



Collected case studies:

Apprenticeships

- *Meeting the skills gap of local economies*
- *Supporting SMEs in creating apprenticeships*

This paper brings together a number of case studies on how cities from the UK and beyond have made the most of apprenticeships.

Apprenticeships are an increasingly central part of the UK's skills and employment policies.

They are regarded by employers and policymakers as providing an important pathway from education into employment, and a means by which to address the country's skills and productivity gaps.

Cities can strengthen the apprenticeship system and make it relevant to their local needs by raising awareness among employers and students, helping businesses to overcome administrative and financial barriers and matching employers with training providers.

The case studies demonstrating how cities implement apprenticeships and what they are trying to achieve are split into the following groups:

- **Meeting the skills gaps of local economies**

Addressing skills gaps is a priority for many cities. Local partners can help reduce these gaps by ensuring a better match between apprenticeships and the demands of the local economy.

- **Overcoming financial barriers faced by employers in taking on apprenticeships**

The Employer Perspectives Survey 2014 found that 8 per cent of employers who do not currently offer apprenticeships are discouraged by the cost of taking on an apprentice.¹ To overcome the financial barriers faced by employers in taking on apprentices, local partners have found additional ways of flexing or supplementing funding for training and wages.

- **Finding the most appropriate training provider for employers' needs**

The apprenticeship training provider market is large, complex, and often difficult to navigate. As a result, employers often struggle to find the most appropriate training provider or the best value for money.²

¹ UKCES (2014) Employer Perspectives Survey 2104: UK Results. Evidence Report 88. London: UKCES. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/373769/14.11.11_EPS_2014_-_Main_Report_full_V2.pdf.

² Centre for Cities interview.

- **Supporting SMEs in creating apprenticeships**

The biggest constraint for SMEs taking on apprenticeships is the additional strain it creates for small and minimally resourced human resource and administrative departments.

- **Raising awareness about apprenticeships among employers**

Employers are crucial to unlocking new apprenticeships. Yet they have not been convinced of the benefits of apprenticeships, and frequently lack access to the information and practical support which can change often outdated and negative perceptions.

- **Making the case for apprenticeships in financial and knowledge based services**

There is a growing awareness among business services companies of a need to diversify their intake beyond standard graduate recruitment channels.³ This has led some employers to explore how they can utilise apprenticeships within their workforce.

- **Promoting apprenticeships among young people and their parents**

The word ‘apprenticeship’ carries a familiarity which is a great strength to the brand. However, it is also one of the biggest problems facing uptake in apprenticeships, as people – and particularly young people and their parents – often have false assumptions about what an apprenticeship can offer.

- **Bridging the gap between school and the workplace**

One of the challenges faced by employers taking on apprentices is the lack of work readiness among young recruits. To address this challenge, a number of local partners have sought to provide additional support for school leavers and for apprentices before they commence their training in order to bridge the gap to the workplace.

- **Closing the skills gap between supply and demand**

Best practice in youth employment support demands strong connections between employers and employment services providers.

- **Ensuring young people develop the skills employers want**

Strong partnerships with employers means young people are more likely to develop the skills employers want and employers are more likely to recruit programme participants.

3 Centre for Cities interview.

Meet the skills gaps of local economies

Addressing skills gaps is a priority for many cities. Local partners can help reduce these gaps by ensuring a better match between apprenticeships and the demands of the local economy.

Using employers' networks through the Chamber of Commerce

Lead organisation: Liverpool Chamber Training

Location: Liverpool, UK

Year: 2015 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Liverpool Chamber Training was established in 1986 as Trident Training, a training provider affiliated with but separate from the Chamber of Commerce. In 2009, the name was changed to Liverpool Chamber Training (LCT) and, over the last year, the two organisations have become more closely affiliated.⁴

Previously, teams from both the Chamber of Commerce and LCT were engaging separately with local employer partners, with little coordination. To streamline their activities they created a single business engagement team and co-located the Chamber of Commerce and the LCT. Since the introduction of a single communication channel in 2015 they have started to see the benefits: engagement with employers has increased, and employers report higher satisfaction as a result of the more joined-up services, as well as the credibility which comes from being part of the Chamber.⁵

Over this time, the Chamber has also been able to leverage its relationships with local businesses to establish their employment and skills needs and to better assess the types of support required. The success rate (the number of apprentices successfully completing the training) of LCT is around 80 per cent, compared to around 70 per cent for Liverpool as a whole.⁶

Using labour market intelligence to inform the apprenticeship offer

Lead organisation: Year Up

Location: Boston and 15 other cities in the US

Year: 2000 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships, Training, International

Read the full report: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Year Up is a one year training programme that provides low income adults aged 18-24 with a route into work through skills development, college credits, internships and other support. Headquartered in Boston, Massachusetts, Year Up operates across 16 US cities.

When Year Up started in 2000, it identified its niche in addressing skills shortages in middle-skill, entry

⁴ Liverpool and Sefton Chambers of Commerce (2016) History. <http://www.liverpoolchamber.org.uk/about/history.aspx>.

⁵ Centre for Cities interview.

⁶ Liverpool Chamber Training (2015) 250 new apprenticeships created in 2014 http://www.liverpoolchambertraining.co.uk/41/section.aspx/39/250_apprentices.

level software support jobs. The training initially focussed on addressing this shortage in skills that were above a high school diploma but below a college degree. Over time, and in response to feedback from partner companies, it has diversified and created new ‘tracks’ in finance and sales, as well as additional training in programming, business management, and customer service. Recently, Year Up has further invested in identifying growth industries in cities to increase the relevance of their training to local companies. They employ Subject Matter Experts in each city they work in and use real-time labour market information to develop a training curriculum that is responsive to the needs of local businesses. They also try to respond to more specific areas of vacancy identified by partner companies which require additional skills – a recent example has been training in anti-money laundering. They design these tracks alongside the employer partner, mapping the curriculum to the requirements of the job. With the creation of new ‘tracks’, Year Up is able to offer long term career growth for young people, leading to the best possible outcomes both for young people enrolled on the programme and for partner companies.

Since 2000, Year Up has worked with more than 13,000 young people and 250 corporate partners in 16 cities. Demand for placements is high, with large numbers of applicants turned away. Nationally, Year Up has a 75 per cent higher graduation rate, and at least 85 per cent of Year Up graduates were employed or at school full time within four months of completing the programme.⁷

Increasing employer involvement in the design of training programmes (I)

Lead organisation: Greater Manchester LEP

Location: Greater Manchester, UK

Year: 2012 to present

Keywords: City and growth deals; Apprenticeships

Read the full report: [City deals and skills](#)

In Greater Manchester, the city deal has been used by authorities at city region level to involve employers in the design of courses and qualifications. The City Deal created a Greater Manchester Employment and Skills Board, a voluntary partnership to bring the LEP together with providers and government agencies and create greater ownership of skills by employers. Respondents reported that this has encouraged high levels of employer engagement in the skills system more generally. Employers from relevant sectors are involved in designing apprenticeship frameworks for a range of sectors, including legal, catering, hospitality and digital games sectors. As part of the programme, partners in Greater Manchester will continue to consult with employers to ensure these apprenticeships are delivering the correct skills.⁸

Increasing employer involvement in the design of training programmes (II)

Policy aim: Provide training relevant to local needs

Lead organisation: Sheffield City Region LEP

Location: Sheffield City Region, UK

Year: 2012 to present

Read the full report: [City deals and skills](#)

⁷ Centre for Cities interview.

⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/221014/Greater-Manchester-City-Deal-final_0.pdf.

Sheffield City Region also negotiated a brokerage model through its City Deal, which will involve reaching out to SMEs in particular and determining their needs before seeking applications from providers to deliver apprenticeships frameworks that match these needs (including from local colleges and partnerships of colleges). To date, at least 15 new apprenticeship frameworks have been created that respondents feel meet local business and sector needs more effectively than the national apprenticeship frameworks.⁹

Overcoming financial barriers faced by employers in taking on apprentices

The Employer Perspectives Survey 2014 found that 8 per cent of employers who do not currently offer apprenticeships are discouraged by the cost of taking on an apprentice.¹⁰ To overcome these financial barriers faced by employers in taking on apprentices, local partners have found additional ways of flexing or supplementing funding for training and wages.

Providing incentives using the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers

Lead organisation: Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Hub

Location: Greater Manchester, UK

Year: 2014

Keywords: Apprenticeships; City and growth deals

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The national Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) has existed since 2012 and provides an additional financial incentive for employers to take on apprentices. As part of the Greater Manchester Devolution Agreement in November 2014, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority received local control of the AGE, which is managed by the Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Hub.¹¹ As a result Greater Manchester has flexed the funding eligibility to better respond to the requirements of the local area. Nationally, the £1,500 grant is available to workplaces with up to 50 employees. In Greater Manchester, in order to cater to the needs of its medium-sized businesses, the grant is available for business with up to 250 employees. This is supplemented with additional grants of £1,000 for employers that progress an apprentice from a Traineeship to an Apprenticeship, or employ an Advanced or Higher apprentice. During 2015-16, there were also additional grants for training providers in Greater Manchester who support the development of a Trailblazer standard.¹²

Greater Manchester's ability to flex the amount and type of funding in order to fit local skills needs has been well received in the city.¹³ The devolved AGE is currently being evaluated by New Economy to inform the programme for 2016/17.¹⁴

9 <http://sheffieldcityregion.org.uk/city-deal/>.

10 UKCES (2014) Employer Perspectives Survey 2104: UK Results. Evidence Report 88. London: UKCES. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/373769/14.11.11_EPS_2014_-_Main_Report_full_V2.pdf.

11 HM Treasury and GMCA (2014) Greater Manchester Agreement: devolution to the GMCA & transition to a directly elected mayor <http://bit.ly/1qHB0zd>.

12 New Economy (2017) GM AGE – Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Grant for Employers – UPDATE. <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/skills-employment/gm-age-greater-manchester-apprenticeship-grant-for-employers>.

13 Roue L (2015) Opinion: Sir Howard Bernstein. Manchester Evening News. <http://bit.ly/1V0Swey>.

14 New Economy (2017) GM AGE – Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Grant for Employers – UPDATE. <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/our-work/skills-employment/gm-age-greater-manchester-apprenticeship-grant-for-employers>.

Funding apprentices' wage subsidies for employers

Lead organisation: Glasgow Guarantee

Location: Glasgow, UK

Year: 2008 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Youth unemployment

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The Glasgow Guarantee began in 2008 as the Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative, a legacy programme which sought to ensure that Glasgow school leavers would benefit from jobs and apprenticeships in construction associated with the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. In 2009, following the recession and the threat of youth unemployment in the city, the scheme was extended to cover all types of work, offering a commitment to assisting every Glasgow school leaver into employment or training. The scheme was then further extended to support young people already out of school. In 2015 the programme was rebranded to become the Glasgow Guarantee.¹⁵ Apprenticeships make up a substantial part of this pledge, and to encourage employers to take on young apprentices, the city council introduced a subsidy of 50 per cent of employers' wages for 12 months (or 24 months for a four year apprenticeship), as long as the apprentice remains in employment for two years.¹⁶

Apprenticeships in Glasgow had declined between 2005/6 and 2008/9, but between 2008/9 and 2009/10 the number of apprenticeship starts in the city more than doubled, and while growth slowed in the following years, there were more than 4,500 apprenticeships by 2012/13.¹⁷ This sharp increase in the number of apprenticeship starts occurred across a range of sectors as many employers shifted away from recruiting graduates, towards recruiting apprentices. Post-recession, some of these sectors have reverted back to recruiting graduates – for technicians, for example – but other sectors, such as accountancy, have continued to recruit apprentices.¹⁸ The experience in Glasgow shows that wage subsidies can act as a catalyst to draw employers into the apprenticeship system, which enables employers to experience the benefits they can provide to their business.

Enhancing national programmes

Lead organisation: Birmingham Young Talent for Business

Location: Birmingham, UK

Year: 2013 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Youth unemployment

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Young Talent for Business (YTfB) was established in 2013 as part of the Birmingham Youth Promise, which pledges that all young people aged 14-25 will be able to access employment, education and training opportunities within four months of leaving school, college or employment. The scheme overall seeks to tackle Birmingham's youth unemployment challenge through jobs, apprenticeships and traineeships.

15 Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (2014). Glasgow: The Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative. <http://www.councils.coop/case-studies/glasgow-the-commonwealth-apprenticeship-initiative/>.

16 Glasgow City Council (2016) Glasgow Guarantee <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=16174>; Glasgow City Council (2015) Regeneration and the Economy Policy Development Committee.

17 SDS, Modern Apprenticeship statistics 2005-6 to 2012-13.

18 Centre for Cities interview.

The scheme is funded by the city council via the Birmingham Jobs Fund, which also funded Local Exemplar Initiatives to provide employability skills and coaching support to help young people into employment. Young Talent for Business is a partnership between the City Council, the National Apprenticeship Service, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) including JobCentre Plus, and Marketing Birmingham. Until 2014, the DWP provided wage incentive grants of £2,275 for employers hiring long term unemployed (at least 6 months) young people across the UK. Young Talent for Business was able to match this with an additional grant for young people within Birmingham local authority, paid once the young person had been employed for 13 weeks. This supplemented the DWP grant which was paid once the person had been in work for 26 weeks. For employers hiring young people as an apprentice, YTFB was able to match the contribution made by the national Apprenticeship Grant for Employers, meaning that employers could receive grants up to a maximum of £3,000 from the Birmingham Jobs Fund.¹⁹ Since the withdrawal of the DWP grants, YTFB have retained the additional subsidy and extended the grant payment threshold to 26 weeks into employment. Applications are made by employers or by training providers on their behalf, and grants are made following review by the partnership members. The partnership also offers recruitment support for employers looking to recruit young people via Jobcentre Plus.²⁰

The grants are mainly targeted at and accessed by SMEs, and since its introduction, the Fund has helped around 3,300 people into employment and apprenticeships.²¹

Finding the most appropriate training provider for employer's needs

The apprenticeship training provider market is large, complex, and often difficult to navigate. As a result, employers often struggle to find the most appropriate training provider or the best value for money.²²

Matching employers and training providers using local networks

Lead organisation: Humber Apprenticeship Support Service

Location: Humber LEP region, UK

Year: 2014 – 2015

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The Humber Apprenticeship Support Service (HASS) was set up in November 2014 to support the creation of new apprenticeships across the Humber LEP region.

HASS brokers relationships between local training providers and businesses in order to support new apprenticeships. It forms one of the six spokes of the Humber LEP skills pledge, which also covers employing graduates, supporting entrepreneurship and employing young people.²³ For the pledge on apprenticeships and traineeships, employers formally agree to offer a place and are offered support from the HASS to enable them to do so. HASS brokers relationships between partners in order to better match

¹⁹ DWP (2014) Helping young people into work. London: DWP. <http://bit.ly/1NnXdXV>.

²⁰ Birmingham City Council. Young Talent for Business: Employer financial incentives available through Birmingham Jobs Fund. https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20139/support_for_business/448/young_talent_for_business.

²¹ Centre for Cities interview.

²² Centre for Cities interview.

²³ Humber Local Enterprise Partnership (2016) Humber Skills Pledge. <http://www.humberlep.org/skills-pledge/>.

up the supply and demand of skills across the region. It works with employers to identify their needs, and provides them with the information and support required to create an apprenticeship. They provide information on how the system works and the types of frameworks available, as well as direct support for employers including work readiness training for apprentices and managing communications between training providers, apprentices and employers.

In the first five months of the scheme, HASS engaged 338 businesses and delivered 33 apprenticeship starts. By January 2016, that number had increased to 167 apprenticeship starts. Much of the success of the HASS has been ascribed to the Humber LEP's ability to build on strong existing networks that had been present prior to its creation, between employers and the business community, local authorities and colleges, the Chamber of Commerce, the University of Hull, and the SFA. The relatively small geographic scale of the area and the longevity of businesses in the Humber also helped to support the effectiveness of relationships within the network. As a pilot scheme, funding was always a challenge for HASS: it was set up to test demand and supported with funding from the European Social Fund programme via the Humber Regional Growth Fund. The scheme was extended until December 2015, and the LEP plans to use European funds to support a further programme building on lessons learned, currently named HASS 2.²⁴

Employers collaborating on training solutions

Lead organisation: Apprenticeship 2000

Location: Charlotte, North Carolina, US

Year: 1995 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; International

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

In 1995, Blum, a bespoke furniture fittings manufacturer from Charlotte, North Carolina, was struggling to recruit skilled technicians. Looking to take a more direct role in developing the skills that they needed, they and the other founding firm, Daetwyler, formed a cooperative and approached Central Piedmont Community College about supplying classroom-based training in order to create a bespoke apprenticeship scheme for the partner companies.²⁵ In 1996, Apprenticeship 2000 grew to incorporate six partner companies working across the mechatronics, tool and die machining industries.

The sponsoring companies pay for training costs, as well as paying the apprentices wages. A job is guaranteed at the end of the programme, and apprentices receive an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree in Mechatronics Technology, as well as a Journeyman's Certificate from the North Carolina Department of Commerce.²⁶ By coming together to define their needs, and then approaching the local college with an offer, the partner companies were able to develop a scheme which supported their specific technical requirements. Over time, as a relationship developed with Central Piedmont Community College, they were able to have input into the curriculum. Partner companies assisted in providing some of the high-quality laboratory equipment for schools to support training, and some companies, such as Blum, developed their own separate training facilities to provide on-site training that would not pose a risk to high value production line equipment and goods.

²⁴ Centre for Cities interview.

²⁵ NC Community Colleges, Workforce Learning Summit Innovation or Best Practice. <http://bit.ly/23tVmNZ>.

²⁶ Birkle M et al, Apprenticeship 2000: The Process. <http://apprenticeship2000.com/zwp/about/our-process/>.

The scheme works because partners clearly see the value in their investment. For the partner companies, the scheme fills technical skills gaps. For apprentices, the offer of high quality training free of charge, alongside the guarantee of good jobs with career progression, meant a significant buy-in to the scheme. And for colleges, several have reported that Apprenticeship 2000 apprentices demonstrate good behaviour, consistently hand in homework and achieve higher grades than other students.²⁷ Anecdotally, partner companies have reported increases in production efficiencies over the course of the scheme. In August 2012, the programme received a Trailblazers and Innovators award from the US Department of Labour. Since 1995, 136 students have graduated and 49 apprentices are currently enrolled. The scheme is entirely funded by the partner employers and the scheme now has chapters right across North Carolina with 50 different companies.

In the UK, Group Training Associations (GTAs) offer a similar model for developing employer-led training. GTAs are membership groups of local companies who come together to train apprenticeships collectively. They often provide a large part of the training in-house, and tend to specialise in a particular industry, which has historically tended to be in construction or manufacturing.²⁸

Supporting SMEs in creating apprenticeships

The biggest constraint for SMEs taking on apprenticeships is the additional strain it creates for small and minimally resourced human resource and administrative departments.

Managing HR and administrative functions on behalf of employers

Lead organisation: Glasgow Guarantee

Location: Glasgow, UK

Year: 2008 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Youth unemployment; SMEs

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Local partners can support SMEs in creating apprenticeships through providing HR and administrative support to offset their costs.

The Glasgow Guarantee began in 2008 as the Commonwealth Apprenticeship Initiative, a legacy programme which sought to ensure that Glasgow school leavers would benefit from jobs and apprenticeships in construction associated with the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games. In 2009, following the recession and the threat of youth unemployment in the city, the scheme was extended to cover all types of work. As part of the Glasgow Guarantee, Glasgow City Council offers a service which manages some of the administrative and HR functions associated with apprenticeships on the behalf of employers. They advertise vacancies, handle recruitment, and sometimes shortlist, depending on the preference of the partner firm. Young people apply to the council for vacancies rather than to the employer, and the council also handles feedback to unsuccessful applicants.

²⁷ Centre for Cities interview.

²⁸ Centre for Cities interview.

Unlike many of the other examples, Glasgow Guarantee partners found that SMEs were particularly interested in the scheme, in part because of the recruitment support offered. And a survey of employers' experience found that while their initial motivations for being involved had been in order to access the wage subsidies, those most likely to use the scheme again would do so because of the recruitment support provided.²⁹

Lowering costs for employers with Apprenticeship Training Agencies

Lead organisation: London Apprenticeship Company

Location: London, UK

Year: 2009 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; SMEs

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) were introduced in 2009 as part of the National Apprenticeship Service to lower the costs to employers of taking on an apprentice by taking on HR and administrative functions. There are now around 50 ATAs across the UK, which receive funding support from the Skills Funding Agency. Established to address the obstacles that businesses, and particularly small and medium sized businesses, face in delivering apprenticeships, ATAs act as a recruitment agency, recruiting, hiring and establishing the training plan for the apprentice.³⁰ ATAs act as a stepping-stone for SMEs in recruiting apprentices. Typically the apprentice is employed by the ATA for around three months while the employer pays a set fee, and is then taken on directly by the employer.³¹

The London Apprenticeship Company was set up in 2009 with support from the Greater London Authority and was the first ATA to open in the UK. It works with both local authorities and businesses to support apprenticeships, and has supported more than 500 businesses to create over 1,000 apprenticeships. It provides a full range of support services for apprentices, helping recruitment, advertising, providing mock interviews and presentations, negotiating pay, employing apprentices on behalf of companies, and offering supervision and pastoral support. The LAC also brokers government grants such as the Apprenticeship Grant for Employers.³²

Raising awareness about apprenticeships among employers

Employers are crucial to unlocking new apprenticeships. Yet, they have not been convinced of the benefits of apprenticeships, and frequently lack access to the information and practical support which can change often outdated and negative perceptions.

²⁹ Centre for Cities interview.

³⁰ Centre for Cities interview.

³¹ Centre for Cities interview.

³² London Apprenticeship Company (2016) Matching, training and supporting employers and apprentices, <http://bit.ly/23E55hj>; Centre for Cities interview.

Getting the Mayor involved in campaigning for apprenticeships

Lead organisation: Greater London Authority

Location: London, UK

Year: 2010 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Apprenticeships have been promoted by the then London Mayor Boris Johnson as a crucial way of tackling the skills gaps which are constraining London's productivity, particularly in non-traditional sectors such as finance.

The awareness of apprenticeships among employers was identified as being one of the key challenges to the creation of new apprenticeships in London, and the London Apprenticeship Campaign was launched in 2010 in order to address this issue. The Campaign has a range of initiatives, including the provision of impartial careers information, advice and guidance in schools and careers and jobs fairs to increase apprenticeship provision in London. In particular, it targets large employers without a history of offering apprenticeships, and SMEs. Two of the key campaigns that the scheme has used are:

1. The Mayoral Employer Letter and Engagement Campaign: letters signed by the Mayor of London were sent out to the CEOs of large employers, with a focus on financial and professional services, to share some of the potential benefits of recruiting apprentices and to direct them to sources of information and support
2. The University of Work: a joint marketing campaign between the Greater London LEP and the Skills Funding Agency, which commissioned advertising agency Saatchi and Saatchi to work with SMEs on what they know about apprenticeships and helping to refer people to the SFA.

The Campaign has been successful in increasing apprenticeship starts across London: between 2009–10 and 2010–11, the number of apprenticeships in London doubled, and its early successes led to the creation of new targets for apprenticeships in London.³³ But there are still challenges: since 2010/11 apprenticeship numbers have not increased substantially, and analysis from the OECD has raised questions about their quality.³⁴ While the scheme has been successful in boosting demand among employers, awareness and perception among parents and teachers remains a challenge; for example, despite securing additional incentives for apprentices in London, such as reduced Underground fares for apprentices, take-up remains low. The London Apprenticeship Campaign demonstrates how campaigning and marketing can have a positive effect on apprenticeship starts, but that at a scale such as that of London, and where there is little history of apprenticeships, changing perceptions is a complex challenge.

³³ Centre for Cities interview.

³⁴ Evans S and Bosch G (2012) Apprenticeship in London: Boosting Skills in a City Economy – With Comment on Lessons from Germany. OECD Local Economic and Employment Development Working Papers. <http://bit.ly/1qHEJGE>.

Sharing information through word of mouth

Lead organisation: Plymouth Apprenticeship Managers Network

Location: Plymouth, UK

Year: 2014 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The Plymouth Apprenticeship Managers Network is part of the 1000 Club, a network of local businesses that aims to support people into careers in the city. The 1000 Club was created in September 2012 in response to feedback from businesses that young people were not work ready and that local businesses were struggling to understand the apprenticeship system.

The Managers Network is a group of employers from across the city which runs apprenticeship schemes and meets regularly in order to share knowledge and information across different sectors, sharing advice on leadership, recruitment and legal obligations. To encourage new businesses to take on apprentices, the Network organises dinners to which current members invite businesses that do not currently offer apprenticeships. This personal approach means that the apprenticeship system and its benefits can be explained by businesses already involved in the scheme. The personal approach also provides a mutually supportive environment for businesses new to the apprenticeship system.³⁵

Members of the 1000 Club have offered 1,244 new apprenticeships in Plymouth since the scheme started, which account for around 21 percent of all apprenticeships created in the city over that period.³⁶

Making the case for apprenticeships in financial and knowledge based services

There is a growing awareness among business services companies of a need to diversify their intake beyond standard graduate recruitment channels.³⁷ This has led some employers to explore how they can utilise apprenticeships within their workforce.

Establishing frameworks in professional sectors

Lead organisation: Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC)

Location: London, UK

Year: 2010 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

35 1000 Club (2016) Welcome to the 1000 Club. <http://www.1000club.co.uk/home.aspx>.

36 6,020 apprenticeships have been created in Plymouth between 2012/13 and 2014/15: BIS 2015. The total statistics do not include apprenticeships created since September 2015.

37 Centre for Cities interview.

London's economy is strongly knowledge-based – 23 per cent of all jobs are in private knowledge intensive business services – and it has one of the UK's most highly skilled workforces, with 48 per cent of all working residents having at least degree level qualifications.³⁸ However, the city also faces a substantial skills challenge, which covers a number of sectors, and particularly intermediate level skills which support knowledge intensive business services such as business, administration, finance and law³⁹.

Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC) started looking to apprenticeships in 2010 as a way of addressing the shortages they faced in recruitment. Finding that none of the existing frameworks were appropriate to their needs, they worked with the National Apprenticeship Service and with around 35-40 other companies within the same industry to develop three higher apprenticeship frameworks in assurance, tax and management consultancy. Using UKCES funding from the Employer Ownership of Skills pilot in 2013, they were then able to deliver 3,000 apprenticeships in professional and business services. PwC apprenticeships last two years and those who pass their exams are offered jobs.

The scheme is highly regarded, and apprenticeship finishers tend to be headhunted by rival firms. The scheme receives more applicants than there are places, and there are never unfilled vacancies. PwC report that the retention rate for apprentices after qualifying is higher than for graduates, at 86 per cent compared to 68 per cent for graduates.⁴⁰ However, there are challenges around the high standards which they demand, even at age 16. Good qualifications, as well as customer service experience and involvement in extra-curricular activities, are important at recruitment stage, and because there are no apprenticeship frameworks in professional services at the intermediate and advanced level, progression into PwC apprenticeships tends to come from academic, rather than vocational routes.

Creating professional apprenticeships for SMEs

Lead organisations: Price Waterhouse Coopers (PwC), Greater London Authority, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and the National Apprenticeship Service

Location: London, UK

Year: 2013

Keywords: Apprenticeships; SMEs

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

London's economy is strongly knowledge-based – 23 per cent of all jobs are in private knowledge intensive business services – and it has one of the UK's most highly skilled workforces, with 48 per cent of all working residents having at least degree level qualifications.⁴¹ However, the city also faces a substantial skills challenge, which covers a number of sectors, and particularly intermediate level skills which support knowledge intensive business services such as business, administration, finance and law.⁴²

Building on their development of higher apprenticeship frameworks in professional services, PwC set up the London Professional Apprenticeship Programme in 2013 alongside the Greater London Authority, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) in order to support the creation of 250 professional apprenticeships by small and medium sized businesses, only 5 per cent of which employ apprentices in London.⁴³ The programme is funded by £1.4 million from

38 Centre for Cities (2016) Cities Outlook 2016.

39 London: Centre for Cities London Councils (2015) Skills Gaps http://skillsmatch.intelligentlondon.org.uk/skills_gaps.

40 Apprenticeship Careers (2015) Top Apprenticeship Employers. <http://bit.ly/25ZuZu>.

41 Centre for Cities (2016) Cities Outlook 2016.

42 London: Centre for Cities London Councils (2015) Skills Gaps http://skillsmatch.intelligentlondon.org.uk/skills_gaps.

43 BIS (2013) Press release: £2.3 million to open London's professional services to more apprentices. <http://bit.ly/1Sz8RR1>.

BIS via the Olympic Legacy Budget, which has supported design, set up and early implementation, while £900,000 from PwC will go towards ongoing costs, such as training and networking events, mentoring, and a graduation ceremony.⁴⁴ The LPA Programme also runs a network for apprentices in London that provides social as well as professional support.⁴⁵

The scheme now has around 400 SME partners, 70-80 per cent of which had never offered an apprenticeship before. In September 2015, 84 per cent of all enrolled apprentices were on track to complete their apprenticeship, compared to a national average of 69 per cent.⁴⁶

Promoting apprenticeships among young people and their parents

The word ‘apprenticeship’ carries a familiarity which is a great strength to the brand. However, it is also one of the biggest problems facing uptake in apprenticeships, as people – and particularly young people and their parents – often have false assumptions about what an apprenticeship can offer.

Getting apprentices to share their experience through schools

Lead organisation: Plymouth Apprentice Ambassador Network

Location: Plymouth, UK

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The Plymouth Apprentice Ambassador Network is a collaboration of employers and training providers across the city which supports current and ex-apprentices to share their experiences with schools and colleges. It is a member of the 1000 Club, a network of local businesses that aims to support people into careers in the city. The 1000 Club was created in September 2012 in response to feedback from businesses that young people were not work ready and that local businesses were struggling to understand the apprenticeship system.

The Plymouth Apprentice Ambassador Network aims to improve young peoples’ knowledge and perception of apprenticeships, which is particularly important in Plymouth, where demand from businesses for apprentices outstrips the supply – particularly in engineering and manufacturing, business, administration and law, and construction.⁴⁷ Ambassadors receive training to be able to share information that extends beyond their own apprenticeship experience, and go into schools in order to share their knowledge with pupils, teachers and parents.⁴⁸ However, the 1000 Club partners recognise that to reach the city’s target of a 25 percent increase in apprenticeships by 2020, more needs to be done to engage with schools and parents in Plymouth. This includes making substantial changes to the careers advice and guidance provided in schools. They are currently compiling an information pack for parents which provides details on apprenticeships available across the city and the progression routes to demonstrate how they can be a legitimate career pathway. They also recognise that real progress in the approach taken by schools will require changes in how schools are assessed, a requirement for schools to report on numbers progressing into apprenticeships as well as on to university, and changes to the contents of careers guidance.⁴⁹

44 PwC (2013) New PwC programme to open up professional apprenticeships for business in London. <http://bit.ly/1oX6gZt>.

45 Centre for Cities interview.

46 PwC (2015) London Professional Apprenticeship students celebrate graduation. <http://bit.ly/1VICXxJ>.

47 Plymouth City Council (2015) Plymouth Skills Analysis. <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PlymouthSkillsAnalysisSummary.pdf>.

48 Centre for Cities interview.

49 Centre for Cities interview.

Recognising high quality, impartial careers advice

Lead organisation: Humber Local Enterprise Partnership

Location: Humber LEP region, UK

Year: 2014 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) was identified as a priority when the Humber LEP was formed in 2011. The LEP, which is also highly proactive in building up awareness and knowledge of apprenticeships across the region, introduced the Humber Gold Standard quality mark for excellence as a means to recognise high quality, impartial CEIAG and to drive up standards where provision was inconsistent or absent.

The Gold Standard is mapped against existing national frameworks but is differentiated according to the input of local employers. The LEP is planning to work with Careers England to have the framework nationally accredited. Previously, careers advice from some schools in the area was sector specific and tended to focus on traditional jobs rather than all occupational areas. Employers believed that the inconsistency of CEIAG was contributing to hard-to-fill vacancies, as young people were not recognising apprenticeship vacancies as relevant to their interests. By shifting the focus of careers advice in schools towards occupational pathways, and working alongside agencies such as Jobcentre Plus, more young people have been following apprenticeship and learning pathways that match their career objectives. Schools, colleges and training providers have been proactively involved in the scheme, and their feedback has focussed particularly on the challenge of changing parents' attitudes towards apprenticeships away from the perception that apprenticeships are a low attainment route with low career prospects. The LEP has supported this approach by attending parents' evenings and giving presentations.

So far the quality mark has been offered to 50 schools and colleges and schools are starting to see some shifts in perception of apprenticeships, and further investment has been secured to extend the scheme to additional partners.⁵⁰

Adopting various approaches to information and guidance in schools

Lead organisation: Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Hub

Location: Greater Manchester, UK

Year: 2012 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

The Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Hub was set up in 2012, with three main objectives, one of which was the provision of information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people in Greater Manchester. The Hub is a partnership involving a wide range of stakeholders including the ten Greater Manchester

⁵⁰ Centre for Cities interview.

local authorities, the Chamber of Commerce, New Economy, the Skills Funding Agency, the National Apprenticeship Service and JobCentre Plus.

In January 2016, there were 18 projects commissioned by the Hub around three main themes:

- **Quality awards and professional development support**, including Inspiring IAG, a nationally accredited CEIAG award which provides a framework for careers provision in schools, and the Better Choices, Better Outcomes school leadership programme that challenged poor cultural perceptions of CEIAG within schools;
- **Information advice and guidance**, including the Apprenticeship Ambassador Programme, which sends apprentices into schools to share their experiences about being an apprentice with pupils, teachers and parents; and
- **Employability skills**, including Skilled and Ready, an award for schools which replicates the activities of employers in schools to share some of the experience of taking on an apprenticeship.

Additionally, the ‘See Things Differently’ marketing and communications campaign is an outreach project which aims to transform perceptions about apprenticeships. The project has incorporated results day flash mobs, a Greater Manchester bus tour and an apprenticeship float as part of Manchester Pride 2015.⁵¹

The impression locally is that through these initiatives, young people are becoming more aware of apprenticeships as an option, and that there is a growing confidence that they can compete with degrees as a route into work.⁵² An evaluation of the Greater Manchester IAG projects during 2015 found that 119 of 221 schools who were approached about information workshops attended, and of these, 82 per cent then participated in one or more projects. On the whole, the schools who took part benefitted from the project, and considered the time that they invested worthwhile, particularly in Inspiring IAG, which helped draw together and develop existing IAG offers in schools. While there is little data available on whether the scheme has led to increased uptake, some schools have seen an increase in interest in apprenticeships – one school had around 10 expressions of interest compared to two or three in previous years. There were challenges in the delivery of IAG: finding time in the busy school day to provide services and for providers to engage with staff was often difficult, and engagement was particularly challenging in schools which struggled with performance issues more generally.⁵³ More recently, local partners have reported that the quality awards and professional development programmes have led to a demonstrable shift in the cultural perception of CEIAG within schools.⁵⁴

Bridging the gap between school and the workplace

One of the challenges faced by employers taking on apprentices is the lack of work readiness among young recruits. To address this challenge, a number of local partners have sought to provide additional support for school leavers and for apprentices before they commence their training in order to bridge the gap to the workplace.

51 GMCA, Greater Manchester Apprenticeships Hub. <http://theapprenticeshiphub.co.uk/the-apprenticeship-hub-is-here/>.

52 Centre for Cities interview.

53 Cambridge Policy Consultants (2015) Evaluation of Manchester Apprenticeship Hub: Improving Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance. <http://www.neweconomymanchester.com/media/1578/gm-app-hub-ceiag-evaluation-report-dec-2015.pdf>.

54 Centre for Cities interview.

Supporting hard-to-reach youth through pre-employment training

Lead organisation: City Gateway

Location: Tower Hamlets, UK

Year: 1999 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Youth unemployment; Training

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

City Gateway is a charity which tackles challenges around social and economic inequality in London, and particularly in Tower Hamlets, by working with partner organisations to create jobs and apprenticeships as well as providing pre-employment support and training for service users.⁵⁵

Service users include hard-to-reach NEETS (Not in Education, Training or Employment) between the ages of 14-24 and vulnerable women, who face significant challenges in entry to work and training, including limited aspirations and low language and skills levels. Only 10 per cent of learners are able to prove that they already have qualifications when they join the programme.⁵⁶ City Gateway addresses some of the biggest challenges to work-readiness through training and employability skills to enable service users to progress into sustainable employment. Before an apprentice begins a formal apprenticeship training programme and placement, they complete a pre-employment training course which can take anything between six weeks and a year, depending on their prior attainment.⁵⁷ Pre-employment training is free for service users, and there are five different routes, including business administration, childcare and IT. Training includes English and Maths up to Level 2, vocational skills up to Level 3, and interview skills. The courses include flexible entry points at Level 1, Level 2 and Traineeship.

Supporting pre-apprenticeships with council and government funding

Lead organisation: Walsall Works

Location: Walsall, UK

Year: 2012 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Youth unemployment; Training

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Making apprenticeships work in cities](#)

Walsall Works is Walsall Council's apprenticeship programme aimed at young people aged 16-24. Launched in April 2012, it supports the creation of apprenticeships with local employers, as well as pre-apprenticeships to support transition into training.⁵⁸

Pre-apprenticeships are short training programmes available through training providers and colleges across the UK, and provide stepping stones into apprenticeships for those who lack the required skills and qualifications, particularly in GCSE level English and Maths. They can take between 6 and 20 weeks to complete, and focus on building up basic skills and work preparation in particular industries.⁵⁹ Walsall Works offers four pre-apprenticeship schemes of 20-26 weeks training, in Sports, Health and Social Care,

⁵⁵ City Gateway, Training for 16-24s. <https://home.citygateway.org.uk/services/training-19-24>.

⁵⁶ City Gateway, Welcome from our COO.

⁵⁷ Centre for Cities interview.

⁵⁸ Walsall Council, Walsall Works. <http://walsallworks.com/>.

⁵⁹ Centre for Cities interview.

Book-keeping, Administration and Customer service, and Business Skills.⁶⁰ As well as qualifications in the relevant subject area, they also receive level 1 qualifications in Maths, Literacy, ICT and Employability, alongside pastoral care and mentoring to support some of the barriers to work, such as low confidence and self-esteem, debt and money management, mental health problems and drug and substance misuse.⁶¹

Walsall Works have worked alongside three local training providers to support pre-apprenticeship places, which are partly funded by the local council, alongside match funding from the Skills Funding Agency and the Department for Work and Pensions. In the first two years of the scheme, Walsall Works supported 1,189 young people into apprenticeships, learning and employment, including 342 pre-apprentices, and worked with 479 employers and 30 training providers. Over that period, youth unemployment in Walsall reduced faster than for the Black Country as a whole, and in 2014, 70 per cent of all pre-apprentices completed their training.⁶²

Closing the skills gap between demand and supply

Best practice in youth employment support demands strong connections between employers and employment services providers.

Working with employers to create training that replicates real jobs

Lead organisation: After School Matters (formerly Gallery 37)

Location: Chicago, Illinois, US

Year: 1991 to present

Keywords: Apprenticeships; Training; Employment prospects; International

Read the full report here: [Youth Opportunity: Lessons from the US](#)

After School Matters (ASM) provides over 22,000 internships and apprenticeships to school pupils in Chicago. It works with over 15,000 young people in the city, making it the largest programme of its kind.

ASM evolved from Gallery 37, which offered young people apprenticeships in the arts, and has expanded to include technical and employability training in science, sports, tech and communications. There are three different tiers within the apprenticeship model: pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships and advanced apprenticeships. The internships allow young people to apply the skills they have learnt (through attending at least three programmes) in corporate environments. All programmes seek to replicate real jobs in a number of ways, for example by interviewing potential participants, maintaining professional standards and paying stipends. The average student-to-instructor ratio is 15 to 1. ASM works with over 300 CBOs across the city, the Chicago Parks Authority, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) and other city agencies, as well as corporate partners to deliver programmes. Four different regional managers and their teams are responsible for building relationships with partners in different parts of the city and assessing the suitability of different sites. ASM also pays existing school staff to act as liaisons within schools to recruit young people, provide real-time information on what is happening in different schools and assist with tracking programme participants. ASM collaborates with the city government (who part fund ASM's

⁶⁰ Walsall Council (2012) New Pre-Apprenticeship programme. <http://bit.ly/1qHFrtZ>.

⁶¹ Walsall Council (2016) Walsall Works presentation <http://www.slideshare.net/safaraz/walsall-works-presentation>.

⁶² Walsall Council (2014) Regeneration Scrutiny and Performance Panel: Walsall Works Programme Update. <http://bit.ly/1V4vQbE>.

work) to establish the 'One Summer Chicago' portal which connects young people with summer job opportunities available across the city. Overall, 65 per cent of funding comes from government grants and support, and the rest from private sources – the team raised over \$4.5 million at their last annual event.

ASM has expanded its research and evaluation team to track the performance of its programmes, and partners with universities to evaluate their impact. ASM programmes have high attendance rates (87.6 per cent compared to the national average of 75 per cent).⁶³ The programme has also been found to lead to higher high school attendance and graduation rates.⁶⁴

Ensuring young people develop the skills employers want

Strong partnership with employers means young people are more likely to develop the skills employers want and employers are more likely to recruit programme participants.

Developing strong partnerships with employers

Lead organisation: Rotterdam's port, DAAD, Shipping and Transport College

Location: Rotterdam, Netherlands

Year: 2008 – 2011

Keywords: Youth skills training; Apprenticeships; Youth employment; International

Read the full report here: [Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment Challenge](#)

Rotterdam's port provides jobs for approximately 90,000 people and due to growth and an ageing workforce demand for new personnel is rising. Employers foresaw a significant problem in recruiting young people equipped with the necessary skills to do the job in coming years. In response, the port in partnership with DAAD (the regional employers service desk) and the Shipping and Transport College, developed a training scheme in 2008.⁶⁵

The training offers young people without any qualifications the opportunity to secure paid employment by completing an apprenticeship. Over 40 weeks, candidates work four days a week, and spend one day a week attending the Shipping and Transport College. Candidates receive an apprentice fee from the employer for the first 16 weeks (which is higher than social welfare payments), after which they are offered a contract for at least 12 months. The companies involved pay for the necessary equipment and provide guidance on the work floor. The project is funded by the stakeholders involved, with 60 per cent provided by the City of Rotterdam, 20 per cent by employers and 20 per cent by the Shipping and Transport College.

On average, 75 per cent of participants successfully complete the course and of these successful candidates, 80 per cent proceed to train as all round operators. The project resulted in around 500 young people being employed in the Rotterdam port in 2010 and 2011.

⁶³ After School Matters (2013) Annual Report 2013, ASM, <http://www afterschoolmatters.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/2013.pdf>.

⁶⁴ Chaplin Hall (2007) After-School Programmes and Academic Impact: A study of Chicago's After School Matters, University of Chicago, http://www.niusileadscape.org/docs/FINAL_PRODUCTS/LearningCarousel/AfterSchoolProgramsandAcademics.pdf.

⁶⁵ Ivaes, B. et al (2012) Report from Rotterdam: 'Revit, Stockholms stad.

More information



The case studies in this document came from the reports:

'Delivering change: making apprenticeships work for cities' published in 2016. Read it at: www.centreforcities.org/publication/delivering-change-making-apprenticeships-work-in-cities/.

'City Deals and Skills', published in 2015. Read it at: <http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/city-deals-and-skills/>.

'Youth opportunity: Lessons from the US' published in 2015. Read it at: www.centreforcities.org/publication/youth-opportunity-lessons-from-the-us-on-improving-young-peoples-employment-prospects/.

'Delivering change: Cities and the Youth Unemployment challenge' published in 2014. Read it at: www.centreforcities.org/publication/delivering-change-cities-and-the-youth-unemployment-challenge/.

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