

all party parliamentary group on
apprenticeships

REPORT

2021 | 2022

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ABOUT THE APPG

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships is a cross-party group of MPs and Peers which provides a forum for parliamentarians and employers to discuss how to promote the role of high-quality apprenticeships. The Group works to ensure that apprenticeships serve as a pathway to a career and examine how the apprenticeship model can meet the changing skill demands from businesses. The Group has heard from all the top apprenticeship experts, including the Minister and Shadow Minister for Skills, top civil servants, business groups and most importantly from apprentices themselves.

The APPG would like to thank our sponsors for their support of the Group. The APPG's sponsors are: Amazon, Babcock International, BAE Systems, The Co-op, Engineering UK, KPMG, London South Bank University, The Open University, WMG at the University of Warwick, and the University of Salford.

FOREWORD



Emma Hardy MP
Co-Chair of the APPG on Apprenticeships



Richard Holden MP
Co-Chair of the APPG on Apprenticeships

It is our pleasure to present the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships' annual report for 2021-22.

Following yet another extraordinary year which reshaped Government priorities and spending, the skills agenda remains a key pillar. The Government must continue to leverage skills and training to support the long-term recovery of the country, the Levelling Up agenda and achieving Net Zero.

Apprenticeships are a fantastic way to upskill, diversify and reskill the workforce, ensuring businesses continue to grow as they give essential capabilities to employees and adapt to emerging technologies. This is particularly important in a post-COVID world and as we look to reduce our national carbon footprint. Apprenticeships are vital for helping people around the country fulfil their potential and drive our economy forward.

Our meetings have seen strong attendance with a diverse range of speakers. Their insights have informed the basis of our report, which presents a series of policy recommendations to improve the delivery of apprenticeships, support SMEs to provide opportunities and ensure better access to apprenticeships for learners and employers. This will be critical as we aim to strengthen the pipeline for the digital and green skills that will form the bedrock of our future economy.

We look forward to the work we have planned for next year.

If you would like more information on the APPG, please contact the secretariat at: ApprenticeshipsAPPG@connectpa.co.uk and follow us on Twitter [@ApprenticeAPPG](https://twitter.com/ApprenticeAPPG).

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The Government should build on the provisions of the Schools and Post-16 Education Act and do more to raise awareness of apprenticeship pathways and their benefits as a positive alternative to the traditional three year degree route for school-leavers, both at sixth form and GCSE level. One solution could be more effective implementation of the Baker Clause, for example by making it part of Ofsted assessments.
- The Government should increase the flexibility of what the Apprenticeship Levy can be used for and when, for example to support training costs, shorter apprenticeships courses and a wider range of apprenticeships. The Levy should sufficiently allow businesses to transfer or pool their resources to improve provision of apprenticeships.
- To support the Levelling Up agenda, the Government should make 'pre-apprenticeship' funding available to support candidates from disadvantaged backgrounds achieve any relevant qualifications they may need to facilitate their apprenticeship, such as a driving licence.
- There should be a focus on reducing the complexity of both the creation of new apprenticeships and the delivery of current apprenticeships, particularly when it comes to the various funding routes for SMEs versus larger companies. This should be with the aim of making apprenticeships a more cost-effective option to train staff, particularly for SMEs.

- The Department for Education should continue to promote the work of the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network and support the delivery of a mentoring scheme which could be undertaken with each regional network.
- There should be a focus on providing more Level 2 qualification provisions with a focus on them as a path to progression to advanced apprenticeships and higher, and as part of the wider Levelling Up strategy. This could be achieved through an amendment to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill's provisions on reporting to Parliament regarding progress in levelling up skills, or by introducing targets for apprenticeship provision, split between levels.
- In order to meet net zero goals and plug skills gaps, IfATE must engage with providers to review apprenticeship standards, and the Government must ensure its policies are keeping pace with change in the sector.
- The Department for Education should establish a Government-run advice and one-stop-shop for small businesses providing support to take on an apprentice and assisting them with the process. Furthermore, UCAS should continue its expansion of its existing portal to service further education, apprenticeships and T Levels.

CASE STUDY

Evelina Slavova – Former Level 3 Team Leader Apprentice

Evelina Slavova, 33, from Dartford, says the decision to join Amazon's apprenticeship scheme in 2017 was "life changing". Before then she had worked as a freelance nail technician and operations manager at a cleaning company.

Evelina says she was keen to try "something completely different" and so joined Amazon in the hope of gaining new experiences and opportunities. But it was only when one of Evelina's managers at the firm spotted the 33-year-old's talents that she was encouraged to apply for an apprenticeship.

She said: "I was looking to improve my English and also my confidence, as a lot of my colleagues and even my manager were telling me that I was doing great in my role but I needed this little bit of extra confidence to believe in myself."

"As I had a previous education from my country of origin, I decided that an apprenticeship would help me to improve my knowledge and grow within Amazon."

What attracted Evelina most to the programme at Amazon was the opportunity to obtain qualifications and degrees, as well as new skills, while continuing to earn money on the job.

"I believe that taking the decision to apply for the BIT (Business Improvement Techniques) programme changed my life," she said, adding it had helped her to grow both professionally and personally.

After successful completion of the Level 2 Business improvements apprenticeship Evelina then progressed onto the Level 3 Team leader apprenticeship within Amazon. Evelina successfully completed this programme with a distinction in 2021. She secured a permanent area management role in 2021 with the company and in April 2022 has been promoted again within Amazon.



Evelina added:

"I have loved my time on the Amazon apprenticeship programme and have learned so many new skills that will help me to progress in my career."

"At Amazon, you are always being encouraged to grow and succeed, and the apprenticeship has greatly improved my confidence."

"To anyone thinking about signing up, I say just apply!"

Amazon is creating 1,500 new apprenticeships in 2022 across 40 different programmes, including over 200 degree-level apprentices.



INCREASING APPRENTICESHIP TAKE UP IN THE TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS SECTOR

The Transport and Logistics industry contributes £155 million to the Apprenticeship Levy each year, however, employers in the sector are struggling to use the funds. Between May 2017 – April 2019, levy-paying employers spent just 18% of levy funds on training and assessment of new apprentices, indicating that there is room for growth were the levy to be simplified.

In our session on 'increasing apprenticeship take up in the transport and logistics sector', contributors from Network Rail highlighted how the Apprenticeship Levy has improved the quality and range of apprenticeships as well as Network Rail's ability to deliver apprenticeships. Before the levy, Network Rail was delivering 150 new starts across three different types of apprenticeships, which increased to 912 new starts per year across 35 different types of apprenticeships before the pandemic.

There is considerable appetite for transport apprenticeships, with contributors from the Co-op noting that they had over 2,500 applicants for fewer than 100 jobs despite negative media coverage of the transport and logistics sector as a whole at that time.

While the Apprenticeship Levy has provided an uplift in the quality and range of apprenticeships available, they are still expensive and complicated for providers and employers to deliver. Quality provision for apprentices takes years of time and considerable financial investment to deliver. For example, Network Rail invests £43,000 per Level 3 technician apprentice but recovers just £24,000 per head.

Partnerships and communication between the employers and providers are crucial. Contributors to the session reiterated that providers must support employers, particularly SMEs, to navigate the red tape around apprenticeships. Partnerships are also important to help SMEs cover the cost of apprentices and provide quality programmes. Providers and employers must take advantage of apprenticeship networks to ensure that all applicants find an appropriate opportunity, and they must also communicate with schools and careers services about the career progression provided by apprenticeships to increase uptake.

Attendees and speakers at the session stressed that the Government must increase support for SMEs, including through the development of an advice service for providers to develop new programmes and take on new apprentices. There must also be a focus on reducing complexities and cost burden for SMEs to encourage them to develop new apprenticeships.

CASE STUDY

Kat Tanner - 3rd year electrical design apprentice at Cavendish Nuclear (a wholly owned subsidiary of Babcock International Group) and the UK's 2022 Maritime Apprentice of the Year.

As a 3rd year electrical design apprentice, Kat currently supports the delivery of the Type 31 Frigate production output; an element of the role involves engaging with professional stakeholders during the design lifecycle to ensure coordination and functionality of design.

To date, Kat's apprenticeship has already seen her succeed in a number of roles across Babcock, from working for Sellafield where she created and updated CAD drawings to joining the team at Devonport where she solved problems by undertaking research and design analysis.

Kat is passionate about educating young women on careers in industry and has helped a number of women kick start careers in the business. In addition to breaking down barriers for women in industry, she is proving that there is no limit to what you can do in an apprenticeship and has made several improvements to the way her sector operates.

Kat also volunteers as Branch Secretary of the Cavendish's Prospect Trade Union, is an active member of the Women's Network and became their Vice-Chair last year to support a new committee and was chosen to Judge the Women in Nuclear Awards.



babcockTM

APPRENTICESHIPS AND LIFELONG LEARNING

Our session on apprenticeships and lifelong learning noted the expectation that around 40% of the UK population will need to completely retrain within the next 10 years as technology advances and changes the nature of jobs. This fact emphasises the importance of lifelong learning for UK workers, particularly older workers, as employers seek to plug the skills gap in the economy. In 2019/20, 47% of the apprenticeships started were by people aged 25 and over, but more must be done to enable older workers to take advantage of upskilling and reskilling programmes.

Lifelong learning is essential for tackling the low economic activity rate for over-50s and for adapting to technological advancements. Contributors from the University of Salford noted that 2/3 of the total apprenticeships starts are people over age 25 and around ¼ are over 40.

Flexibility in programming is key for ensuring that apprenticeships are accessible for older workers, for those with family or care duties and for reaching every community, noted contributors from The Open University. They further noted that apprenticeships must be accessible as opportunities for all ages and all levels, and be seen as pathways for reskilling and upskilling.

Contributors from KPMG highlighted the success of employee upskilling programmes in data analytics, project management, improvement specialist, cybersecurity technologists, Dev-Ops engineering and software development, training 216 employees in 2020 and allowing the business to remain agile.

More funding and policy stability will allow providers to innovate and develop flexible apprenticeship programming that can support lifelong learning and help the UK tackle skills gaps and adapt to technological advancements.



CASE STUDY

BAE Systems

BAE Systems is committed to apprenticeships as a key part of their UK skills strategy, helping ensure they continue to deliver critical long term national security programmes on platforms such as the Tempest future combat air system, Type 26 frigate and Dreadnought submarine. Apprenticeships help to generate the essential STEM skills required for aerospace, software and nuclear engineering, which are hard to recruit in the open market.

BAE Systems has more than 2,400 apprentices and in 2021 recruited a record 851 apprentices on over 50 different apprenticeship programmes. Two-thirds of these new starts were for advanced and intermediate apprenticeships with the remaining third for higher and degree apprenticeships.

The company remains committed to offering apprenticeships which support local communities, in line with the Government's "Levelling Up" agenda. Of the 2021 intake, 90% were aged 24 or younger while 70% of the new starts were recruited into vacancies in the north of England and Scotland. More than quarter of their apprentices in England came from disadvantaged communities. In addition, the company continued to support the young unemployed through Movement to Work, providing c.100 placements, alongside a further 43 successful Kickstart placements.

In 2021, BAE Systems was delighted to receive and retain an Ofsted Grade 1, Outstanding, at its inspection and also won 2022 Movement to Work's Employer of the Year Award. The company plans to break intake records again in 2022, further helping to support its sustainable talent pipeline strategy.



BAE SYSTEMS

PLUGGING THE CONSTRUCTION SKILLS GAP WITH APPRENTICESHIPS

One of the UK's largest industries, construction accounts for approximately 3 million jobs – 10% of total UK employment – and includes both manufacturing and services. Our session on construction and apprenticeships found that while there has been an increase in the take up of apprenticeships in the sector, it is still not enough to fill its persistent skills shortages.

In particular, the construction industry is in need of digital skills, green skills and leadership skills, according to contributors from Make UK. Contributors from CITB also noted that the Construction Skills Network forecasts an annual recruitment need for over 43,000 workers per year over the next five years – but there are not currently enough people with the skills needed to meet this demand.

Employers need more support to get trainings and skills development underway, however. The high cost to employers for manufacturing apprenticeships means that often additional incentives are not generous enough to make an impact. For example, contributors from Make UK noted that manufacturing apprenticeships cost well above the £27k funding available – so the extra £3k incentive isn't having much impact.

Contributors from the OHOB Group called for greater alignment and correlation between Government programmes and for better mapping of apprentice progression.

As the UK looks to meet its net zero goals and plug skills gaps, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) must engage with the construction sector to review apprenticeship standards, and the Government must ensure its policies are keeping pace with change. Providers can also do more to show progression to appeal more to apprentices, raise awareness through careers guidance as early as primary school, increase flexible offerings and improve placement offerings. The Government can support this by working in tandem to raise awareness of apprenticeship pathways and their benefits as a positive alternative to university.

CASE STUDY

Co-op - Driver Apprenticeships

As one of the largest food retailers in the UK the Co-op relies on drivers to deliver products to its network of stores. According to Logistics UK there was a shortage of 90,000 LGV drivers across the UK in 2021.

Faced with this challenge, the Co-op identified apprenticeships as a potential solution. The Co-op's approach sought to bring new colleagues into driving roles within the business and also to provide new opportunities to upskill existing colleagues from Funeralcare, warehouses and food store roles. Planning started for the delivery of the LGV Driving Apprenticeship in October 2021, which:

- Bridges the driver shortage gap to ensure stores were well stocked for their communities.
- Creates role-model drivers with the skills, performance and behaviours to display Co-op values and become ambassadors for the business.
- Utilises apprenticeship levy funds.
- Supports social mobility and diversity by recruiting drivers from a range of backgrounds, ages and gender, who may not have seen a way to start a career in driving.

All successful apprentices are employed as permanent drivers at from day one, and current outstanding achievement rates and retention are 100%. The Co-op is renowned for its driver retention, with over 46% of their drivers having more than 10 years' service, and it's expected the apprentices will have a long career with the business.



CO OP

CELEBRATING NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIPS WEEK

During National Apprenticeships Week (7-13 February 2022), the APPG held a virtual fair featuring a panel of apprentices from Amazon, BAE Systems, KPMG, LSBU, Co-op, Babcock International, Aston Martin and the University of Salford. The apprentices shared their experiences and highlighted how apprenticeships are critical for building the skills needed for the fourth industrial revolution.

The apprentices spoke of the many advantages of undertaking an apprenticeship programme, including:

- Opportunities for career progression, professional development and skills development, particularly for those who could not otherwise afford to study (for example in a university degree programme).
- A strong foundation for building a career and finding a pathway into the workplace.
- skills both during and beyond the pandemic era.

They also encouraged the early promotion of apprenticeship pathways in schools to highlight apprenticeships as a feasible alternative to university and the opportunities on offer.

Contributors from The Open University also cited a new report published during National Apprenticeships Week in collaboration with The 5% Club, presenting new insights from a survey of just over 600 apprenticeship employers in England on how employers value apprenticeships and the benefits they offer in diversifying the workforce.

The survey found that almost 7 in 10 of employers are seeing the transformative impact taking an apprenticeship can have on the learner, that almost 9 in 10 employers of apprentices plan to maintain or increase the number they take on in the next 12 months, and that while apprenticeships are seen as an effective tool to open up opportunities for under-represented groups in the workplace, this is not matched by firm plans to recruit from these groups.

During the fair, the Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills Alex Burghart MP said that the Government can do more to show how apprenticeships can lead to work opportunities in order to encourage children and parents to view it as a good pathway. He noted that the Government is keen to support apprenticeships provided by small businesses and make it easier for large companies to transfer levy funds to SMEs to help with apprenticeship costs.



CASE STUDY

EngineeringUK – Levelling up engineering skills

In January 2022, EngineeringUK published Levelling up engineering skills: widening opportunities for young people. This briefing provides an overview of the knowledge and perceptions of the different routes into engineering careers, including apprenticeships, held by young people and their parents. The paper draws on regional insights from recent EngineeringUK research and poses seven questions for policymakers focused on ensuring that all young people, whatever their background or wherever they live, know about the pathways into engineering careers. Key findings from the report include: 43% of young people across the UK (aged 11 to 19) said they knew about the apprenticeship options available to them. 63% of young people (aged 11 to 19) in London said they knew about apprenticeship options available to them (the highest across all English regions) compared to just 34% in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Wider work on apprenticeships

EngineeringUK continues to work closely with employers to highlight the importance of vocational pathways, including apprenticeships, to young people through its free careers information and programmes. Earlier this year around 30,000 young people attended EngineeringUK's flagship event, the Big Bang Fair. EngineeringUK also undertakes research on for example workforce needs and attitudes to engineering and recently published their most up to date Engineering Brand Monitor, a survey with young people, parents and teachers exploring a range of issues including awareness and perceptions of apprenticeships.

HOW DO WE MAKE THE SYSTEM WORK BETTER FOR SMES?

In our session on making the apprenticeships system work better for SMEs, it was noted that SMEs were previously the bedrock of the apprenticeship system, providing around 65% of all apprenticeships. However, it was recently pointed out that just 10% of apprenticeships on the Government's website were being provided by SMEs, even though 98% of employers in England are not large or levy-paying employers. In order to allow

SMEs to contribute further to levelling up and to address skills gaps post-Brexit and post-pandemic, it was noted that SMEs need simplified processes, stronger support both in knowledge and resources and stronger collaboration with providers.

Regarding simplification and support for SMEs, contributors from Babcock International pointed out that even large organisations find it difficult to understand their levy spend. While there are useful portals from the Government and from IfATE, the existence of so many different apprenticeship schemes makes it even more difficult for organisations to identify which scheme is the right fit.

Contributors from the St Helens' Chamber of Commerce spoke about how their organisation has dedicated staff for helping SMEs navigate the apprenticeship levy system, but SMEs still require more support. Though the organisation published a Good Practice Guide on levy transfer, they were still not seeing much transfer happening due to the complexities and red tape involved.

According to contributors from the Association of Employment and Learning Providers, another problem for SMEs is the slow transfer of levy funds, which hinders small businesses' ability to fill immediate gaps for apprentices. With greater flexibility for how the Apprenticeship Levy can be used and improved support through a Government-run advice portal, SMEs will be able to make more use of the Levy.

Another challenge for SMEs is the overall lack of candidates. Contributors emphasised that the Government must do more to raise awareness of apprenticeship pathways and their benefits and make it easier for SMEs to take on apprentices, navigate the provider network and support the development of an employer-led system. SMEs and Level 2 apprentices are key for building skills and developing the young talent that will drive levelling-up and post-pandemic recovery.



CASE STUDY

The Open University – Opportunity for All

The Open University (OU) is one of the largest apprenticeship providers in England. They offer Higher and Degree level apprenticeships, available in a range of subjects including healthcare, social care, policing and digital. As a university of four nations, they also support apprentices in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The OU's mission is to make learning accessible to all and apprenticeships can provide learners of all ages and from all backgrounds the chance to develop new skills and gain practical experience. The vast majority of OU education is 'open entry', meaning learners do not need a prior qualification to study with them. But for apprentices requiring Level 2 English and Maths, they provide additional support so apprentices can gain these qualifications alongside their apprenticeship.

Through the OU's flexible learning model, students are able to stay in their local area whilst studying. It helps to keep skills in the community with many students remaining and working in their localities after completing their training. It also means the OU can engage with harder to reach geographies such as rural or coastal areas and in education "cold spots" which have limited access to higher education.

The OU has found that flexible, supported online learning opens up apprenticeships to learners with personal commitments which can make traditional classroom-based education a challenge.



Meet Fola, who was looking after her family of three children whilst studying the OU's Nursing Associate Higher Apprenticeship with Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust. Now graduated, Fola is living her dream of being a nurse, following in her mother's footsteps.

To find out more visit www.open.ac.uk/business/apprenticeships.



The Open University



THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY, FIVE YEARS ON

Our session on the apprenticeship levy noted the various successes and challenges of the Levy in the five years since it was introduced. The session heard from employers on the ways in which they have been innovative in how to utilise and transfer the Levy funding.

While the Levy has resulted in more employers being able to take on apprentices, it has also had its challenges. Contributors from the British Retail Consortium, which includes over 190 member organisations such as Marks & Spencer, Amazon, Tesco and Sky, highlighted their recent survey in which 95% of their members said the Apprenticeship Levy needed reform.

Another challenge that emerged as a common theme during the session as well as in the BRC survey was the need for greater support for SMEs through the Levy. Contributors from Health Education England emphasised that SMEs need greater support, in particular for accommodating the costs and burden of taking on an apprentice and for raising awareness to businesses for how the Levy can be used.

The Levy could also benefit from greater flexibility. Contributors from Engineering UK noted the need to consider greater flexibility for how the levy can be used, and the exploration of ideas such as extending it to T-Level placements. Contributors from the University of Warwick's Institute for Employment Research highlighted how apprentices and providers had shown remarkable resilience and flexibility during the pandemic, which ought to be reflected in how the Levy can be used to support sector and provider innovation.

Contributors agreed that more support is also needed for getting younger people into apprenticeships and for pre-apprenticeship programmes in literacy, maths and English. Greater awareness of the Levy and of the benefits of apprenticeships will be crucial for building the necessary skills to plug gaps and develop the workforce.

Contributors also noted the need for stability for providers in terms of apprenticeship policy and funding from Government, the need for the offering of new courses and the need for employers to enrol more individuals on apprenticeships.

With less red tape around how the Levy can be used, businesses will be able to transfer and pool their resources to improve the provision of apprenticeships. This, plus a Government-run advice service, can help SMEs and businesses create new apprenticeships and expand their provision.

CASE STUDY

WMG, University of Warwick - Inspiring the next generation

Bringing together the best of higher education and work-based learning, Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) has developed undergraduate and postgraduate programmes with industry partners to support evolving business needs. WMG are passionate about offering engaging experiences to all their learners and supporting career paths so people gain the right skills for their careers, their organisation and for life.

WMG spoke to Aston Martin Degree Apprentice Josh Oldham, who is studying on their Applied Engineering Programme about his journey and how he is now giving back and inspiring others:

“Prior to my time as a Degree Apprentice at Aston Martin and studying at WMG – University of Warwick, I attended WMG Academy Sixth Form to focus on subjects that would progress my knowledge of Engineering. One such subject was a Cambridge Technical in Engineering that contained modules such as electrical engineering and design engineering.

As part of the subject, we would have a company come to the Academy to task us with completing a project, and in my year the company was Aston Martin. The project required students to redesign a soft-top roof mechanism on an Aston Martin using key engineering principles to aid in the process. This subject sparked my passion for automotive engineering and after finishing Sixth Form I applied and was successful in starting a Degree Apprenticeship scheme with Aston Martin.

After I started at Aston Martin, given the relationship between the company and WMG Academy, I was fortunate enough to be asked to deliver a project through a series of presentations to students at the Academy who were studying the Cambridge Technical in Engineering course. The project focussed on the Aston Martin door handle mechanism where students were taught how the mechanism worked, what materials it was made from and potential areas for improvement. Not only has this been a fantastic opportunity to get students thinking like engineers but it has developed the relationship with the school and has generated great interest in apprenticeships.

As a Degree Apprentice, this has been one of the most rewarding experiences, being able to study a subject myself where I felt inspired, to then speak to the next generation of engineers and hopefully inspire them too.”



Read more on Josh's journey here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/wmg/people/wmginsight/josh-oldham/>

For more information about WMG, please visit their website: www.warwick.ac.uk/WMGdegreeapprentice



APPRENTICESHIPS AND HYBRID WORKING

Flexible working has become a major trend with employers and employees alike. The COVID-19 pandemic intensified the trend towards flexible working with employers switching their processes overnight to support remote working. The adoption of a hybrid model has transformed the nature of working, including for apprentices, which has enabled new opportunities – but it has also challenged the existing standards needed when developing good apprenticeships.

Contributors from BAE Systems noted that hybrid apprenticeships can and should have an important role to play in the modern world and that technology will take on a growing role when it comes to hybrid provision.

Hybrid and virtual learning can be incredibly helpful, allowing for greater flexibility and for learners to go at their own pace. Coming out of the pandemic, when many providers fully embraced virtual learning, many providers are continuing their provision of hybrid courses. A 2021 report by FutureLearn surveying UK providers found that 50% believe online learning can provide similar benefits to formal education, 56% stated that online learning allows people to learn at their own pace, 44% stated it directly increases self-esteem in learning, 48% stated online learning is financially accessible, and 42% stated it is physically accessible.

Contributors from the Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) noted that informal networking gives the best chance for learning and can only really be achieved in person, while contributors from Capital City College Training added that 16-18-year-olds in particular are worst affected by lacking interpersonal interactions when it comes to career development.

Providers and employers can do more to provide information and guidance to young people about the flexibility of hybrid learning as well as the potential of apprenticeships to contribute to their careers. SMEs will require greater support to navigate red tape around apprenticeships, particularly with regard to the Levy, and to recruit more socioeconomically and ethnically diverse apprentices.

CASE STUDY

London South Bank University – Developing Careers Pathways through a group structure

Progression from advanced and intermediate apprenticeships into higher and degree ones poses a challenge for many learners. To help tackle this, London South Bank University set up the LSBU Group which, in addition to the University, includes South Bank Colleges and South Bank Academies. By forming a group structure with secondary, further and higher education provision, LSBU is able to deliver progression from Levels 2 to 7 in sectors including creative, construction and health – offering employers a comprehensive offer that responds to their skills needs.

Kimberley Dobbs - Level 4 Post-Production Technician Apprentice

A recent example of such a progression is Kimberley Dobbs, who joined South Bank Colleges in September 2021 to study a Level 3 UAL Diploma in Creative Media Production and Technology – a course designed to fast-track students with little prior knowledge in skills including camera-operation; sound recording; editing using Adobe Premiere Pro; shooting pieces-to-camera and developing a critical and contextual awareness of different perspective and approaches within the media sector.

These skills enabled Kimberly to augment her prior experience and successfully apply for a Level 4 Post-Production Technician apprenticeship with the BBC (for which LSBU is the training provider). The recruitment process was national and open to all applicants, but the short news report Kimberley submitted was judged to be the most professional out of all the entries received.

As curriculums are aligned across the Group, Kimberley will be able to matriculate to the University in the autumn knowing that her new course will build directly on the skills she developed at the College.



CASE STUDY

University of Salford: Powering the public sector workforce of the future

Apprenticeships have transformed the way the public sector is able to attract and retain talent and support, develop and progress existing staff.

The University of Salford has been offering higher and degree apprenticeships since 2016, and in that time the institution has had around 1,500 total apprentice starts and worked with almost 500 employers – large and small – across Salford, Greater Manchester and beyond.

This includes the major public sector employers locally, such as NHS Foundation Trusts, local authorities and, more recently, Greater Manchester Police.

As a university with a track record of working with the NHS – Salford is one of the largest trainers of nurses and allied health professionals in the North West – it was only natural that it would offer a range of apprenticeship options for aspiring and current healthcare professionals, including nursing, public health and advanced clinical practice.

Salford is also helping to train the next generation of social workers through the three-year BA (Hons) Social Work degree apprenticeship and is currently working with a local college to develop a progression pathway for local authority staff to train to level 5 and then top up to a degree level apprenticeship in chartered management.

In addition, this year has seen the University of Salford take on its first policing apprentice cohort. As forces across the country look to professionalise learning for police officers, new recruits that are not already educated to degree level are able to undertake the new Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship – a three year professional policing degree apprenticeship – delivering in partnership between the University of Salford, the University of Central Lancashire and Greater Manchester Police.

Ensuring that everyone has access to high quality training and opportunities to progress in the workplace throughout their lifetimes is a key plank of the government's Levelling Up agenda. Apprenticeships are providing the public sector with a valuable mechanism to train, upskill and retrain staff, supporting individuals to develop and progress all while delivering frontline public services that are so important to our communities.



University of
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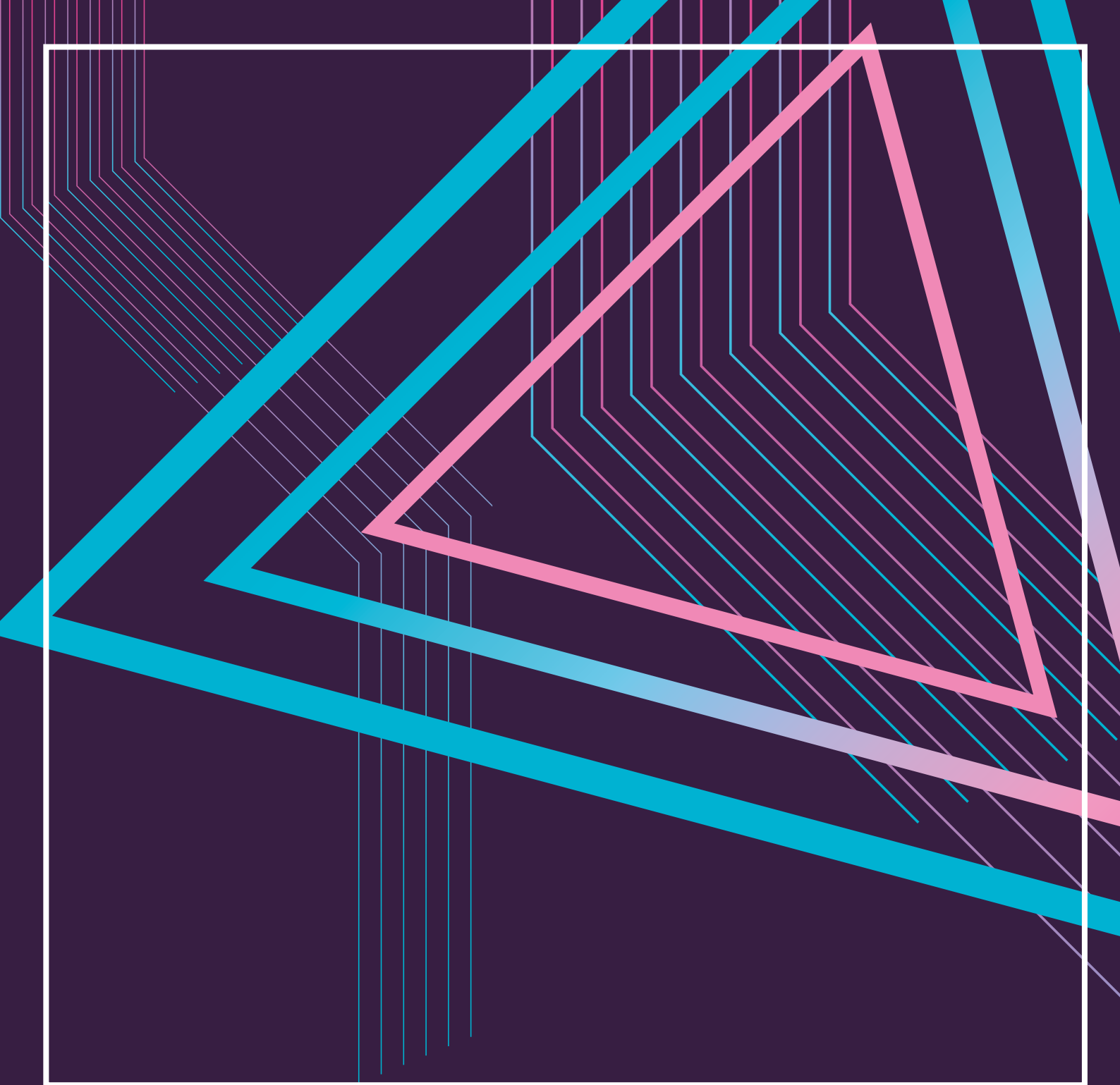
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