs of apprentices at work. Successful apprentices, particularly from groups under-represented in training, also acted as ambassadors for training providers during school visits and careers events.
13. Training providers were skilled in matching applicants to employers' apprenticeship vacancies. Examples included:
  - dyslexic learners being placed with supportive employers who had previous experience of supporting such learners
  - smaller employers who wanted to help learners from disadvantaged backgrounds taking on young people because of their established relationship with a provider whose evaluations of young people were trusted
  - placing young people with employers where they could commute easily; this was important in avoiding the demotivating effects of long travel times and excessive costs, particularly in rural areas.

14. On a number of occasions inspectors saw the successful recruitment of under-represented groups in particular vocational areas. Examples included men and Asian apprentices in hairdressing, and women in engineering. Although a range of approaches was used to engage young people from under-represented groups while they were still at school, the major successes came when role models were visible, such as male stylists in hair salons, young women on engineering apprenticeships, and Asian tutors and assessors working in training centres.
15. Many young people reported that they had taken some time to find either a suitable employer or apprenticeship place. Many had researched vacancies online using the National Apprenticeship Vacancy Service. However, in some rural areas, such as Cornwall, the service often had over 20 applicants for one job, with 60 being the record. Insufficient information is available to identify how many young people fail to find suitable employers and apprenticeships.
16. Many of the young people interviewed in the survey, particularly those who had little idea of what they wanted to do after Year 11, said the advice and guidance they had received from their schools were unsatisfactory. Although they wanted to leave school and gain employment, few felt that they had been given information about what was available – other than staying at school or going to a college. Most of these young people conducted their own research online or were helped by their parents or guardians.
17. Inspectors came across several examples of bright young people feeling that they had been derided by their teachers for wanting to progress to work-based learning, particularly in care or hairdressing, rather than to stay on at school. One very skilled hairdressing apprentice related how, on excitedly telling her headteacher that she had got an apprenticeship with Sassoon, she was allegedly told: 'Why on earth do you want to waste your time doing that?'
18. The following examples illustrate successful but different approaches to recruitment by providers in the survey. The first illustrates an effective recruitment and selection process for young people which starts at school and takes place over a long period, ensuring that new apprentices are suited to the industry they are entering:

Fareport Training's hairdressing provision had excellent recruitment processes. Trainers met apprentices at least five times before they started their programme. Trainers and past apprentices began by holding presentations in schools and taster days for Year 9 pupils, who were encouraged to apply for their apprenticeship at this early stage. Trainers contacted the pupils again in Year 10 to see if they were still interested and asked them to apply early for their apprenticeship. Once they had received the application form, trainers started the four-stage recruitment process which took place between February and July:

- Stage 1: potential apprentices attended a mini interview where their potential grades, future career and motivation were discussed.
- Stage 2: they attended a preparation and selection for employment day which included teambuilding, an analysis of the type of salon they would like to work in through creating a mood board, and how to create a good impression at interview. Potential applicants' aptitude for hairdressing was also tested by asking them to use a block and put the hair into rollers. The day was also designed to ensure that potential apprentices had a realistic view of the industry.
- Stage 3: the trainers met to discuss each applicant and their suitability for the apprenticeship. Successful applicants received details of the hairdressing salons that the provider had links with that were recruiting and also met their requirements for an ideal salon to work in.
- Stage 4: successful applicants were generally given Saturday or holiday work over the summer to give them a taste of the industry. They were then invited to attend evening workshops held by the provider.

Fareport Training knew that this process worked well. The training manager commented: 'Around 90% of applicants who attend the preparation and selection for employment day start the apprenticeship. Once apprentices start their programme, they nearly all tend to stay and be successful.'

19. Another provider used existing apprentices as role models to substantially increase the number of young women starting engineering apprenticeships:

GENII had been very successful in increasing the number of young women starting its engineering apprenticeships. A targeted recruitment campaign began in 2008–09 to increase applications from women. The provider used a focus group of women apprentices to find out what had attracted them to engineering, the barriers they may have faced and their views on how GENII might encourage more women to apply. The apprentices felt it was important to avoid the stereotype of engineering as a job needing physical strength. Posters were produced using current apprentices on the theme of 'Charlie's Engineers' – Charlie being the name of one female apprentice and the title being taken from a popular film. Posters showed three young women at work and in more familiar environments. Over 100 posters were distributed to post offices, hair salons, beauty salons, doctors' surgeries and clothing shops. The local TV and press picked up on the campaign, giving it strong media coverage. Case studies of women engineers and apprentices were made available on the website – the main recruitment portal for GENII.

The provider realised that a single push would not be sufficient and has persisted in promoting apprenticeships for women positively. The campaign initially produced a 28% increase in the number of applications

from women, and a steady increase in the number of women apprentices. Currently 15% of GENII's engineering apprentices are women, compared with the national average of around 2%.

20. Another provider engaged with its employers every summer through a well-attended event that helped to find suitable employers to take on young people:

Crackerjack held a very successful event every June, since this was the time when nursery managers were considering their staffing levels for the following September. Held at a local hotel, it attracted 40–50 childcare employers each year. Crackerjack promoted its apprenticeship programme and particularly the young apprentices who were seeking employment or a placement. The event gave employers the opportunity to tell Crackerjack of any changes to their business needs and Crackerjack updated the employers about changes to frameworks, funding requirements and legislation; this updating included specialist speakers. Employers networked and shared information.

A nursery manager who was also a work-based assessor said: 'I always attend the employer engagement events as they help me to keep up to date. I am able to find out more about apprenticeships and Crackerjack's expectations, including about recruitment of apprentices for the next year.'

21. Another provider established an apprenticeship programme in a rural area with high unemployment where young people were recruited to learn skills that were in danger of dying out and which traditionally had been passed down through generations of families:

Cornwall College had strong employer engagement. A 2006 survey of hill farming on Dartmoor found a lack of skilled labour coming into farming on the moor. If this trend continued, the experience and knowledge held within the ageing farming population would be lost. A key conclusion was that an apprenticeship programme could provide a solution by training young people in these vanishing skills. The Moorskills Apprenticeship Partnership emerged. The main partners were the farmers, the College, Dartmoor National Park Authority (Hill Farm Project), the Duchy of Cornwall, Dartmoor Commoners' Council and localised Commoner Associations. Each partner brought its own expertise which contributed to the project's overall quality and impact.

Through dialogue with the farm owners, a unique apprenticeship programme was created, resulting in the formation of the company Moorskills Farming Project Ltd. Individual farmers had insufficient regular work to justify employing one person. However, the Moorskills umbrella company enabled 10 farmers to become directors of the company and to employ five to eight apprentices in one cohort as they worked on a rota

system around the farms. In this way, the underemployment barrier was overcome and new job opportunities were created.

Eighteen of the 20 apprentices so far have continued with substantive employment, 14 of them on Dartmoor farms. The concept of creating a company to share labour is a principle that could be mirrored in other industries. One apprentice said: 'Not coming from a farming family, the Moorskills programme gave me an entry route into agriculture. I love working on the moor and enjoy the variety of jobs; no two days are the same. I learned a huge amount during the apprenticeship and working for a number of different farmers was really good.'

## Introductory programmes

22. Ten of the providers surveyed had pre-apprenticeship courses; these could be school link or foundation courses. Progression to apprenticeships from these varied from 15% to 82% in the providers surveyed; typically, around half progressed. This variation often reflected the course undertaken, with better progression where students had a definite interest in the vocational area they were following rather than being involved in general vocational education as an alternative to attending school.
23. The young people surveyed who attended these courses reported almost universally that they valued the experience. Providers' statistics showed that those who progressed succeeded well on apprenticeships. However, providers noted that opportunities for young people to experience such courses were reducing as changes to funding were leading schools to restrict numbers. Funding offered by three providers for Young Apprenticeship programmes was in its final year.
24. Examples of pre-16 courses seen in the survey were often for a discrete group of students, such as Travellers, or excluded students who had become disengaged with traditional school learning. Eight of the providers surveyed had been particularly successful in engaging young people who, for a variety of reasons, had not made a successful transition at age 16 to employment or participation in any form of education or training. This is a large and challenging group to work with. Six of the providers saw their pre-apprenticeship programmes as an opportunity to diversify the group of apprentices they worked with, as many of these young learners had had very little experience of academic success, had not attended school regularly, had low self-esteem and had sometimes been involved in a gang culture which instilled negative attitudes towards work. Most courses were for foundation learners targeted by the provider to progress to particular apprenticeships. Provider staff saw the right work experience as valuable in helping learners develop work skills and understand the vocational area. Both colleges in the sample were good at promoting progression to apprenticeships to young learners who had taken full-time college courses for a year after leaving school.

25. The pre-apprenticeship programmes that successfully engaged young people who were not in employment, education or training had a number of common features. They:
- employed staff who had a good understanding of young people; for example parents of children with a similar background to the learners, those with an interest in youth work, and ex-learners who had progressed and wanted to help others
  - ensured regular and routine contact with parents and carers, particularly at the start of training
  - set ground rules, agreed with the group at an early stage, that encouraged a work ethic by developing employability skills
  - provided work tasters that showed young people what it was really like to work in a particular trade or type of work, as well as developing confidence and basic work skills such as being punctual
  - engaged with supportive employers who not only wished to employ young people themselves but who also wanted to help others step on to the work ladder – very often, successful work experience led an employer to employ and support the young person through their apprenticeship
  - provided role models who could talk to young people in their own language and who understood the potential barriers to employment and training that they faced
  - provided training that closely reflected the work-based model that the young people would encounter in their apprenticeships.
26. The following examples illustrate successful approaches to engaging young people in work-based learning. In the first example the provider developed work-related skills and attributes with young people before and during the early stages of apprenticeships:

City Gateway promoted progression to apprenticeships as a key part of its Foundation Learning and pre-apprenticeship programmes. During the first week of their programme, learners were introduced to the 'job ready profile', which listed six key expectations in order for them to be employed. These were developed using feedback from employers, apprentices and staff to ensure that they were the most relevant attributes for an apprentice. The profile appeared in every classroom and teachers constantly reviewed the six principles:

- 1) Be presentable: appropriately dressed and clean, with attention to your personal hygiene
- 2) Be cooperative: capable of taking instructions and working with other staff or managers
- 3) Be communicative: an attentive listener who speaks clearly and effectively

- 4) Be responsible: reliable, honest and able to build professional relationships
- 5) Be dedicated: hard-working and able to deliver work to targets and deadlines
- 6) Be teachable: able to cope positively with change and challenges – to constructively evaluate work and be willing to train in new skills.

When learners progressed to an apprenticeship, they had an appraisal every six to 12 weeks with their manager and the City Gateway employment progression worker. This was linked effectively to the 'job ready profile' to gauge how successfully apprentices were developing their work-related skills and attributes. As part of the process, apprentices assessed their own performance and this was compared with their manager's assessment. It provided a good learning experience as many young apprentices found self-evaluation difficult and often did not respond well to negative feedback. Employers welcomed the approach as it enabled a frank discussion to take place and, for those new to hiring apprentices, it gave them coaching in how to manage young people more effectively.

One apprentice said: 'I have developed good communication and people skills which have prepared me well for work.'

27. The same provider supported young people into employment by acting as a recruitment broker between apprentices and the employer:

Most of City Gateway's learners faced multiple barriers to employment which could make it difficult for them to gain work. Over the previous two years, it had developed a new approach to working with employers. It employed the apprentice on a contract for their apprenticeship and acted as a temporary recruitment agency to match the apprentice with an employer. Employers valued this flexibility as they were not tied into a long-term contract with the apprentice. However, many employers took on apprentices permanently at the end of their apprenticeship. The arrangement also had additional benefits for the employer as they were invoiced by City Gateway for the costs incurred; City Gateway provided human resources, payroll and finance services, and paid the apprentice. If an employer had concerns about the apprentice's work or attitude, City Gateway's employment progression workers visited the workplace and dealt directly with the apprentice. They were able to supplement the employer's support with coaching and mentoring for apprentices. The arrangement also enabled apprentices to have more flexible employment, as they might spend only part of their week with each host employer.

A sports advanced apprentice explained how this approach worked for him: 'I wanted to do an apprenticeship in sport, had applied to different providers but not been taken on. City Gateway focused on me, rather than my lack of experience. They developed me to get a placement which has led me to full-time work as a fitness instructor.'



28. Eight of the providers in the survey ran Foundation Learning programmes that led to employment as apprentices for many young people:

A particular strength of PSC Training and Development Ltd (PSC) was in recruiting apprentices who were low achievers or from disadvantaged backgrounds. The provider worked hard to understand learners' needs – often multiple challenges such as poor communication, low achievement, low self-esteem and behavioural issues. These learners started on a Foundation Learning programme with a clear intention of moving to an apprenticeship. PSC was able to evaluate learners' needs clearly, make effective arrangements to support them and worked hard to help them progress. They tended to avoid formal interviews and used work trials to match apprentices and employers carefully before committing to a full apprenticeship. All job opportunities were internally advertised to full-time Foundation Learning programme learners and tutors actively promoted apprenticeships to those who were ready to progress. Around a third of PSC apprentices had progressed from their Foundation Learning programme.

29. A North London provider was very successful in working with disaffected local young people and helping them progress to apprenticeships:

Enfield Training Services ran a Motive8 training programme, funded by the council's Working Neighbourhood fund. The programme was targeted at young people who were less likely to be engaged in learning, including youth offenders, gang members and looked after children. Learners might also have limited qualifications, lack direction and be unready for work.

Motive8 was designed to provide a flexible programme so that no one would be excluded because of their educational history. The programme supported changes in attitudes and behaviour, including conflict and anger management as well as drug and alcohol awareness. Young men with behavioural difficulties were taught by mentors who were ex-offenders themselves. They were shown how to meditate and control their emotions. Other aspects of lifestyle and attitude change were tackled through partnerships with local organisations that were more experienced in tackling gang, knife and gun crime.

Around 60 young people participated in Motive8 interventions and their destinations included short-term employment, further education, apprenticeships and Foundation Learning programmes. One participant who had successfully progressed to an apprenticeship said: 'I can really see a way forward with my life now. Two years ago I was involved in all sorts, now I am turning everything around and am in control.'

30. The following example illustrates the positive impact of supporting young apprentices by regular and routine contact with their parents and carers, particularly at the start of training:

Crackerjack believed that it was important to involve the parents and carers of young people throughout the apprentices' programmes but particularly in the case of those making the transition from school to work-based learning. Early taster days held at Crackerjack's training centre or at regional venues gave parents and carers a good insight into what the apprentices would be doing and the expectations of the apprenticeship programme. The managing director often held individual and group meetings with parents and carers and found that this was particularly helpful in managing apprentices who were not attending regularly, not making good progress or had poor behaviour. As a result, parents, carers and other relatives felt at ease in contacting Crackerjack's managing director when they had questions about the programme, for example when apprentices were asked to work different shifts or were under threat of redundancy.

Crackerjack's managing director said: 'I firmly believe that working with parents is a partnership that helps our young apprentices to achieve. It is important to get parents on board as it's a big change going from a school environment with set timetables to an apprenticeship delivered in the workplace.'

## **Induction into the workplace and the apprenticeship framework**

31. The vast majority of the young people interviewed during the survey described what they thought they had gained from their inductions in terms of their understanding of how they would be trained and what would be expected of them in employment. Induction lasted usually a minimum of two days but, in several cases, extended over a period of months. Although the inductions were very different, each induction had aspects that worked well with young people. The young people commented favourably on the following elements.
- Coverage of career progression in terms of employment and future education was helpful. Young people particularly liked meeting or hearing from previous apprentices to whom they could relate and who acted as models of what was possible.
  - Many young people were not familiar with NVQ structures and evidence requirements. Explanations of the structure of the apprenticeship framework with clear reasons for the different components being included were helpful, related to how they would help performance at work. Exercises with 'skeleton' portfolios really helped young people's understanding of what would be required and how to provide evidence for it.
  - Young people valued having members of staff as mentors. This role was particularly important in the first few months as young people built up their

confidence. They often used the mentor when they were unsure about whom to approach to get the right work examples.

- The use of buddies was seen more with employers where current, experienced apprentices, or those who had recently completed their apprenticeship frameworks, were able to answer questions related to work or training.
  - A variety of good-quality handbooks, which were also shared with employers, explained the programme in detail. Many required completion of sections as induction progressed and some included assessment through tests.
  - Learners with three of the providers surveyed received a certificate for completing their inductions successfully which they liked, feeling that it brought the induction to an end.
  - Early meetings between the training provider, employers and apprentices to define the job role and select relevant and appropriate NVQ units were less frequently seen as an induction activity, but were effective in linking provider and employer inductions.
  - One provider used a pre-induction day to cover all the registration paperwork and the issue of personal protective equipment, as it felt that this separated the necessary 'dull aspects' from the main induction. This went down well with young people.
  - Several providers dealt with pastoral subjects such as healthy eating, safe working, and drug and alcohol awareness within induction using interactive activities.
  - Teamwork was encouraged through ice-breaking activities. Many young people said they had been apprehensive about taking part, but eventually enjoyed them. Their self-confidence grew as a result.
  - Health and safety training was often a major part of induction, using assignments that related it to the workplace.
  - Most of the providers covered training in equality and diversity well, particularly harassment and bullying. Video and examples of real incidents from the workplace made such training very memorable for the young people.
32. Inspectors saw an example of a particularly effective block of training as an induction to prepare young people for the workplace:

Herefordshire Primary Care Trust operated an intensive, one-month induction for all new apprentices. They got to know each other and the staff well through the usual ice-breakers but also through a whole-day teambuilding activity on the fourth day. Induction covered the content of their programme, working in the care sector, customer service, and roles and responsibilities. Apprentices identified their career aspirations and what they needed to do to achieve their goals. They created their

individual learner record to plan their career path, what qualifications they needed and a timescale for achieving these. The plan was revisited frequently during reviews, being updated and revised as necessary.

The apprentices completed all their additional mandatory training during induction, so they had all the required training before their first placement. They covered moving and handling, infection control, dementia awareness, diet and nutrition, assisting patients to eat and drink, maintaining fluid balance, food hygiene, and health and safety.

The apprentices felt fully prepared to start working on hospital wards and felt part of a team. Two said: 'It was good to do four weeks at the start. I learnt a lot and didn't feel so nervous when I went on my first placement.'

'I definitely felt prepared for the wards, a lot more than if we had gone out after just one week.'

33. Twelve of the providers extended induction over a number of weeks. In the following example, the employer carried out its own training:

Sassoon planned a 16-week induction. The first week was an intensive introduction which, as a result of feedback from apprentices, had moved away from being classroom based and was now a one-day group activity.

Induction involved both buddying and mentoring. The mentor, a senior team member, was charged beyond induction and throughout the apprenticeship with supporting the development of different skills. The buddy was an experienced assistant who knew what it was like to begin work in the salon. These roles were considered essential in supporting young people.

Induction included career development lectures in the salons with a focus on Sassoon, the industry and life skills (alcohol, smoking, drugs, healthy eating, etc). One apprentice said: 'The career development lectures were great and really opened my eyes to the variety of different things that are available in the industry.'

34. One provider found that young people responded well to following a set of rules for training that they had helped to develop. This worked particularly well with younger learners who valued being consulted on what was expected and how they would be trained:

Towards the end of their two-day induction for each group at PH Academy, tutors introduced a mind-map activity to apprentices. Producing a group charter set the ground rules for training. This would be used to help them achieve their qualification. It also helped to structure and reinforce some of the key messages and expectations about health and safety, attendance, employment and targets during induction. The charter was agreed and signed by all the apprentices in the group and their tutor.

Tutors used it during lessons to remind apprentices about their responsibilities and during the termly course reviews of their targets.

As the year progressed, the charter gained in impact as the apprentices used peer support and, at times, pressure to help the whole group to achieve. PH Academy's tutors say the charter has had an unexpected benefit as instances of bullying and harassment have fallen over the last two years.

One apprentice said: 'There is a really big difference in the attitude of the staff here compared to when I was at school. I can see that my training is really important to them and that they just want to help me to succeed. You follow the rules when you have helped make them.'

## **Work-based learning for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities**

35. Although none of the providers in the survey was a specialist in providing work-based learning for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they all gave examples of how they had met the particular needs of individuals.
36. All the providers carried out comprehensive initial assessments of apprentices' learning needs. Provider staff usually followed up the initial assessment with individual interviews. Learners often self-declare their learning disabilities and some were reluctant to make these known, either because of previous negative experiences or an unfounded fear that making their needs known would have an impact on their chance to be an apprentice. Providers rarely received a completed learning difficulty assessment from an apprentice's former school or local authority.
37. The support given was well planned between assessors, support tutors, the apprentice and their employer. Most of the providers increased the frequency of assessor visits to apprentices who had learning difficulties to help them maintain their rate of progress. Links with external specialist support agencies were generally well developed and led to improvements for learners, for example, securing an induction loop for an apprentice with a severe hearing problem. Often, individual members of provider staff acted as 'champions' for conditions such as dyslexia and were able to give their colleagues detailed guidance. The two colleges in the survey had especially well-developed support structures, including adaptive technologies such as specialist computer hardware and voice recognition software. They supported large numbers of apprentices well.
38. Seven of the independent training providers routinely had a high tutor to apprentice ratio at off-the-job training (between 1:4 and 1:6), enabling them to give good individual help when it was needed. Apprentices with one of the care providers alternated their weekly off-the-job training between group and individual targeted support sessions at the company's head office. Another independent training provider, by making resources available to the whole

group, ensured that apprentices needing support were not singled out. For example, if coloured paper was used for an apprentice with dyslexia, everyone used it. When adaptive technology was used, the whole group could access it.

39. The providers surveyed tended to get to know employers who were good at supporting apprentices with disabilities or those who had learning difficulties and placed apprentices with them. Inspectors found examples of employers who regularly took on apprentices who had additional learning or social needs or provided short-term placements while they were trying to secure a full-time position. One independent training provider had sought employers with links to specific disabilities; currently it had a partially sighted apprentice who was working for the Royal National College for the Blind. The colleges employed specialist liaison staff to work with their employers.
40. The success rates of apprentices who had learning difficulties and/or disabilities were, with one exception, above national rates and often above the high rates of the good and outstanding providers in the survey.
41. One college had successfully supported a learner who had cerebral palsy to undertake an apprenticeship:

A young man had had an interest in electrical engineering since secondary school and so he enrolled on an electrical course at Barnsley College after his GCSEs. When he had completed the course he was unsure about his career path, but knew he wanted to be involved in the industry. He heard that there were vacancies with Barnsley College's Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) and applied for a job to gain work experience and qualifications. He was apprehensive when he reached the interview stage because his cerebral palsy resulted in limited movement in his right arm and leg. He was thrilled to be successful and started his apprenticeship working as a technician for the engineering department at Barnsley College. Duties included fixing electrical hand tools, building test boards and checking that the workshops were safe.

He said: 'My disability hasn't stopped me and I am treated exactly the same as other students and staff members. I sometimes find it hard to do some of my jobs because two hands are needed. However, I can ask one of the other technicians or tutors to help me.'

42. One of the providers surveyed successfully supported a profoundly deaf learner on an apprenticeship:

WEBS Training Ltd was particularly responsive to a profoundly deaf learner who applied for an apprenticeship in wood machining. Deaf since birth, he had a cochlear implant as a child which helped him detect sound. He was able to lip read and sign. WEBS's officer for additional support and the learner's instructor attended training to help them understand the needs of profoundly deaf learners. They quickly realised that the learner

would have difficulty simultaneously lip reading and watching demonstrations in a noisy workshop environment. WEBS decided to take the learner as an apprentice and find ways to support him. For example, visual alarms were added to the fire alarm and other systems. Staff attended a course in sign language to provide further support and the learner himself helped staff to learn. The instructor made sure that demonstrations were managed so that the apprentice did not miss any instructions – mainly by ensuring that he was facing the apprentice directly when he spoke and not expecting him to lip read and watch a practical demonstration at the same time.

Achieving key skills in communication was more challenging for him than the staff originally thought. The apprentice's first language was sign language – English was an additional language – and much of the grammar and many of the connectives in English are not present in sign language. The learner chose to cover the requirement to make a presentation by teaching his fellow apprentices sign language. This enabled them to communicate better with him and helped to integrate him into the group. WEBS training identified an employer to take him on and continue his apprenticeship. He completed this and progressed to an advanced apprenticeship. Afterwards, the employer took him on as a permanent member of staff.

43. Many providers were good at helping young learners who had learning disabilities to progress to apprenticeships, where they were supported to achieve. The following is an example:

One apprentice had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and dyslexia. He had struggled at school, was excluded and attended a pupil referral unit. He began working for two days a week and his employer, impressed with his practical skills and positive attitude to work, contacted GENII to ask if they could support him through an apprenticeship. He undertook the usual recruitment assessments, with appropriate allowances being made for his dyslexia. He was accepted for a fabrication apprenticeship and support was planned to help him succeed; this included using his statement of learning needs from school. He was given a lot of support with his theory work; instructors helped him to read questions and explained them. GENII made arrangements with the awarding body for extra time, a reader and a scribe for written examinations. His employer provided extra study time for his theory work. He successfully completed his NVQ at level 2, functional skills at level 1 and an intermediate technical certificate. He is now working on his advanced apprenticeship and has just passed his first level 3 examination.

He said: 'I had to do the written side of things to get an apprenticeship but I got help with it so it wasn't too bad. My instructor helped me to read through the questions. I've now completed my NVQ at level 2 in fabrication. If anyone like me is thinking of applying for an apprenticeship, I'd tell them to do it – you get a lot of help.'

44. Severe illness can sometimes have a serious impact on apprentices' access to their training. One provider, rather than requesting a suspension of training from the funding body, used its information learning technology to allow a learner to continue:

An apprentice who had cancer was not always able to visit the training centre for off-the-job training. The training provider used an online programme that enabled the apprentice to have remote access to group and individual learning sessions and to take part in discussions and presentations electronically. Documents and presentations were shown to the apprentice at the same time as the group, and the apprentice could ask, and be asked, questions to develop the theory learning.

## Teaching, learning and assessment

45. Although certain principles of good teaching, learning and assessment apply to learners regardless of their age, inspectors identified features that worked particularly well with younger apprentices. The following examples relate to teaching and learning.
- Understanding a 'route map' of what would be involved in completing a full apprenticeship framework, with clear timescales, was particularly important to young people. Those who understood the links between qualifications and where they could lead in the future were motivated and understood their progress well. These young apprentices spoke eloquently not only about progression into future training but about wider work opportunities and promotion.
  - Providers who had tried different delivery models described the clear benefits of putting theory into practice as soon as possible with younger apprentices.
  - It was important to ensure that practical vocational training was clearly linked to work, so that young apprentices could see the benefits and purposes of the practical training in preparing them for their employment.
  - Teachers' demonstration of practical skills at a high level not only helped young apprentices to see what could be achieved but also reinforced the principle that skills development was mainly about dedication and practice rather than exceptional innate ability or natural talent.
  - Teachers' simulations helped to develop skills in contemporary workplace practices and at commercial speeds. Teachers were well qualified and many still worked part-time in industry or undertook work placements to update themselves.
  - Effective teaching gave clear guidance on what should be achieved as a minimum while providing opportunities for some apprentices to achieve more if they could (differentiation).



- A variety of activities was important to young apprentices but this did not require state of the art facilities to work well. Carefully selected free video clips from video-hosting sites were a feature of several examples of teaching that apprentices liked. Later, they accessed further clips on their smartphones or on computers at home.
- Learning was made fun by involving apprentices in role play, quizzes, games and activities. Learning was checked in ways that encouraged answers from all apprentices, even if they were not totally correct. This information was then used to provide additional learning support.
- Problem-solving approaches, where young apprentices were not routinely shown how to undertake all activities but were coached to find things out and learn for themselves, improved their experience in theory lessons.
- Small groups were particularly valued by learners in both theory and practical training activities because young apprentices who lacked confidence did not become hidden in a large group. A number of young apprentices who had spent time in larger groups on traditional college vocational courses said that the way the apprenticeship was being delivered gave them more confidence.
- Linking key or functional skills training to the area of learning being studied meant that young apprentices did not view it as more of the same 'English and maths' they had studied at school and could see the real benefits of improving these skills. Those who had not done well at school said that they could see the point of mathematics in particular when they would be using it as part of their jobs.
- Feedback, whether oral or written, was clear and focused on supporting improvement.
- Many of the young apprentices who were interviewed during the survey felt that their teachers and assessors really understood them and cared about their progress. Sympathetic and experienced staff knew the kinds of problems that young apprentices might have encountered from having found learning difficult as teenagers themselves; from understanding the possible problems of the area being studied; or having themselves come from backgrounds where expectations of achievement were low.
- Thirteen of the providers had easy to use and accessible virtual learning environments. Young apprentices liked these, particularly for extra work, revision, or to catch up on missed training. They often used their smartphones to access materials and upload assessment evidence.
- While young apprentices particularly liked both commercial and provider-produced resources for extra revision, face-to-face contact with a teacher was still important to most of them.

46. Inspectors identified the following common features of effective assessment.
- Prioritising early achievements (of individual NVQ units, key or functional skills and employment rights and responsibilities) motivated young apprentices, particularly those who had not been high achievers at school. They had a real sense of pride in gaining certificates or knowing that their progress was good.
  - Young apprentices liked to collect assessment evidence using technology such as still and video cameras on phones and used this inventively. They felt able to collect evidence that really showed how and what they did in the workplace.
  - The variety of assessment methods helped to motivate younger apprentices; for example, by allowing apprentices to present evidence in the form of audio or video recordings.
  - Young apprentices had a real sense of pride in producing good-quality portfolios with varied evidence, including witness testimonies, examples of work products, records of professional discussions, and well-written and detailed observations from assessors.
  - Electronic portfolios were used effectively and were liked by the minority of apprentices in the survey who used them. However, providers were cautious about using them while awarding bodies were still developing software.
  - Having assessors available to young apprentices in the workplace was important in timely assessment. Employers who had staff who were also assessors meant that assessment was available almost on demand.
  - Assessors were usually readily available by text, email or by telephone to help with assessment queries and personal problems. Apprentices felt supported in between visits to the workplace or between off-the-job training sessions.
  - Where assessment was particularly good, visits to the workplace were well planned, learners were fully prepared as they knew what was expected, employer staff were available and all parties made the most of assessment opportunities. Assessors' written feedback was usually detailed and very thorough with clear guidance on what apprentices needed to do to improve.
  - Target-setting was usually carried out with the apprentice and the employer in the workplace, covering a period of between two and six weeks. This helped to ensure that young apprentices were not demotivated by targets that took too long to complete.
  - Apprentices often said that they were motivated by the feeling of achievement as they 'closed down' NVQ units. Young apprentices particularly liked knowing how far they were through their NVQ and framework expressed as a percentage. Being 74% of the way through, for example, was a clear statement of progress; it meant more to them than knowing they had fully completed three out of eight NVQ units with partial completion of four other units. Five of the providers used this approach.

47. The following example illustrates how the design of a programme can help apprentices to progress and achieve:

PH Academy provided additional practical sessions twice a week, on different days on a two-weekly cycle. These were available to all apprentices, although each workshop took a maximum of five. The arrangement helped employers to cover the days on which they could release apprentices; alternatively, apprentices could attend on their days off. Employers knew the timing and content of each workshop and the workshops solved the problem of limited training in smaller salons. Workshops could be used to improve the timing of services, confidence and skills development (by providing extra models and assessments). One member of staff delivered and coordinated the extra workshops, providing consistency. Apprentices evaluated the sessions.

A reward system encouraged attendance, punctuality, coming properly prepared for practical work, and the completion of homework and NVQ documentation. Apprentices paid a £10 deposit to join the rewards system which helped to encourage attendance. Coloured dots on a grid showed areas that had been successfully completed; red dots were used for negative aspects, such as being late. At the end of each term rewards included certificates of achievement, comb sets and training blocks. The workshops improved the apprentices' overall rate of progress.

Four summer school sessions were used for apprentices who were worried about falling behind. These were well attended, enabling several apprentices to complete on time. Consultation between staff ensured a focus on the right areas for each apprentice. Learning aids had been developed for practical tasks that apprentices could use in sessions and take home. A workbook developed for cutting motivated apprentices to attend in order to complete different cuts. This included research projects. The summer schools were also used as open days for employers to see the training of their apprentices at first hand and to discuss progress.

An 18-year-old male apprentice said: 'The workshops have been incredible for me. The one-to-one attention for cutting has boosted my confidence and I now know how to plan and check cuts well. At work I have been able to progress to some of the proper duties of a stylist.'

An employer with a single salon said: 'I can see the results of the workshop when my apprentice comes back into the salon. She is so much more confident and better at dealing with the clients.'

48. The following three examples illustrate how information learning technology was used effectively. The first describes how learning, particularly for literacy and numeracy, was made available to apprentices at any time:

McDonald's provided a variety of ways for apprentices to learn, including e-learning, workbooks and group off-the-job training sessions. As a large number of apprentices worked shifts, e-learning provided flexible opportunities. Bite-sized lessons and activities were interesting and fun.

An e-tutor service, bought in from a specialist literacy and numeracy provider, supported the e-learning. Apprentices could communicate with their e-tutor by text, telephone or email, although feedback showed that initial telephone contact worked best. The education team was able to monitor the effectiveness of the support and the apprentices' progress. E-tutors also provided specialist advice for trainers about how best to support apprentices who had specific learning difficulties.

Although McDonald's had ensured that each crew room had at least one computer, analysis showed that many 16–18-year-olds preferred to access the e-learning via their smartphones. McDonald's therefore introduced an 'app', enabling easier access for apprentices and updating of their training records. 'Mobile learning' using iPads was also piloted in a few of the restaurants.

Apprentices appreciated this approach. One said: 'I like the way you can use e-learning anywhere. I use my smartphone, home computer and also the computer in the crew room. The activities are set out in a really straightforward way, starting at the right level for you and increasing in difficulty.'

49. In the second example, the provider motivated young apprentices by successfully embedding information learning technology in training and assessment:

Fareport's trainers and assessors made excellent use of a wide range of technology in apprenticeship training and assessment. It fostered a culture where technology was seen as part of everyday life and invested significant resources in training for staff so that they were confident in using it. Best practice was shared through peer observations and standardisation activities. Webcams were very effective in enabling apprentices to participate if they were unable to attend. Tutors made good use of electronic portfolios, video conferencing and interactive whiteboards. These had been particularly successful with the 16–18-year-old apprentices and within childcare, where the learners were generally younger.

One childcare tutor explained how technology had made the subject of legislation more lively: 'I realised that apprentices found legislation rather dull. I now use YouTube clips of children playing and ask the apprentices to record their observations. After this, I ask them to link what they have just seen to the legislation and required standards. The apprentices then watch the clip again and rewrite their observation, applying the knowledge

they have acquired. We follow this with a discussion about what they can now see. Apprentices really enjoy this and some employers have commented that their apprentices now link their work more closely to legislative standards.'

50. In the third example, a virtual learning environment (VLE) introduced flexibility into training:

The Premier League had developed a VLE that gave access to online resources at any time. Part of an apprentice's development might be to go 'on loan' or work experience to another club, sometimes in a lower league. Apprentices were set work to do online which they could email to their tutor. Use of the VLE and the education resources of the other club ensured that apprentices continued to make progress.

Young football apprentices particularly liked the use of e-books. One popular example was an interactive learning resource on disability and physical access to Premier League clubs.

51. Finally, two further examples illustrate good practice in providing key and functional skills. The first describes how one employer made key skills relevant for apprentices:

McDonald's designed its key skills programme to make it relevant to apprentices and to align it to key company drivers. Teachers were appropriately qualified in literacy and numeracy. The assignments encouraged apprentices to help the company improve its environmental performance and share the improvements with customers. Apprentices were given a choice of assignments such as the following.

- Apprentices calculated the costs of energy use and considered how these could be reduced by good housekeeping; they displayed the results in a range of formats that contributed towards developing their understanding of the application of number.
- During their regular litter patrols near their restaurants, apprentices recorded the amount of litter collected, what it was and where it originated; they presented the findings in a range of charts and graphs. Apprentices also considered what the results told them about people's behaviour and how the business could reduce its impact on the local environment.
- For communication, apprentices developed a leaflet on McDonald's products, where they were sourced and the quality of the food.

One apprentice said: 'I have developed my confidence and my ability to inform customers about food quality and to pass on information to other local businesses and members of staff who have not completed the apprenticeship.'

To ensure that the knowledge developed was built on, McDonald's introduced 'Planet Champions'. These ensured that all staff in the restaurant understood what environmental initiatives McDonald's was introducing and why they were important, as well as providing continuing encouragement for current initiatives such as litter management, recycling and energy saving.

The Education Officer at McDonald's said: 'Our key skills workbook was designed to provide a structure for and consistency in the environmental message for apprentices. Many apprentices tell us that they have made changes in their lives which benefit the environment and often save them money.'

## Supplementing an apprentice's main learning programme

52. All the providers surveyed went beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship frameworks to enhance the training. A number of the additional areas were not related to the occupational standards, focusing instead on personal development and transferable work skills. Apprentices, particularly those who had not achieved well at school, liked a wide variety of short courses which led to extra qualifications. One said:

'I hardly had any qualifications when I left school and now I seem to have achieved a lot in a really short space of time.'

53. Examples of additional training included:

- additional qualifications in first aid, food hygiene, general health and safety, moving and handling, and conflict resolution
- visits abroad that widened the vocational experience of apprentices and boosted their confidence
- courses run by manufacturers whose equipment and products were used in the workplace; these provided a different type of training and helped to develop wider, more up-to-date knowledge
- individual and team competitions linked to occupational competence which helped to extend the acquisition of skills beyond that expected of the NVQ (catering, construction, engineering, football and hairdressing); a number of young apprentices represented the UK at World Skills in London in October 2011
- volunteering or ambassador roles, helping to develop apprentices' confidence and leadership skills
- customer service qualifications as an additional and transferable employability skill where apprentices dealt with customers or the public; these qualifications were highly valued by young people and their employers
- fundraising for local good causes or charities; this was a feature at most of the providers surveyed and was enthusiastically supported by apprentices

who developed their organisational skills as well as a greater social and community awareness

- personal development programmes that included healthy eating; money management; personal safety, such as safe driving; participation in sports for relaxation; and the safe use of social networking; inspectors also noted several good examples of sustainability and additional assignments on human rights and equality and diversity.

54. The following illustrates a provider's development of apprentices' leadership skills:

City Gateway's apprentices had the opportunity to join its young leaders' programme which provided them with opportunities to be involved in local decision-making and improving community cohesion among learners. The team of young leaders voted for representatives who liaised with trustees and the senior management team at quarterly forums. Through this scheme, young leaders influenced City Gateway's strategic planning by raising issues or making suggestions. Changes made by young apprentices were reported to the team who disseminated them to all learners.<sup>1</sup>

City Gateway consulted its young leaders about the support they needed to be effective in the role. Typically, this involved mentoring, coaching and training in volunteering to enable them to put their ideas into practice. Young leaders held youth nights where they planned sessions and activities for young people. They engaged with and helped other young people with issues such as fighting and knife crime. Part of the role of young leaders was to address barriers to learning that other young people faced and, as a result of this, 37% of the people they had contact with progressed to training programmes.

City Gateway introduced a youth work apprenticeship programme to provide the young leaders with opportunities to make further progress and develop their leadership skills.

55. One provider's apprentices had a particularly well-developed knowledge of equality and diversity that they applied to their work:

PH Academy had integrated equality and diversity so successfully into its schemes of work that apprentices saw it as an integral part of their hairdressing training. Scenarios developed for tutors to help raise apprentices' awareness included human rights, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, different cultures and disabilities. One tutor acted as a 'champion' for the area, developing a wide range of support materials that

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<sup>1</sup> A video of the scheme is available on the Good Practice section of Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120065](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/120065).

were particularly relevant to young people. These were under constant development and were responsive to current news stories.

Although apprentices worked in areas with a low proportion of minority ethnic groups and had limited direct experience of different cultures, their knowledge and understanding had been raised. They became very aware of how they should adapt a service for a diverse range of clients, whether for a physical disability affecting mobility, sight or hearing or for hair types related to ethnicity. Tutors adapted the equality and diversity questions asked of apprentices during progress reviews to check and extend their understanding of diversity; for example, the approaches they should take when working with Asian women's hair.

Tutors regularly used up-to-date diversity-related topics within key skills lessons. Examples included an account of a Muslim woman who had allegedly been refused employment because she wore a headscarf and who was suing a hairdressing employer; and a young woman allegedly refused an apprenticeship place because she was perceived to be too short. After reading about Katie Piper, a young model who was disfigured after having had acid thrown in her face but who did not want to be treated any differently, learners raised significant amounts of money for the work of the Katie Piper Foundation.

Apprentices saw the relevance of understanding diversity within their industry and in the world of work. Such understanding contributed to good customer service skills, which were valued by their employers and transferable outside hairdressing.

A 17-year-old hairdressing apprentice said: 'I've become much more aware of the differences between people and now embrace them positively. When we cover different services we ask how we might adapt the use of equipment for someone using a wheelchair rather than our tutor having to prompt us. I'm really confident of what to do, whoever should come into our salon.'

A hairdressing employer said: 'I make sure I can sit in on all of the reviews of my apprentice as it has helped me understand what diversity is all about and how my business can meet everyone's needs.'

56. The employers surveyed in areas where there was direct contact with the public, either face to face or on the telephone, valued customer service skills. Some young people, however, take time to become confident. Five of the providers offered training in dealing with the public, usually before the apprentices started their main apprenticeship. One care provider found it very beneficial, as illustrated here:

All the care apprentices starting at Herefordshire Primary Care Trust also worked for an additional customer service diploma as part of their care



apprenticeship. There was significant input on communication skills during the induction period, giving young care workers the skills that improved their communication and confidence when dealing with patients. The customer service training not only improved their performance but was a valued transferable skill.

57. Some aspects of training helped ensure personal safety when using electronic social media:

PH Academy apprentices received extensive safeguarding training at induction, covering aspects such as healthy eating, exercise, drugs, smoking, e-safety and alcohol. These topics were put into the context of being a hairdressing apprentice. Apprentices could talk with authority about many potential dangers facing young people, such as safety in getting a taxi or how to prevent drinks being 'spiked'. At the end of the induction, learners produced a poster about personal safeguarding issues. Learners had an increased awareness of e-safety and most had installed the Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) centre safety button on their computers.

58. A hairdressing employer was committed to developing the creative talents of its young learners:

Sassoon encouraged its young hairdressing apprentices to be creative. A wide variety of additional activities were provided so that apprentices appreciated the influences used by Sassoon's creative team. For example, museum and gallery visits looked at industrial design, shapes, form and textures and how they could be applied to cutting hair. The continual emphasis on original ideas rather than on being told what to do was a new experience for apprentices. Many had the chance to be assistants in shows given by the creative team at home and abroad, increasing apprentice's awareness of what could be achieved in the industry.

The culmination of the creative efforts each year was a competitive show where each salon chose a theme and illustrated it with a set of models during a 'soirée' in a prestigious venue. This was attended by parents and guardians. The 'salon by salon' show encouraged team rather than individual work, harnessing the apprentices' different qualities and talents. Each group worked within a budget to design costumes, makeup, music, choreography and hairstyles. The results and the show were inspirational, especially for the newer apprentices who would take part in three shows as they progressed to complete their advanced apprenticeships.

After one show an apprentice said: 'The show was simply amazing. It pushed all of us to the limit and I have never seen my parents look so proud of me. I've always been creative and can't wait till next year!'

59. Football apprentices received additional training that helped them to deal with the potential pitfalls of success:

The Premier League's workshops, delivered at individual clubs, helped to develop apprentices into responsible adults. An employee who had experience of the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) supported the development of a football-specific course to show how young players could, unintentionally, bring their clubs into disrepute. The training touched on several areas that had embarrassed clubs and individual players in the past.

Before leading a workshop, the employee looked up a young person's profile on a social media site, 'befriended' them online and changed their profile. The shock of how they could be manipulated was very effective in enhancing the apprentice's understanding of how they could and should protect themselves. This personalised approach to learning had fired their interest and their behaviour had been altered positively.

A lot of work was carried out to discourage racism through the 'Kick it Out' campaign, while the 'Don't Cross the Line' anti-bullying initiative used a black England player as an unofficial ambassador. Workshops to counter bullying were delivered to players, coaches and parents/guardians.

Work was also done to discourage negative influences such as drugs, drinking or gambling. A charity, 'If you care, share', promoted emotional well-being and how to deal with feelings, pressure and stress. Apprentices regularly accompanied senior players to local events involving schools, hospitals and charities.

## **Personal, learning and thinking skills and employment rights and responsibilities**

60. Changes to apprenticeship frameworks from April 2011 had an impact on a number of the apprentices in the survey. Although they were new, some providers surveyed had always included some aspects of personal, learning and thinking skills in frameworks, as well as aspects relating to employment rights and responsibilities.
61. Apprentices and employers welcomed the introduction of personal, learning and thinking skills because of their contribution to effective learning, assessment and employment. Several employers were very positive about the way in which this component encouraged apprentices to reflect on their own performance. Apprentices were better able to set goals with clear success criteria and to manage their time and resources effectively to achieve them. Personal organisation, managing change and taking responsibility were also valued skills.
62. Several employers felt that these skills were helping to develop apprentices' maturity, their teambuilding and problem-solving skills. One major employer

integrated the skills in its apprentice diary and key skills workbooks to ensure that they were relevant.

63. Training in employment rights and responsibilities was being delivered effectively using a variety of appropriate paper-based and electronic resources produced by providers, awarding, and lead bodies. This training was usually delivered early in the programme, usually within the first four weeks, often as part of an extended induction and almost universally with the support of employers. Apprentices felt that the training helped them to understand the world of work and they liked an element of research which gave them the opportunity to assess their employers against legislative frameworks and practice in other organisations.
64. One training provider ran a confidential helpline for apprentices so that they could easily raise any concerns about employment or training. The provider then incorporated what had been learnt from running the helpline into newsletters and other material for apprentices and employers. In some cases, providers were reminded of their obligations, particularly about allowing apprentices time at work to study and gather evidence for assessments.
65. One provider had been very effective in delivering and tracking learners' acquisition of personal, learning and thinking skills:

Managers and staff at Fareport had tackled the introduction of personal, learning and thinking skills into the apprenticeship framework enthusiastically. A teacher at a local school, who had been involved in the joint delivery with Fareport of a hairdressing diploma programme, led two sessions to raise trainers' awareness of how schools were providing personal, learning and thinking skills. Trainers then referred to the skills in all their schemes of work, lesson plans and activities. Apprentices did their own assessments at the end of each lesson about which of the skills they had demonstrated and noted these on a checklist.

The head of quality assurance said: 'The employers we work with want apprentices with these personal, learning and thinking skills and particularly the ability to work with clients. We see the skills as key to addressing this.'

One apprentice said: 'The personal, learning and thinking skills link really well to hairdressing and, at the end of each lesson, I can easily tick off which skills I have done. It has helped me develop individual and team working, particularly in how I help other staff within the salon.'

66. The following describes a successful approach to making employment rights and responsibilities more interesting and useful for learners:

The McDonald's education team introduced an apprentice diary that provided new apprentices with information and activities that developed their knowledge of the company, career progression, and processes such

as those for appeals. Each month the diaries set research questions to take apprentices through each stage of their programme, particularly their rights and responsibilities. The diary included an apprentice's individual learning plan and key points from progress reviews.

An apprentice's first tasks were to gather necessary information such as their national insurance number and to assess their skills and competence. Apprentices were asked to reflect on their learning and teamwork – a useful task in generating evidence about personal, learning and thinking skills. Apprentices enjoyed completing the activities, particularly those that involved discussion and research.

An apprentice who used the diary said: 'The apprentice diary is useful for scheduling dates to plan my work. I liked the way that the questions made me read the company information and link it to my work and own circumstances.'

## Support for young people

67. Apprentices' additional support needs are identified at the start of apprenticeship programmes and support is planned alongside the teaching and assessment required to complete an apprenticeship. The two colleges in the survey had teams of specialist support staff while independent providers usually relied on the specialist tutors for functional or key skills or the assessor. It is more cost-effective to deliver support off the job but several providers delivered some individual support in the work environment. Twelve of the training providers trained teachers and assessors in giving support for dyslexia and more general learning support.

68. Providers used practical solutions such as coloured overlays for reading, digital voice recorders, or resources with large print; they provided scribes where appropriate and asked for additional time for apprentices for tests. Increasingly, technology was being used to support apprentices, particularly through podcasts, voice recognition software, e-learning packages and e-tutors. McDonald's provided support by text, telephone or online. A young apprentice who had had such support said:

'The e-tutors were particularly supportive and gave a lot of extra activities and coaching. The flexible options for text, telephone or email support are really good.'

An apprentice with dyslexia said:

'Being given extra time has made a difference as I no longer have to rush my work.'

69. Much of the pastoral support for apprentices came through the close working relationships they had with their teachers and assessors. Staff developed links with a wide range of external agencies, and some staff accompanied

apprentices to these organisations. Affordable housing was a growing problem for many young apprentices. One independent training provider also maintained regular contact with apprentices' parents and saw this as key to apprentices' well-being.

70. Inspectors found many examples of work conflicts being talked about and resolved between apprentices, their employers and assessors. In other instances, however, apprentices had to be withdrawn and found a more suitable employer. One apprentice said:

'I was not getting on at my placement but was found an alternative within four days, and in the meantime I was allowed to attend college full time.'

71. The two colleges in the survey had a range of very well-established pastoral support services for their work-based learners. This was an area which the other providers were developing well and several had access to counselling services and other specialist support. Induction activities and handbooks listing helplines and websites gave apprentices a good awareness of the support that was available. Information boards and leaflets in training centres in areas where they could be seen easily but accessed discreetly were also helpful. Inspectors found four examples of confidential provider helplines for apprentices; these were particularly useful when apprentices did not want to discuss personal issues with their employer, teacher or assessor.
72. Inspectors also found eight health clinics, three of which had notable successes in reducing teenage pregnancies. Three independent training providers ran a breakfast club for apprentices who could not afford breakfast and did not eat before attending the centre. Those who used them felt that they were more ready for training as a result.
73. The three following examples illustrate different aspects of support. The first shows a provider and its employers working as a team to give outstanding pastoral support, enabling apprentices to overcome problems and stay in training:

Crackerjack and the employers it worked with provided excellent pastoral support for those on care apprenticeships. They worked very productively to agree how the apprentice would be supported. Many of Crackerjack's apprentices had experienced problems that affected their work, progress and levels of self-esteem, including domestic violence, sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, debt, drug and alcohol misuse, and homelessness. Crackerjack's staff had extensive links to a wide range of external organisations. These were used very effectively to ensure that apprentices got the help they needed to continue with their learning and stay in employment.

One employer provided outstanding support. An apprentice had been homeless and was living in a hostel. The apprentice dropped out of the

programme for four months and had just recently returned. The provider and employer were working together to provide the apprentice with a gradual reintroduction to work and the apprenticeship. The apprentice was not yet confident enough to attend group sessions, so had individual off-the-job tuition. On another occasion involving a different apprentice who was having difficulties with rented accommodation, the employer, the managing director of Crackerjack and the apprentice met the landlord to seek a solution. This apprentice was happy with the resolution and was still on the programme.

The employer said: 'Crackerjack's managing director knows every single person who is taking an apprenticeship with them well and is keen to help resolve anything that presents a barrier. The team approach we take to support apprentices works really well.'

74. In the second example, a provider's summer school gave a variety of support:

Herefordshire Primary Care Trust's three-week summer school was offered to apprentices needing additional support with literacy and numeracy or with building their confidence before starting their apprenticeship. Apprentices moving between intermediate and advanced apprenticeships also attended if they needed to. Apprentices could attend all the summer school or just the parts they needed to prepare them for their programme. Fifteen apprentices attended in 2011 and the event received very positive feedback from them.

75. The third example describes a hairdressing provider's successful initiatives undertaken to tackle two problems that had previously caused several learners not to complete apprenticeships:

A community nurse visited PH Academy's training centre each year to raise learners' awareness and stimulate discussion of teenage pregnancies and sexual diseases. The initiative was particularly successful and teenage pregnancies among the provider's apprentices declined from four three years ago to none in the last year.

An 'all gloves' policy was introduced for apprentices' practical activities, with the academy providing gloves for use in the workplace if necessary. This greatly reduced the number of apprentices showing early signs of dermatitis, a skin condition that can force sufferers to leave hairdressing.

## **Employers' and workplace supervisors' support for young people**

76. The training of apprentices is often a strategic as well as an operational priority in meeting employers' business needs. The employers visited for the survey had a strong interest in their apprentices and in maintaining an apprenticeship programme. Around half of the training providers had engagement events or open days for employers which helped to increase the number of employers

they worked with. The key to many of the providers' successes was the way they worked closely with employers and apprentices to establish individual learning programmes for each apprentice. They carefully selected the units that apprentices would take, based on their aspirations and the opportunities that were available at work.

77. Once the apprentice had started the programme, progress reviews were the main route for providers to engage with workplace supervisors. These took place at intervals that varied from four to 10 weeks. Younger apprentices felt that they benefited where the periods between reviews were shorter as it helped to ensure that they stayed on course to complete assessments. The shorter time between reviews also acted as a prompt to any supervisors who were not well organised to do what was agreed at a progress review.
78. Supervisors were fully involved in programmes and were well aware of the tasks that apprentices should be completing. This worked particularly well when supervisors had previously completed an apprenticeship or NVQ themselves. Training providers' handbooks for employers increased their awareness of the content of the off-the-job training so that they could plan tasks at work better. Apprentices valued their employers' help and support. One employer, talking about young people, said:

'I find it beneficial to build a good relationship, especially as apprentices find work quite daunting at first. It is important to develop the link you have with an apprentice from that of a pupil and teacher relationship to one of trainee and employer.'

79. Employers have high expectations of young people. They expect them to have good literacy, numeracy and communication skills, and to be confident in dealing with customers. A number of employers commented negatively about the ability of young people to apply for jobs and their poor punctuality and timekeeping. Some training providers provided potential apprentices with support for interviews, CV writing and trial placements to overcome this. It was felt that timekeeping was better when young apprentices had undertaken work experience; employers welcomed it, too. One employer said:

'The work experience is really good for helping find apprentices who are independent thinkers. I can see this very easily through the way they work with clients and other members of the team.'

80. A small number of negative views were expressed by some of the employers in the survey about the poor standard of English and mathematics that the apprentices arrived with, even those with grade C and above at GCSE level. However, they felt that the apprenticeship improved this. There were also several comments about young people initially finding it difficult to maintain a focus on specific tasks.

81. The approach of one of the providers developed positive behaviour and work values among young apprentices:

GENII developed a set of standards and expectations that applied to its apprentices and its own staff equally. The standards set out expected values and behaviour that staff showed daily and these were also expected of all apprentices. They covered safety; delivering to customers; quality; leadership and management; equality and diversity; safeguarding; communications; training and development; personal conduct; teamwork; and the environment. Everyone had a booklet explaining, under each heading, what they could expect from GENII and what GENII would expect from them. Critical to success was that all staff and apprentices were aware of the shared expectations and were able to challenge each other. As a result, apprentices developed employability skills that employers valued. Employers spoke very positively about the attitudes, skills and work ethic that the young apprentices had developed.

### **Monitoring learners' progress**

82. The providers surveyed had developed electronic tracking systems, focused mainly on achievement of NVQ units, to monitor apprentices' progress. One provider had an effective manual system that performed the same function, but was developing this as the number of apprentices increased. Providers' assessor staff had regular meetings with training managers, typically every four weeks, at which apprentices' progress was discussed. Technically, no apprentice should be more than four weeks behind schedule before action is taken. Assessors were set targets and those were monitored, usually through performance reviews.
83. Survey visits found that providers' assessor staff and managers knew their learners well. If apprentices were causing concern or missing key deadlines, they agreed on support or actions to deal with this. The close working between teachers, assessors, employers and apprentices, formalised by target-setting and progress reviews, had the greatest impact on apprentices' progress. Reviews were important in ensuring that apprentices were kept on track.
84. The following illustrates an effective review process:

PH Academy found that apprentices responded well to extended reviews that involved the off-the-job theory and practical tutor, an assessor, the apprentice and their employer (or the most appropriate salon trainer).

The process started with the tutor and apprentice grading against academy criteria such as timekeeping, attitude and progress. The same criteria were then completed by the apprentice and employer. Equality and diversity (harassment, bullying), health and safety (using new equipment) and safeguarding, including reinforcement of what had been covered off the job, were also reviewed. Progress was covered thoroughly,



including all parts of the apprenticeship framework. Also covered were apprentice support, including extra visits, scribing and self-directed learning for literacy and numeracy.

Apprentices particularly valued negotiating and agreeing realistic short-term (four to six weeks) and long-term (six to 12 weeks) practical and theory targets. Apprentices were encouraged to meet these targets early if opportunities arose. Progress reviews were checked during attendance at the academy along with the personal learning plan. Completed targets were 'ticked off' by assessors. More accomplished apprentices or those struggling to complete their frameworks had extra reviews to meet their needs. Employers were actively involved in helping their apprentices to meet their targets.

An apprentice said: 'The review process is a key part of my progress. I know what I should be doing every day and love getting ahead of my targets.'

85. One of the providers set milestone targets that helped its apprentices to monitor their progress realistically:

Fareport's assessors changed the way in which they set targets to make them more meaningful and give a realistic assessment of the progress apprentices were making. They looked at the framework holistically and divided it into milestones that linked directly to assignments, observations, professional discussions and training, including external certificates. This enabled them to set targets for apprentices that they understood, such as the achievement of an assignment, observation or training session, rather than parts of a unit or key skill. This worked particularly well and supported the holistic way that most of the organisation's staff were assessing. Apprentices could easily see their progress and achievements. Managers had a more accurate view of the rate of progress and could identify problems easily.

The number of apprentices completing their programmes within the expected timescales improved steadily and for many progress was rapid. The head of quality assurance felt that Fareport's systems for monitoring apprentices' progress had contributed to the progress that apprentices made but that introducing milestones had had the most impact.

## **Celebrating success and supporting progression**

86. Most providers had annual achievement events to which employers, parents or guardians were invited. Local dignitaries or well-known figures in the industry were often invited to present awards. Most providers received local press coverage and some featured in trade and awarding body publications. Young people were very proud of their achievement in gaining an apprenticeship.

87. Nine of the training providers in the survey promoted successful achievement of framework components such as the NVQ or technical certificate through regular newsletters for employers and apprentices. Several employers also had in-house newsletters which celebrated the success of staff. Three of the training providers used the best-known social networking sites to share apprentices' success stories with a younger audience.
88. Employers with four of the providers had introduced incremental pay increases or awards for milestone achievements by apprentices. For many apprentices, achieving the intermediate apprenticeship resulted in an offer of permanent employment or a pay increase. In some industries, such as hairdressing, achieving the intermediate level has a status attached to it in the salon (stylist), which is increased on progress to advanced level (senior stylist).
89. Four of the independent training providers gave apprentices certificates for completing individual units; they felt that young people liked this as an intermediate marker of their success. Inspectors saw several different examples of celebrating success:

Sassoon used rewards to celebrate success and to motivate and improve the performance of apprentices. The role of head assistant in each of their salons for three months was a reward for good progress. The apprentice carrying out the role received a bonus and the experience helped to improve their work readiness and maturity, as well as preparing them for the chance of progressing to management. Young apprentices were thrilled to get a card from the UK Creative Director congratulating them on a particular piece of good work. This acknowledgement also helped to inspire other apprentices and showed senior managers the importance of training. Meetings of Sassoon's creative team identified apprentices who had significant potential and they were then involved in events, for example assisting during Sassoon shows. There are two prestigious awards of Apprentice of the Year.

Heart of England Training designed bronze, silver and gold badges to reflect the occupational areas that it offered. For example, the badges were in the form of scissors for hairdressers. The idea had been developed from an example on Ofsted's good practice database and apprentices really liked receiving the badges when they had completed set numbers of NVQ units. They wore them proudly, both at work and in the training centres.

90. Providers, learners and their employers generally expected that all apprentices should progress in employment and training. The providers and the apprentices who took part in the survey had very clear knowledge of the opportunities for progression available through further education and training. Young people in intermediate apprenticeships understood the benefits of progressing to advanced apprenticeships and were very positive about wanting to do so. For

the providers in the survey, the level of progression to advanced apprenticeships was much higher than is usually seen. Some employers, particularly in care and hairdressing, felt there was a need for young people who had completed intermediate apprenticeships to have a break in training before they progressed to advanced apprenticeships. They felt that this would allow them to develop the experience and job skills they needed for the demands of the advanced qualification. However, although the employers felt this was desirable, they were also apprehensive about being able to support their employees financially once they were 19.

91. Much of the most effective promotion of progression opportunities took place during meetings between the teacher, assessor, apprentice and their employer, often towards the end of the apprenticeship. At one of the training providers, advanced apprentices acted as mentors for intermediate apprentices. Meetings were held at three set points and the intermediate apprentices were encouraged to progress to the next level. A group of young business administration apprentices said:

‘Everyone has been turned on to continuing to an advanced apprenticeship as others who have already done it told us how it had helped them to get promotions.’

92. Many apprentices were aware of higher education beyond the advanced apprenticeship but were apprehensive about debt. For example, in a group of 20 advanced apprentices who were interviewed by inspectors, 16 were keen to gain further qualifications but worried about incurring debt. In one of the colleges, all the faculties were developing their own higher education offer to help apprentices progress internally. Most of the training providers showed progression routes in their marketing literature, on websites and on posters in training centres. Two training providers offered higher national diplomas, management programmes, level 5 qualifications, foundation degrees and part-time degrees. Another had developed progression agreements with a local university to give apprentices a clear route into nursing, teaching and management. An employer who was very supportive of progression said:

‘Most apprentices progress to the advanced level and many then go on to a foundation degree or level 4. I use various universities to ensure day release can happen across several days. As I have done a level 4 qualification myself, I can recommend it to future apprentices with confidence.’

93. One employer successfully promoted progression routes to company training programmes, an externally accredited advanced level diploma, a foundation degree and management roles at work:

Most of McDonald’s apprentices had few formal qualifications at the start of their programmes. They valued the opportunities to gain accredited awards and McDonald’s was keen to develop its apprentices.

After completing their apprenticeship, apprentices could progress to the level 3 NVQ in shift management or supervising food safety in catering, and ultimately to a foundation degree in managing business operations. The education team had mapped the apprenticeship and its other training programmes to show the links between career development and the achievement of qualifications. Apprentices were introduced to the 'progression ladder' through the apprentice diary, the online orientation programme, and through notice boards in their restaurant. McDonald's also published the ladder in its prospectus so that parents and careers tutors in schools could see where the apprenticeship fitted into the company's career structure. It was developed further in 2012 by an explanation of the qualifications and how they linked to traditional qualifications.

One apprentice commented: 'The progression ladder in our crew room is really useful. You can easily see which training programmes you can do next and how to develop into management.'

Staff, and particularly younger apprentices at an early stage in their career, were motivated by the opportunities. As a result, most of McDonald's apprentices have gained promotion or progressed to higher education courses. One manager said: 'The apprenticeship provides a stepping stone to management. It increases employee morale and gives staff the confidence to progress.'

94. Progression to sustained employment was generally very high in the providers surveyed with some good examples of specialist providers helping their apprentices to gain employment:

In the Premier League, the main focus is always on advanced apprentices achieving a professional contract with their club. But if they are not successful in this, they are guided to a career in football, sometimes with lower league clubs and sometimes abroad. If unsuccessful they are helped to follow another career which may use many of the skills developed through the apprenticeship, for example football coaching or PE teaching. The support is very well-developed, including summer schools and help with applications for higher education. Club coaching staff were very enthusiastic about the foundation for a future career that the advanced apprenticeship provided for young players once they stopped playing.

One of the training providers employed the apprentices for the duration of their programme as their work was generally self-employed. They promoted progression to self-employment by seconding each apprentice to a self-employed kitchen fitter to gain real work experience and contacts in the industry. The provider brought in business link advisers to talk to the apprentices about their future in self-employment.

## Notes

Between September and November 2011, inspectors visited 15 providers to identify the key features of successful apprenticeship provision for young people. The providers had been judged to be either good or outstanding for their overall effectiveness at their most recent inspection and had a recent history of working well with young people taking apprenticeships. Before the selection of providers to be visited, inspectors analysed success data and inspection reports for all work-based learning providers inspected in the last three years. Providers supplied a range of pre-visit information for analysis related to the key questions of the survey.

A range of provider types and settings was represented by the providers visited, including independent learning providers, colleges, employer-based programmes, local authorities, a charitable organisation and a primary care trust.

During each visit inspectors explored all aspects of delivery with senior managers, reviewing a provider's documentation and quality improvement evidence. Inspectors interviewed 105 apprentices, 41 employers and six mentors. Interviews were also held with teachers, assessors and support staff and those with management responsibility for apprenticeship programmes, focusing on aspects of delivery that worked particularly well with apprentices.

## Further information

### Publications by Ofsted

*Good practice in involving employers in work-related education and training* (090227), October, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090227](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090227).

*Learning from the best: examples of best practice from providers of apprenticeships in underperforming vocational areas* (090225), October 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090225](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/090225).

*Progression post-16 for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities* (100232), August, 2011; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100232](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100232).

*Twelve outstanding providers of work-based learning* (100112), July, 2010; [www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100112](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/100112).

### Ofsted's good practice website area

For the last three years, Ofsted's good practice database for learning and skills has been hosted by LSIS on its Excellence Gateway. In March 2011, Ofsted launched its own website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/goodpractice](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/goodpractice)) showcasing good practice across the sectors that Ofsted inspects and regulates.

The case studies are written by Ofsted's inspectors following a visit to the provider to investigate a lead about good practice, which has usually been identified during an inspection. A number of the examples on the website include documents supplied by the provider which can be downloaded and adapted. There are currently over 50 learning and skills examples, including four video case studies, illustrating effective teaching and learning in business administration, construction, hairdressing and engineering.

## Other publications

*Adult apprenticeships*, National Audit Office, 2012;  
[www.nao.org.uk/publications/1012/adult\\_apprenticeships.aspx](http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/1012/adult_apprenticeships.aspx).

*Building engagement, building futures: our strategy to maximise the participation of 16–24-year-olds in education, training and work*, Department for Work and Pensions, 2011; [www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/policy-publications/building-engagement.shtml](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/policy-publications/building-engagement.shtml).

*New challenges, new chances, further education and skills system reform*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2011;  
[www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/fe-and-skills-new-challenges-new-chances](http://www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/fe-and-skills-new-challenges-new-chances).

*Rethinking apprenticeships*, Institute for Public Policy Research, 2011;  
[www.ippr.org/publications/55/8028/rethinking-apprenticeships](http://www.ippr.org/publications/55/8028/rethinking-apprenticeships).

*Review of vocational education – The Wolf Report*, Department for Education, 2011;  
[www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00031-2011).

## Annex: Profiles of the 15 providers

**Barnsley College:** a large tertiary college serving Barnsley and surrounding areas in South Yorkshire. The college is the main provider of post-16 education and the destination for 80% of school leavers in the town. It offers a broad and expanding range of apprenticeships, including business and management, hair and beauty, catering and hospitality, construction, engineering, health care, motor vehicle, retail, logistics, support services, creative industries, sports and land based. Barnsley College was judged outstanding at its last inspection.

**City Gateway Limited:** a training provider that specialises in training for young people who are not in education, employment or training. Apprenticeships are offered in sports, information and communication technology, and customer service at three sites in Tower Hamlets, East London. The borough has some extreme deprivation and youth unemployment is high. Almost all learners progress to the apprenticeship programme from City Gateway's pre-apprenticeship programme and are helped to find employment. At the provider's last inspection, over 70% of pre-apprenticeship learners had no qualifications and 57% spoke English as an additional language. City Gateway was judged outstanding at its last inspection.

**Cornwall College:** a very large general further education college with sites across much of Cornwall. The college is one of the largest apprenticeship providers in the South West, supporting around 1,700 apprentices at any one time. Cornwall College Business (and Duchy Training Agency for all land-based provision in the group) is the employer focus for work-based learning. This provides employers with a single contact point in the college to discuss business needs and training requirements. The college offers apprenticeship training in most of the 15 sector subject areas and was judged outstanding at its last inspection.

**Crackerjack Training Limited:** a private training company providing childcare training to apprentices in the Birmingham and Solihull area. Crackerjack also trains 14–16-year-olds through its links with schools and a young apprenticeship programme with a local college. Many learners progress from these programmes to Crackerjack's apprenticeship programme. Learners have off-the-job training each week at one of five community venues across the West Midlands. At its last inspection, Crackerjack was an outstanding provider.

**Enfield Training Services (ETS) (The London Borough of Enfield):** the London Borough of Enfield's work-based learning unit within education services. ETS is located in one of the most deprived wards in the borough. The majority of learners come from disadvantaged and/or socially excluded groups with little or no previous educational attainment and often have challenging behaviour. As well as apprenticeships, ETS offers Foundation Learning. The London Borough of Enfield, including ETS, was a good provider at the last inspection.

**Fareport Training Organisation Limited:** a large private training provider that provides apprenticeship and Foundation Learning programmes across a wide range



of subjects including business administration, customer service, childcare, hairdressing, housing, retailing, management, teaching and assessment. The company is based in Fareham and trains learners across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. It also trains 14–16-year-olds through a school links programme. At its last inspection, Fareport was an outstanding provider.

**GEN II Engineering and Technology Training Limited (GENII):** a private training provider which provides mainly engineering apprenticeships for local employers through four centres across Cumbria. It was established in June 2000 by five international companies, AMEC, BNFL (Sellafield Ltd), CORUS, Iggesund and Innovia Films. It also offers higher education provision in the field of nuclear engineering, design and decommissioning. GEN II was judged an outstanding provider at its last inspection.

**Heart of England Training Ltd (HOET):** a private training provider established in 1996; the head office is in Rugby and the company has seven training centres in Rugby, Coventry, Birmingham, and Leicester. The company currently provides training for 773 work-based learners in business administration, customer service, retail, team leading, management, hairdressing, beauty therapy, nail services and Foundation Learning. There are plans to deliver additional vocational areas of learning to include marketing, health and social care, and warehousing and distribution. In addition, there are vocational training programmes for 14–16-year-olds in all areas for around 70 learners from local schools. The company also works in partnership with, and delivers training in, three secure training centres. At its last inspection, HOET was an outstanding provider.

**Herefordshire Primary Care Trust (HPCT):** this provider changed its name on 31 October 2011 to **The Shared Services Partnership Trust**. The Trust is an independent training provider, set up 21 years ago to attract school leavers into careers within the National Health Service. The Trust delivers programmes in health and social care, children and young people’s workforce, dental nursing, business administration, customer service and programmes for those not in employment, education or training. It is based in two locations in Herefordshire. At its last inspection, HPCT was an outstanding provider.

**McDonald’s Restaurants Limited:** McDonald’s is one of the largest employers of under 21-year-olds in the country. The company provides hospitality and catering and skills for life training to over 5,000 apprentices at its restaurants in the United Kingdom. McDonald’s head office is in East Finchley, London, and training takes place in the restaurants by crew trainers and managers and through online learning. Most apprentices have few formal qualifications at the start of their programme. McDonald’s also provides apprentices with the opportunity to progress to the advanced level diploma and a company-established foundation degree. At its last inspection, McDonald’s was a good provider.

**PH Academy:** a private training provider based in Kent which provides hairdressing and customer service apprenticeship training for its own salon chain (Antoniou) and

other Kent hairdressing employers. It also trains 14–16-year-olds through a school links programme, many of whom progress to apprenticeships. With an overall effectiveness grade of good at its last inspection, it was judged to be outstanding for equality of opportunity and safeguarding.

**The Premier League Ltd:** the FA Premier League includes the top 20 teams in England and Wales. The league operates a youth development department which manages the work-based learning contract. Education is considered to be fundamental to player development. Up to 200 elite players, from the age of 16, are recruited for advanced apprenticeships in sporting excellence. Each football club operates a football academy or centre of excellence, licensed by the league, which meets its standards and rules. Each club has a full-time head of education and welfare and a team of coaches who provide on-the-job training. A flexible approach to theory, alongside a structured, sport-specific, training and development programme enables apprentices to achieve their footballing potential while also developing their academic and personal skills. Skills development is outstanding. It was an outstanding provider at its last inspection.

**PSC Training and Development Ltd (PSC):** a private training provider, previously known as Plymouth Skills Centre which provides work-based learning for young people and adults across the South West of England, in construction, engineering, care and business administration. PSC was judged outstanding at its last inspection.

**Regis UK Limited (Sassoon):** an employer provider, Sassoon was established by Vidal Sassoon in the 1960s in London. Sassoon's artistic teams demonstrate to other hairdressers throughout the world and the company provides expertise in hair styling to magazines and fashion shows. Sassoon was judged outstanding at its last inspection. The level of practical skills exhibited by apprentices was outstanding.

**WEBS Training Ltd (WEBS):** a private training provider, based in the Midlands, provides apprenticeships in manufacturing technologies for the upholstery, wood machining, cabinet making and kitchen fitting industries. WEBS was judged outstanding at its last inspection.