

LADDER OF OPPORTUNITY

For apprentices, employers and providers



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#NAW2017

SPECIAL CELEBRATION OF 10-YEAR MILESTONE



GEMMA GATHERCOLE
@G_GATHERCOLE

A decade of promoting apprentices and apprenticeships is certainly something to celebrate.

That's why the team at FE Week has pulled out all the stops for this supplement, marking the 10-year milestone for National Apprenticeship Week.

Starting a new job or role, which all apprentices do, is something I can particularly empathise with at the moment, being three weeks into my new job, and I'm delighted that this NAW supplement gives me the opportunity to

make my editorial debut.

This isn't the last time you'll see me in this supplement either, as my piece on pages six and seven gives an update on the policy journey we've been on this last year.

This week has featured 'Get In, Go Far' and 'Made by Apprentices' campaigns, even Royal Mail has joined the party by franking mail with the Apprenticeships logo.

At this key juncture, preparing for wholesale changes to the funding of apprenticeships, it's fantastic to see the great stories of apprenticeships being told across the country.

During the year, we welcomed a new secretary of state, Justine Greening, and a new skills minister, Robert Halfon and we're delighted to feature them both in this edition. Justine Greening was present at the launch event for this year's celebration, featured on page three and Robert Halfon has provided an expert piece on page four alongside some tweets of his national tour for NAW.

Shadow skills minister, Gordon Marsden, provides an expert piece on page five, where he returns to his much-loved

and correct metaphor of the ladder of opportunity that apprenticeships provide so many people - a theme we've followed through this supplement.

The 10th NAW has seen hundreds of events take place across the country celebrating and promoting the breadth of activity in this sector. We feature a selection of these events on pages 10 and 11.

And apprentices take centre stage on page 12, where we celebrate the winners of the National Apprenticeships Awards.

It's perhaps appropriate that in the week where apprenticeships are the main story, we have finally had confirmation of the majority of the senior roles at the Institute for Apprenticeships. Page 13 gives you the round-up of the most recent announcements.

Given the implementation of the levy and the new funding system will be launching in May, and with so much new policy, we've given you the essential reference library of documents, on pages 14 and 15, to help you navigate the changes ahead.

Finally, I want to add my voice to the chorus of congratulations, to our sector,

the providers, the trainers, the mentors, the employers, even us policy wonks, but most especially to the apprentices themselves.



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GREENING STAMPS HER MARK ON LAUNCH

The tenth National Apprenticeship Week scaled new heights last week, when it officially launched at Canary Wharf.

The event saw education secretary Justine Greening address an audience of 100 employers and apprentices about the lifelong benefits apprenticeships can grant.

Sue Husband, director of the National Apprenticeship Service, also spoke of her high hopes for NAW 2017.

"Year-on-year I am overwhelmed by how many organisations get behind NAW to celebrate the positive impact apprenticeships have on individuals, businesses and the economy," she said.

"I have no doubt this, our 10th NAW, will be our biggest and best. With apprenticeships available in 1,500 job roles and covering over 170 industries, there's never been a better time to get involved."

David Meller, who chairs the Apprenticeship Delivery Board and the National Apprenticeship Ambassador Network, and Mike Thompson, head of apprenticeships at Barclays, also spoke at the event.

Among many other events, this year's NAW was kicked off by the BBC, with 'You're Hired' at Broadcasting House,

focused on apprenticeships in the creative industries and hosted by news broadcaster Reeta Chakrabarti, while even Chris Evans repeatedly referenced NAW on his Radio 2 breakfast show.

The Royal Mail also backed NAW 2017 with a special postmark, which appeared across the country stamped on mail between March 6 and 10.

Sector leaders spoke of their enthusiasm for NAW, which comes just a few weeks before widespread reforms to the whole system are launched next month alongside the new apprenticeship levy.

David Hughes, chief executive of the AoC, said: "The theme of NAW - 'the ladder of opportunity' - reflects that every apprenticeship should be focused on an occupation, supporting people to move forward on the road to a good career.

"Almost every FE college offers apprenticeships and this is just one of the ways they play a significant role in supporting local communities. As a membership organisation for colleges, we're pleased the government is committed to skills training."

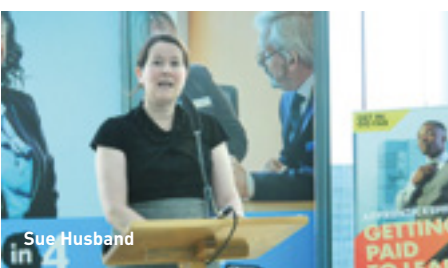
Mark Dawe, the boss of the AELP, said NAW 2017 was an important way to spread



Justine Greening

the word about the good apprenticeships can do both for employers and learners. "It may be surprising with less than a month to go, but not all levy-payers know about the advantages that apprenticeships offer, so NAW is a fantastic opportunity to promote them," he said.

"Using their expertise and experience in apprenticeship delivery, independent training providers are working tirelessly around the country to successfully engage employers of all sizes who have



Sue Husband

not previously committed themselves to the programme. Many teachers and parents still have outdated notions of what apprenticeships are about and AELP members want to work with employers, schools and other partners to generate a better understanding of the programme's scope and benefits.

"I wholeheartedly agree with Justine Greening that NAW is a chance to celebrate the fact that apprenticeships offer an alternative route to a gold-plated career."

FE Week

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INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Workshop: Institute for Apprenticeships - use of data
Dr Alex Wilson Deputy Director Data Science Unit, IfA
Hall 11b 10:40-11:30 | Friday

INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Workshop: The role of the Institute for Apprenticeships
Ana Osbourne, Deputy Director Approvals, IfA
Mike Keoghan, Deputy Chief Executive, IfA
Media Suite 11:55-12:45 | Friday

INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Keynote plenary from the shadow CEO of the Institute for Apprenticeships, Peter Lauener.
Hall 1 13:30-14:30 | Friday

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NAW IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER WEEK



ROBERT
HALFON

Apprenticeships and
skills minister

This week, the skills and apprenticeships minister Robert Halfon travelled the country, meeting apprentices and employers all over the UK. Here, he argues that apprenticeships are going from strength to strength.

Why are we celebrating the tenth National Apprenticeship Week? Because we want to showcase the brilliant work employers and their apprentices have been doing! This week does not just show case the very best apprentices around our country, but also is incredibly important in raising the prestige of apprenticeships and Skills - vital if we are to really build an apprenticeships and skills nation

NAW 2017 is unlike any other week. We are highlighting the best of the best and shining a light on some of our hardworking, aspirational apprentices and employers around the country. It is good that FE Week does so much to highlight the importance of apprenticeships. Transforming the prestige of apprenticeships must be done by all of us, whether in politics, the media, business and our communities.

What makes this NAW even more special is the wonderful announcements in the Budget on technical education. It has really raised the profile of non- academic routes and gives a real chance for millions of young people to climb the ladder of opportunity- to get the skills and jobs they need for their future.

Skills truly is at the heart of this Budget. The announcements made by the Chancellor, Philip Hammond, are the most ambitious post-16 reforms since the introduction of A-levels 70 years ago.

For too long there has been an underinvestment in skills in this country. I really welcome the commitment the Chancellor has made to a £500 million investment every year to increase training for 16-19 year olds. This will ensure technical education is on par with our world-leading higher education system and create two genuinely equal options.

Alongside this, the chancellor has confirmed the that maintenance loans will be made available to students on higher technical education courses at levels four to six in National Colleges and Institutes

of Technology. This puts technical routes on a real level footing with university. £40 million extra will also be invested in lifelong learning so we can develop pilot schemes to see what works best for learners.

We are working hard to make apprenticeships higher quality by putting

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We want to showcase the brilliant work employers and their apprentices have been doing!

employers in the driving seat so people can get their foot on the ladder of opportunity and get the skills they need to fulfil their true potential. Groups of employers have been coming together to create new high quality apprenticeships. This means there will be the right workforce out there for employer's needs.

Three million more apprenticeships by 2020 means three million more life-changing opportunities for people of all backgrounds and all ages around the country.

When I attended the National Apprenticeship Awards earlier this year (see page 12), I was able to meet some extraordinary apprentices from the Get In Go Far campaign and apprenticeship ambassadors as well. It really was a celebration of the best of the best and I hope more employers and learners will be inspired by their stories.

During this week, I have been travelling round the country alongside the National Apprenticeship Service and meeting some more brilliant apprentices across many diverse fields of employment. From EDF Energy to Crossrail, Sunseeker to Premier Inn, this really has been a fantastic opportunity to hear some inspirational stories.

Along the way I have met some extremely inspirational young women who are working hard to achieve their potential – Josanna at Bridgwater College,

who is working hard to become a luthier (someone who crafts string instruments!) and at Poole, Ellie who has risen the ranks at Premier Inn, completing her level three and soon to move on to a level four. Already at the age of just 23, she has become an operations manager at Premier Inn Hotels.

As part of NAW this year, I have also spoken at a Westminster Hall debate about the importance of trying to make sure everyone who wants to is able to get into an apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships work and that is a fact. The numbers speak for themselves – it is remarkable that 90 per cent of people that do apprenticeships go on to further work or additional education. This really is something to shout about.

We have been making considerable progress towards Britain becoming an apprentice and skills nation. Apprenticeship participation in England stands at nearly 900,000 – the highest figure on record.

It is also an important achievement that there have been 780,000 apprenticeships started in England since May 2015.

Apprenticeships really are one of the greatest success stories of the decade.

Through the new apprenticeship levy, £2.5 billion will be invested in apprenticeships by 2019-20, that is double the amount spent in 2010-11. With more money than ever, we will be helping people get into more and better quality training schemes. Monies raised means that we can help finance small businesses so that they can get the apprenticeship they need to succeed. We also are doing everything possible to invest millions of pounds in ensuring that apprentices from all walks of life, whatever their background or disadvantage, have every possible chance to climb the ladder of opportunity.

The levy will ensure a step-change in apprenticeships numbers and quality giving employers the highly skilled workforce they have been crying out for.

We have come an extremely long way and April is going to be really significant for apprenticeships and our reforms. We will be seeing the apprenticeship levy come into force as well as the launch of the new and independently led Institute for Apprenticeships. The new Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers will be in place and trailblazers will continue to work tirelessly to ensure there is a quality apprenticeship out there in every industry.

I hope that NAW 2017 inspires more employers and people to do an apprenticeship. I congratulate every apprentice, every employer and every provider, whether FE or private for the work they are doing to ensure that millions of people can climb the apprentice ladder of opportunity.

#NAW2017



Robert Halfon ✓
@halfon4harlowMP

Pleased to launch new 'Ladder of Opportunity' Apprentice Badge for National Apprentice Week #NAW2017



8:10 AM - 6 Mar 2017

Fantastic group of Rolls Royce, SKF & Cavendish Nuclear #apprentices @Bridgwater_Coll #NAW2017



10:56 AM - 6 Mar 2017

Hinkley Point - helping to create 3 million quality #apprenticeships by 2020 #NAW2017 @edfenergycomms



3:49 PM - 6 Mar 2017

Wonderful to meet outstanding @premierinn Poole Apprentices- Levels 2,3,4- with senior positions in Hotel Grp @GetInGoFar @ Apprenticeships



3:49 PM - 6 Mar 2017

National Apprenticeship Week isn't just a government thing. Labour's shadow apprenticeships minister Gordon Marsden also got in on the action, and went on a great British tour of his own, as he explains below.

During National Apprenticeship Week we are rightly able to celebrate the thousands of individual successes from young beginners to older workers – and of the trainers, colleges and employers who inspire them.

This week I was delighted to speak to meet apprentices here in Parliament, across London, at Blackpool, in the engineering and motor industries, and at the new BAE Systems Academy near Preston. I was regaled with stories of success and of the chances available to young people taking an apprenticeship. These success stories build on the vital achievement of the last Labour government in setting up the National Apprenticeship Service, introducing National Apprenticeship Week in 2008, and revitalising our apprenticeship programme.

But with every success comes concern. For apprentices to get the most of their experience and gain the skills employers need, the new Institute for Apprenticeships must have adequate capacity and resources. Are 80 employees and a paltry £8 million annual budget going to be

Welcome to FE Week's National Apprenticeship Week 2017 supplement, which we're delighted to be sponsoring once again this year.

Apprenticeships continue to be in the spotlight, with the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy now just two months away and discussion around the value, volume and reform of apprenticeships at an all-time high.

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National Apprenticeship Week is, as always, a great opportunity to highlight the importance of apprenticeships

National Apprenticeship Week is, as always, a great opportunity to highlight and reiterate the importance of apprenticeships. They offer learners the opportunity to gain the skills and knowledge required to work in their chosen career, while also earning and



GORDON
MARSDEN

Shadow skills minister

SO MANY STORIES OF SUCCESS

enough to support the government's desire for three million apprenticeship starts by 2020? Not to mention the extra workload when the Institute takes on responsibility for technical education from 2018/19.

How are they going to tackle continued concern from employers on what new routes include? At the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders reception on Monday, a host of employers expressed anxiety that new routes would not have the solid qualifications they require. We have issued warnings that government's blinkered approach to reaching its three million target could be to the detriment of quality provision.

We are still waiting for the government to announce how it intends to tackle a careers IAG system, where apprenticeships are often seen as the

poorer cousin of higher education. That is why I was delighted to see Lord Baker's amendment to the TFE Bill, which will ensure schools have to give access to advice about apprenticeships, as well as fully supporting my colleague Nic Dakin's 10-minute rule bill, which will allow businesses and FE providers to go into schools and let students know about opportunities available via apprenticeships.

It was great to speak at my colleague Kelvin Hopkins' debate on financial support for apprentices. Too often we speak about apprenticeships but not enough about the individual apprentice. In the debate I raised issues around the financial benefits apprentices are excluded from and the negative effect this has on the social mobility and life chances of those



ESME
WINCH

NCFE Managing Director

SO MUCH TO CHEER ABOUT

getting real, on-the-job experience, which of course benefits the employer too.

As we all know, apprenticeships are going through a lot of change, with spending power moving into the hands of employers, the introduction of a new funding mechanism (the Levy), and of the new apprenticeship standards.

The Levy has been introduced to encourage employers to invest in apprenticeships for their workforce, and a lot of work has gone into ensuring that they are in the driving seat when negotiating prices and setting out their apprenticeship needs. According to the Department for Education, 'the Levy will allow us to double investment in apprenticeships by 2020 from 2010 levels, to £2.5bn'. However, only time will tell whether this initiative leads to an increase

in the number of apprenticeships and, most importantly, jobs.

What we do know is that large employers and a growing number of small and medium-sized enterprises want to get involved in apprenticeships (some for the first time), and apprenticeships are increasingly being seen as a viable alternative to the academic route, which can only be positive.

NCFE can attest from our own perspective to an increase in employers who are looking more closely at their planning and recruitment strategies and building opportunities to include apprenticeships as a viable and sustainable part of their workforce. Analysis from the Institute for Fiscal Studies recently showed that 60% of employees in the UK will work for an

from disadvantaged groups and areas.

It is crucial the government utilises traineeships as the key point of entry to get far more young people competitive at the starting gate for high quality apprenticeships. We've had warm words from the minister on their progress,s but he must get agreements with the Department for Work and Pensions and the Treasury to make them financially attractive to would-be applicants, as well as employers, providers and colleges.

This week of course we've had confirmation of the chancellor's changes in technical skills funding – welcome, if inflated, for their potential in expanding quality apprenticeships in their announcements. But the £500 million promised will only amount to £60 million in 2018-19, and won't get anywhere near its full value until 2021/22 – after the next election – according to the Treasury's own detailed figures.

Meanwhile a succession of reports, from the BIS select committee, the EEF and the IfS – indicate there is still widespread scepticism about whether government is doing enough to satisfy the crucial link between apprenticeships and industrial strategy, overcoming Whitehall silos and energising skills and training policy with a proper devolution process. It's a big challenge for the IfA to address, coming in as lean as it is, with still no permanent chief executive, come April.

employer that pays the Levy, showing the scale of this measure.

We're here to support you both now, with our range of full and part apprenticeships in a variety of sectors, and in the future with the new standards and end point assessment. We're pleased to be one of the organisations approved by the Skills Funding Agency to deliver end point assessment, with a particular focus on the customer service and leadership and management sectors, so we're well-placed to advise you on how to maximise opportunities around this.

This is undoubtedly an important year of change but, amid all the change and uncertainty, we can be certain that there will be a need for high quality technical education, helping learners progress to their professional and personal goals.

Awarding organisations, providers and employers will all need to work together to navigate the landscape and deliver high quality apprenticeships that will provide learners with essential skills they need to succeed, and help employers to plug skills gaps in their businesses.

If you'd like to talk about how we can support you with your apprenticeship provision, please do get in touch with our Apprenticeship Consultants on **0191 240 8950** or visit our dedicated website at **www.levy.ncfe.org.uk**.

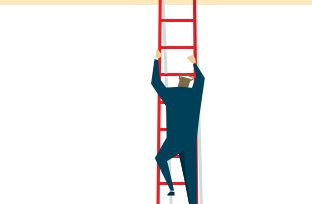
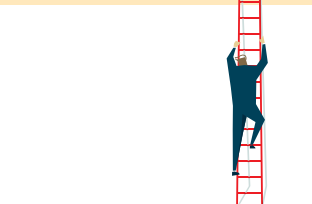
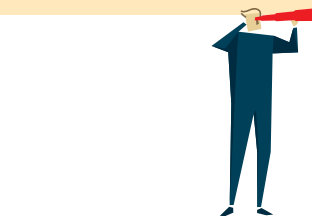


GEMMA GATHERCOLE: HEAD OF FUNDING AND ASSESSMENT, LSECT

If a week is a long time in politics, then this past year of apprenticeship reform must have been very long indeed. This time last year, we had a skills minister with an apprenticeship brief who was forced to divide his responsibilities across two different departments, while many questions on the levy and funding reform were yet to be answered. This time last year suddenly feels a long time ago, doesn't it?

Since then, we've had Brexit – and in the interests of space I'll not mention that any further – changes to the machinery of government, a new ministerial team, three consultations (one on the funding system and two on the Institute for Apprenticeships), a draft and a final set of funding rules, numerous updates to guidance on the way the levy may work, a tortuous recruitment process for shadow and permanent staff at the IFA, and plenty of other important things that I've glossed over.

Now that we're mere weeks away from the implementation of the new funding system for apprenticeships, let's take a whistle-stop tour of the major policy changes from the last 12 months.



CLIMBING THE LADDER OF APPRENTICESHIP REFORMS

STILL TO COME...

Government responses to IFA consultations expected
Levy payments start April 2017
New funding methodology comes into effect for starts May 2017

MARCH 2017

10th anniversary National Apprenticeship Week

FEBRUARY 2016

Final apprenticeship funding rules for starts from May 2017 confirmed
IFA confirms that it will charge assessment organisations for quality assurance
Apprenticeship Service (previously the Digital Apprenticeship Service) launched
Legal contract between SFA and employers released

JANUARY 2017

Consultations open on IFA Strategic guidance and operational plan
Public Sector apprenticeship target is confirmed at 2.3%

DECEMBER 2016

Government commits to creating an apprentice panel that will report to IFA Board

NOVEMBER 2016

Levy pot reduced again in Autumn Statement

OCTOBER 2016

Recruitment for Chair of IFA gets underway
Government publishes consultation response on levy proposals and confirms final funding bands and draft funding rules

SEPTEMBER 2016

Peter Lauener confirmed as new Shadow Chief Executive of IFA

AUGUST 2016

Apprenticeship funding update finally published

JULY 2016

Post-16 Skills Plan published, announcing plans for IFA to expand to take on the remit for technical education and for apprenticeship standards to be aligned to 15 technical routes
Skills Minister, Nick Boles, quits his post
New Ministerial team appointed, Justine Greening as Secretary of State for an expanded DfE and Robert Halfon as Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills

JUNE 2016

Shadow Chair and shadow chief operating officer for the IFA announced
Adverts for IFA Board released
Skills Minister, Nick Boles, announces 'little delay' to excepted updates on apprenticeship funding reform

MAY 2016

Shadow Chief Executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA) announces departure from role in September (tenure March-September 2016)

APRIL 2016

Office of Budgetary Responsibility (OBR) cuts levy forecast by £100m per year
Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) published updated guidance on how the levy would operate

SO WHERE ARE WE NOW?

Employer groups are continuing to develop standards. It is the intention that standards replace frameworks by the end of this parliament, though this is dependent on employer groups coming forward to develop them, and the IFA signing them off. In the meantime, the SFA is continuing to retire frameworks when replacement standards are approved for delivery.

The Institute for Apprenticeships comes into existence in April 2017 and, assuming there is little change from the consultation of its operational plan, will have the remit for leading the reform programme, including the development of standards and assessments, quality and regulating the apprenticeship system, and collaborating with partners.

When the new funding system comes into effect in May, providers, at least those currently offering standards, will be operating three separate funding methodologies.

1. Framework starts before May 2017: our current provider allocation model
2. Standards before May 2017: the pilot system set up Trailblazer standards (two thirds funded, one third employer payment)
3. Framework and standards starts from May 2017: a new employer-led model using negotiated rates and funding caps

Working on the assumption that you're all familiar with the current funding and the pilot system methodology, let's focus on the new system that will shortly be in operation:

- An extra £1 billion in apprenticeship funding generated via the employer levy
- "Negotiated" rates based on upper limits rather than a national funding formula
- Phased implementation of the new apprenticeship service, starting with levy-paying employers, to allow employers to decide what they spend their funds on and with whom
- Levy-paying employers pay the full cost of apprenticeship training from their levy account, which includes a 10 per cent top-up from government; if they exceed their allowance, they will use the same payment regime as non-levy-paying employers

- For non-levy-paying employers, the government will meet 90 per cent of the agreed cost of the apprenticeship within the upper limit, with the employer paying the rest
- Employer funds left unspent in a levy account will expire after 24 months; these unused funds will be what pays for the top-ups, incentives and non-levy-paying employer funding
- Providers offering apprenticeships will only receive an allocation from the SFA for non-levy-paying employers; levy-paying employers will select a training provider directly and draw up a contract with them, with no allocations required
- Employers with a payroll of £3 million or more will start paying the levy from April 2017; employers with a payroll of less than that will not have to pay

This summary only scratches the surface of the funding methodology. There are three separate funding rules documents published by the Skills Funding Agency: one for training providers, one for employer-providers, and one for employers.

No one should underestimate the scope of the change that's going on in the world of apprenticeships, even though we've been talking about this for so long that we might have become jaded to the scale of events. There are likely to be some bumps along the road – there's probably never been a system implementation that's gone exactly to plan. But it's going to be more important than ever that we focus on the detail so this transition can be as smooth as possible for the apprentices that we celebrate this week.

KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

470

Number of standards currently in development or approved for delivery

157

Number of standards approved for delivery

4,800

(3.1 per cent of starts this quarter)

Number of reported starts on standards Q1 2016/17

262

Number of live apprenticeship frameworks

Apprenticeship reform by numbers

Sector	Standards in development
Engineering and Manufacturing	124
Construction	81
Creative and Design	44
Legal, Finance and Accounting	34
Health and Science	30
Digital	29
Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care	24
Transport and Logistics	23
Sales, Marketing and Procurement	18
Business and Administration	17
Catering and Hospitality	15
Childcare and Education	11
Protective Services	10
Social Care	6
Hair and Beauty	4

Funding bands

Funding Cap	Number of standards
£9,000	48
£27,000	34
£18,000	16
£5,000	14
£12,000	14
£3,000	11
£15,000	7
£24,000	7
£4,000	4
£6,000	4
£21,000	2
£2,500	1
£1,500	0
£2,000	0
£3,500	0

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- high quality personal support including access to our Functional Skills experts
- training courses geared towards your needs
- FREE access to online resources- including FAQs, Chief Examiner Reports and Qualification Support Packs
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to work with us
within 3 days.



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requests within 1 day.



Answering the phone
within 2 rings.



Responding to emails
within 24 hours.



External assessment results
issuing within 6 working days.

SELECTION OF #NAW2017 EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE ACROSS THE COUNTRY

MARCH 6 - MARCH 10

Climb aboard the apprenticeships express

It was all aboard the apprenticeships express at the Barnsley Interchange during NAW.

The town's busy hub for bus and train services was the site of Barnsley College's first apprenticeship pop-up shop.

Advisors from the college were on hand to talk to commuters about the range of apprenticeships available and the benefits of being an apprentice, along with details of current vacancies.

Being in such a central location meant the pop-up shop was able to attract

the interest of a wide range of people – including prospective apprentices and, perhaps crucially, their parents and grandparents.

Those interested in getting on the ladder of opportunity could leave their details, and the college will work with them to find the right apprenticeship for them.

Mel Jenkinson, head of student recruitment, said: "Events like these are vital if we are going to raise awareness of apprenticeships and the benefits of choosing this career pathway."



Barnsley College staff Samantha Dunkley and Sue Tazzyman speak to the public



Den-building was one of the activities at the Eden Project

A better world at the Eden Project

The lush gardens of the Eden Project provided a fitting backdrop for an event that sought to grow apprenticeships in Cornwall.

Around 120 young people – including apprentices and other interested parties – gathered to share their experiences and take part in activities across the site.

The aim of the day was to inspire young people in the area to consider an apprenticeship, and provide them with valuable information and skills.

Attendees included apprentices for the

NHS, Cornwall Council and from the Eden Project's own programme, which is run in collaboration with Cornwall College.

Activities during the day, which was organised in partnership with the Cornwall Apprentice Ambassador Network, included a workshop on job interview techniques, as well as den-building and orienteering.

Will Pearce, an apprentice at Pendennis Shipyard, said: "Meeting other apprentices has been useful, it gives me a different perspective on what everyone else is doing," he said.

Hawk swoops in to Number 10

Even 10 Downing Street got in on the action this week, with a visit from top apprentices at Hawk Training.

Many apprentices at the private provider already work in positions across all sorts of government departments, including the Treasury and the Cabinet Office, which ran a tour of the prime minister's official home for 25 lucky learners.

George Shackelford, a 21-year-old business and administration apprentice who works at Downing Street, hosted the tour and walked his colleagues through

history, showing them the belongings of past prime ministers such as Margaret Thatcher and Winston Churchill.

After the tour the Hawk apprentices gave presentations about their work, followed by an informal networking session at the nearby Wales Office.

Crawford Knott, the provider's managing director, said: "Against a backdrop of unprecedented change within the sector, National Apprenticeship Week 2017 provides an opportunity to celebrate what is most important, the apprentices and their achievements."



Hawk Training apprentices outside Number 10

Omelette and cocktail challenge

Learners at Barnet and Southgate College have marked NAW with a contest guaranteed to tickle the taste buds – an omelette and cocktail making challenge.

The competition, which was open to anyone with an interest in studying for an apprenticeship at the college, saw around 15 learners and local school pupils go head to head for each challenge.

Entrants were timed to see who could rustle up a plain omelette the quickest, while the first to mix up a virgin mojito was crowned the winner of the cocktail challenge.

Sophie Reid, 21, who is currently studying

a level two NVQ in catering but plans to progress to an apprenticeship, proved to be the biggest whizz in the kitchen by winning both challenges.

She whipped up her omelette in an incredible two minutes and 50 seconds and said she loved taking part in the challenges.

"I can't believe I came top in both!" she added.

She said she wanted to do an apprenticeship "to gain experience in the working world – it's ideal as you earn while you learn and it's so difficult to get a job without any relevant training in the field these days".



Sophie Reid whisks up her winning omelette under the watchful eye of chef trainer Louise McPhee



Teesside apprentices and employers make it to the top

Scaling the skills gap across Teesside

Apprentices in Teesside have scaled its famous Transporter Bridge in an effort to learn where they can fit into their area's proud industrial history.

Ten apprentices and 15 employer representatives joined a crew who visited the top of the longest working transporter bridge in the world – a site which was mostly operated by apprentices when it was first built in the early 20th century.

The event was organised by Northern Skills Group, the commercial training arm of Middlesbrough College, which is responsible for training around 2,000

apprentices every year.

NSG invited employers from across the north-east, including reps from engineering giant Amec Foster Wheeler, chemicals firm Sabic, robotics specialists Labman and manufacturer Caterpillar, all of whom use its training services.

"The Transporter Bridge remains a true symbol of the skills and creativity that have earned this region a fantastic worldwide reputation – and today's apprentices are the ones who will be taking that reputation forward," said the director of NSG, Peter Wilson.



Oldham College's construction apprentices

Opening windows of opportunity

It was "pane sailing" for a team of apprentices at Oldham College as they created a "window of opportunity" to celebrate NAW.

Six of the college's construction students combined their skills in woodwork and painting and decorating to fit a seven-foot window in the job shop – the college's central hub, where learners can speak to an advisor about apprenticeship vacancies and work opportunities.

The week-long reconstruction and

makeover project included a complete revamp of the whole room. Speaking on the second day of the project, painting and decorating apprentice Connor Kemp, 18, said: "We've managed to knock through the wall and put in the window frame already and it's only day two. An assessor has been on site to support us but all the work has been our own. It's been a real team effort."

At the end of the week local construction firms joined the apprentices in the rebuilt Job Shop to celebrate their achievements.

Stepping up and over for 5-a-side football cup

Apprentices in Oxfordshire were pitched against each other in a hard-fought five-a-side football tournament to kick off National Apprenticeship Week.

The contest, organised by Oxfordshire Apprenticeships in partnership with Ignite Sport and the University of Oxford, also showcased the range of apprenticeships in the county.

Twelve teams lined up, each representing local businesses including the Oxford plant of car manufacturer MINI, electricians Clarkson Evans, and training providers 3aaa, Activate Learning and SOFEA.

And after a long afternoon of fancy footwork the apprentices from Oxfordshire County Council emerged victorious.

The team's captain, 29-year-old Luis Audibert, who is studying a level three technical highways apprenticeship, said the event had been "a good chance for all of us to have fun, bond as a team and raise awareness of apprenticeships".

The event also raised money for SeeSaw, an Oxfordshire charity offering grief support for children and young people.

The charity's representative Jane Elliott said it was "wonderful" to see so many teams taking part in the competition.



Clive Shepherd, the university's apprenticeships manager, presents the trophy to Luis Audibert

Making the cut with Manchester stylists

The hair stylists of the future have been showing off their skills at Michaeljohn Training School as they recreate the looks of iconic women through the ages.

The Manchester-based independent training provider marked both NAW and International Women's Day on March 8 with a competition for its hairdressing apprentices.

Learners competed against each other to impress the judges with how well they had recreated the look of a significant woman, past or present.

Each apprentice researched the individual style of the woman they'd chosen to feature, then

recreated the look on live models using a variety of techniques they'd learned on their course including setting, blow-drying and upstyling.

Nineteen-year-old Abbey Lambert, a level two apprentice, said she enjoyed recreating the look of her chosen icon, the acid-attack victim and TV presenter Katie Piper.

"I love how strong she is and how independent she is after all she has endured," Abbey said.

"Apprenticeships are great. You are learning while you are working, and getting paid for it."



Abbey Lambert gets to work

AWARDS FOR HIGHEST ACHIEVING APPRENTICES

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The nation’s finest were recognised at the prestigious National Apprenticeship Awards ceremony at London’s Grosvenor House in January.

The top three apprentices for 2016, as announced at the ceremony, were Charlotte Blowers, who won the I-Can Qualifications Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year for her work in hairdressing and nail services at Exceed Training Academy and Salon.

Adam Sharp, who works in mechanical design at Sellafield Ltd, won the EAL Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year.

Holly Broadhurst, who studied a foundation degree in engineering and a BEng hons in mechanical engineering with JC Bamford Excavators Ltd, also scooped the Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for the Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year.

The event was attended by Robert Halfon, his first time since he was appointed skills and apprenticeships minster last July, who also unveiled the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list for 2016.

He said: “The National Apprenticeship Awards ensure apprenticeships get the

prestige they deserve, while shining a light on the fantastic work that both apprentices and their employers do.

“Congratulations to all the winners – they are champions showcasing how apprenticeships to give everyone the chance to get on.”

FE Week spoke to all three of the young apprentice champions about their success.

Charlotte, 19, said: “I’m quite proud of myself. My friends and family congratulated me and my clients are very happy, so it’s nice to know that I’ve achieved something that everyone’s proud of.”

She said she found the working environment very rewarding at Exceed, and had learned a lot about people skills and customer service.

“You don’t really speak to people of all different ages when you go to school – I now speak to people who are everything

from under 20 to over 60, all sorts of ages of men and women,” she said.

Adam, 22, told FE Week about his experience of becoming an apprentice: “At school everyone seemed to be forced

down this route where it’s university or nothing.

“But my dad asked if I’d thought about an apprenticeship, and it was about the time when apprenticeships were starting to be pushed again, so I went onto the government website and I’ve ended up here.”

He added that his company, Sellafield, had



Charlotte Blowers



Adam Sharp

pushed him “every step of the way” into new opportunities, and he had learned “the art of self-reliance”.

Holly Broadhurst, 23, said she found the stories of achievement at the awards ceremony “really inspiring”.

“I have tried to promote apprenticeships more by speaking to different publications and running events, and to speak out for women in engineering because I think it’s really important,” she said.

Holly, who studied engineering at the JCB academy, said being able to earn while learning and get straight into practical work had been important to her.

“I’ve learned a lot about working within a global industry. It is so diverse and fast-paced which is something I like being a part of,” she added.

“Hopefully in the future I’ll be looking to go on and do a Masters, once I’ve finished my chartership to become a chartered

engineer. I want to get as much experience within the business as I can.”

Mitie, a facilities management company, was announced as winner of the EON Award for ‘Macro Employer of the Year’.

On winning the award and being announced in the Top 100 list, Barry Norris, training director at Mitie, said: “This is testament to the hard work and dedication of our many managers across the business who support our apprentices so magnificently and, of course, to the apprentices themselves.

“It is also a wonderful recognition of the partnership we have developed over eight years with our principal provider, Jigsaw Training.

“We are already planning significant expansion of our apprenticeship numbers over the next couple of years because in simple terms, it makes sound business sense!”

NATIONAL APPRENTICE WINNERS		
Name	Company	Award
Charlotte Blowers	Exceed	The I-Can Qualifications Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year
Adam Sharp	Sellafield Ltd	EAL Award for Advanced Apprentice of the Year
Holly Broadhurst	J C Bamford Excavators Ltd	The Nuclear Decommissioning Site Licence Companies Award for the Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year

NATIONAL EMPLOYER WINNERS	
Ebsford Environmental Ltd	Unilever Small Employer of the Year
Troup Bywaters + Anders	British Gas Medium Employer of the Year
Mercedes-Benz UK	BAE Systems Award for Large Employer of the Year
Mitie Group Plc	EON Award for Macro Employer of the Year
Craggs Energy Ltd	Santander Award for Newcomer SME of the Year
Bond Dickinson LLP	Rolls-Royce Award for Newcomer Large Employer of the Year

KEY APPOINTMENTS FOR HIGHEST RUNGS ON THE IFA LADDER

JUDE BURKE
@JUDEBURKE77

Most of the main roles at the Institute for Apprenticeships have been filled just weeks before launch after long months of uncertainty.

The names of the eight people who will take up senior management positions were revealed at the beginning of March, joining the eight people named to the board in late January.

And with Antony Jenkins confirmed as chair, the only role left to fill is that of chief executive.

So we decided it was high time to see who’s who at the IfA, and exactly what the new body will be responsible for when it formally opens its doors April.

Peter Lauener, the shadow chief executive, revealed the eight new members of the IfA’s “executive team” during the AoC’s recent governance summit, describing them as “a really interesting mix of colleagues from across the education sector”.

“We’ve got people from industrial training backgrounds, and some very talented civil servants,” he said.

Six of the eight positions are deputy directorships, while the remaining two are part-time consultancy roles.

Nikki Christie, the current head of education and skills at the British Film Institute, will become deputy director for assessment – a position considered by some as something of a poisoned chalice.

According to the Department for Education’s job pack for the deputy director roles, Ms Christie will “work with analysts and others to map assessment demand by standard” and “actively manage the register [of assessment organisations] to ensure that sufficient high-quality assessment is available to meet demand”.

She will also “establish and manage a quality alliance with relevant bodies including other regulatory bodies” and “regularly review delivery of apprenticeship assessment”.

It’s set to be a Sisyphean task. Mark Dawe, the chief executive of the AELP,



Nikki Christie

said in an exclusive FE Week webinar in January that he felt sorry for whoever took the job, because it could duplicate the job of qualifications regulator Ofqual.

“I imagine anyone taking on this role will feel like they have been handed a hand grenade with the pin removed,” he said.

Meanwhile, Jonathan Mitchell will be moving from the independent Forest School in London, where he is deputy head academic, to become deputy director for apprenticeships standards development.

One of his responsibilities will be to “ensure excellent quality-assurance practice governs the creation and review of standards including establishing effective feedback mechanisms”.

He will also be tasked with “ensuring the quality of standards remains high” by putting the “required number” of route chairs and panels are in place.

FE Week reported in January that Ana Osbourne, who used to work in the enterprise directorate at the now-defunct Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, had been appointed deputy director of approvals.

Ms Osbourne will be expected to “coordinate and support the operation of the approvals process for apprenticeship standards and technical education standards”.

The other deputy directors to be named are Jayne McCann, for funding policy; Alex Wilson, for data science; and Helen Knee, for corporate effectiveness.

Ms McCann is understood to have worked for the DfE, and Ms Knee is currently at the Skills Funding Agency, though FE Week has been unable to ascertain Mr Wilson’s current role.



Jonathan Mitchell



Dame Asha Khemka

Dawe: Institute director to be given ‘grenade without a pin’

ALIX ROBERTSON
@ALIXROBERTSON4

A plum job at the new Institute for Apprenticeships has been compared to “a hand grenade with the pin removed”, by the head of the Association of Employers and Learning Providers. Mark Dawe, chief executive of AELP and an exclusive FE Week webinar, he felt sorry for whoever takes on the newly created role of director of apprenticeships, and warned the government not to “duplicate” the work done by qualifications regulator Ofqual. In a discussion on the responsibilities of the IfA, Mr Dawe said: “I imagine anyone taking on this role will feel like they have been handed a hand grenade with the pin removed. “But the actual big work – we don’t understand why that isn’t given to the government agency that’s there with the expertise in assessment, and that’s Ofqual.” He said there were still many discussions to be had on the end-point assessment of apprenticeships, around whether it will be “valid, reliable, manageable across all the standards” and whether there are “actually organisations to do it”. “We’ve heard maybe 10 per cent – maybe more than 50 per cent now – of standards have an EPA organisation.” He said: “But you talk to those EPA organisations and a lot of them aren’t going to be ready for 12 months to actually deliver it. “They [the government] could make their lives a lot easier if they just didn’t duplicate and actually commissioned Ofqual to do the work that’s needed.” This is not the first time Mr Dawe has raised concerns about the Institute’s handling of assessment. When the Department for Education published its draft strategic guidance for the IfA earlier this month, he argued that “big questions remain on standards and assessment” and announced that AELP would be “calling for a complete pause on the whole process”. He said: “In our view, there would be much less cause for confusion if Ofqual were given the overarching role on assessment on behalf of the IfA.” The DfE refused to be drawn on the reasons why Ofqual would not be taking up this responsibility. However, a spokesperson said: “We believe that the SFA is best placed to maintain the Register of Apprenticeship Assessment Organisations and has significant experience in quality assuring organisations to deliver services.

development of high quality end point assessments is a priority for Ofqual in 2017. “We are already working closely with the DfE, IfA, SFA and others to establish the optimum arrangements for maintaining standards. We will not be responding to the consultation.” The webinar was hosted by FE Week editor Nick Linford, and conducted in partnership with NCFE.

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Two other people announced by Mr Lauener will be working part-time for the IfA.

Richard Guy, whose recent work includes a stint as apprenticeships adviser at City and Guilds, will be strategic advisor.

Mr Lauener said his was a “name that will be known to a lot of people in this audience”, describing his “deep knowledge from the delivery end on skills training” and “developing qualifications”.

Meanwhile, Tony Singleton, another former DfE employee, will oversee setup and finance.

The recruitment process for a permanent chief executive is expected to begin shortly, though Mr Lauener will continue to fill the role on an interim basis until a new person is in post.

He has been supported by one of the DfE’s former directors of FE, Mike Keoghan, as his deputy CEO.

These latest appointments follow confirmation at the end of February that the erstwhile Barclays chief executive Antony Jenkins will go on to formally chair the Institute, having been shadow chair since June, joining the eight members of the IfA board announced in January.

The board comprises a majority of employers, as planned, but two members are serving college principals – Bev Robinson of Blackpool and the Fylde College, and Dame Asha Khemka of West Nottinghamshire College.

The other members of the board are Dr Katharine Barclay, Pfizer UK’s head academic liaison; Dame Fiona Kendrick, the chair and CEO of Nestlé UK; Robin Millar, the chair of Blue Raincoat Chrysalis Group; Sir Gerry Berragan, a former adjutant general of the British Army; Paul Cadman, the HR director for Walter Smith Fine Foods; and Toby Peyton-Jones, Siemens’ head of HR for northern Europe.

What will the IfA actually do?

When it launches in April, the Institute for Apprenticeships will oversee the quality of every apprenticeship in England, as an employer-led regulator. Although it was first announced in November 2015, it wasn’t until the publication draft strategic guidance in January of this year that its core functions were outlined. Amongst other things, it will be responsible for “developing and

maintaining quality criteria for the approval of apprenticeship standards and assessment plans”, and “supporting the development of standards and assessment plans by employer groups and reviewing and supporting them”. According to the IfA’s draft operational plan, one of the first challenges it needs to address is the time it takes to complete the development process for

new standards. It will also be responsible for “maintaining a public database of apprenticeship standards” including “illustrating potential gaps”, and “reviewing published standards and assessment plans”. The IfA will also advise the government on funding issues; according to the draft operational plan, this will include “allocating new standards to agreed

funding bands and changes to existing funding band allocations”. One contentious part of the IfA’s work is the role it will play in quality assuring end-point assessment of apprenticeships. It will be responsible for setting the “key quality criteria” for the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers, even though the actual list will be maintained by the Skills Funding Agency.



Apprenticeships and Skills minister Robert Halfon joins guests on stage at the National Apprenticeships Awards 2016 ceremony in London’s Grosvenor House

HERE TO HELP: KEY GOVERNMENT DOCS AND WEBPAGES FOR STARTS FROM MAY

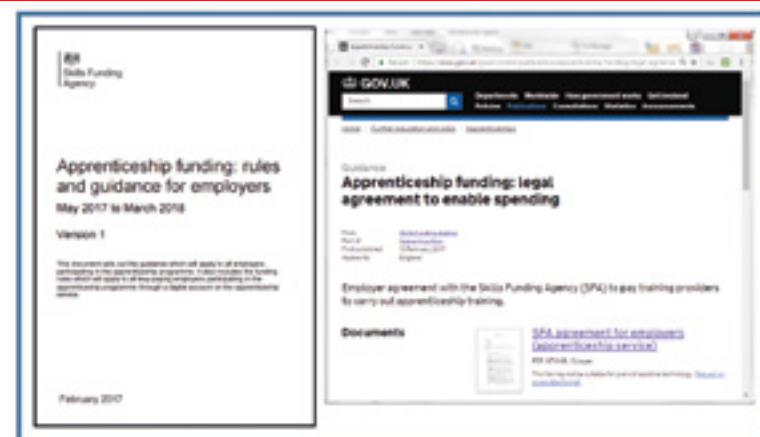
In case you were in any doubt, the reforms to the apprenticeship system are complex. You might think that there would be one single place that you could access to get all the information you would need, but there isn't (unless you include gov.uk but not all the documents are on one page or even linked together). So we've created that one

stop shop for you. On these pages is a complete listing of the relevant documents, spreadsheets and webpages that relate to apprenticeship funding, apprenticeship providers and the levy. It covers provider documents, employer-providers and employers. It's the complete reference library.

THE KEY DOCUMENTS



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-and-performance-management-rules-2017-to-2018>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-legal-agreement-to-enable-spending>



Apprenticeship frameworks and standard funding bands from May 2017
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-technical-funding-guide>

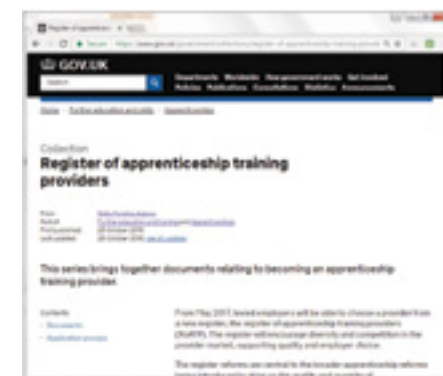


<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-from-may-2017>

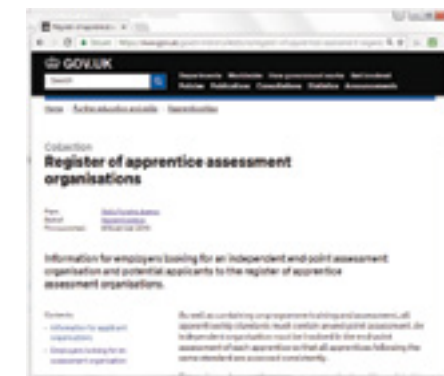


<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-become-a-training-provider>

VARIOUS REGISTERS AND LISTS



<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-of-apprenticeship-training-providers>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-of-apprentice-assessment-organisations>



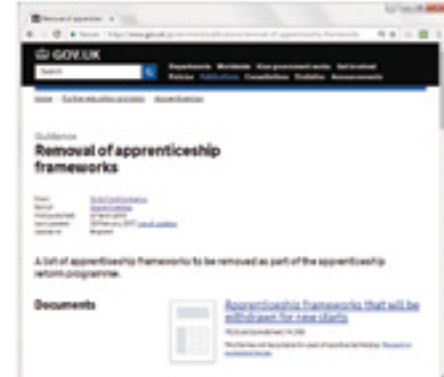
<http://www.afo.sscalliance.org/>



<https://hub.fasst.org.uk/Learning%20Aims/Pages/default.aspx>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-standards>

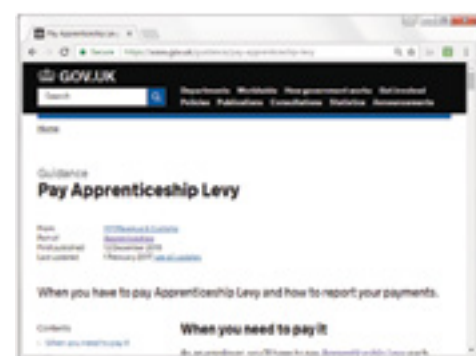


<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/removal-of-apprenticeship-frameworks>

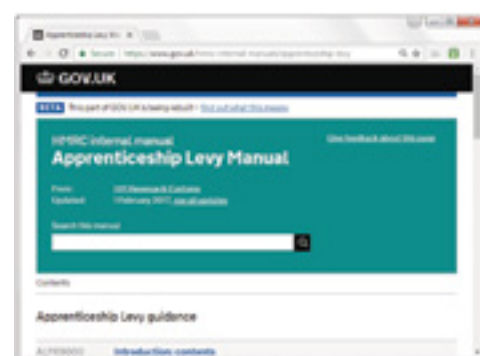
THE KEY GOVERNMENT WEBPAGES



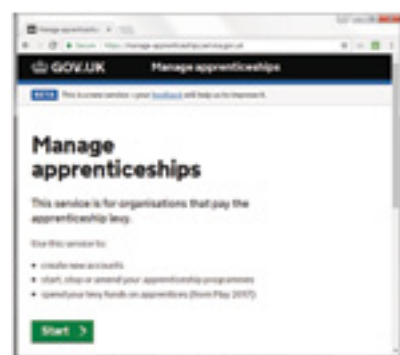
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-levy-how-it-will-work>



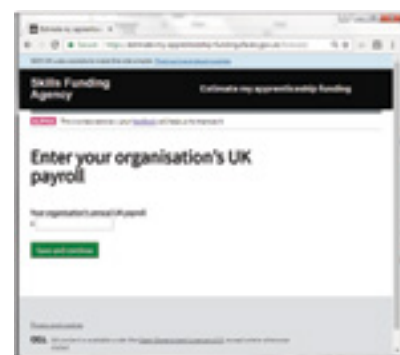
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/pay-apprenticeship-levy>



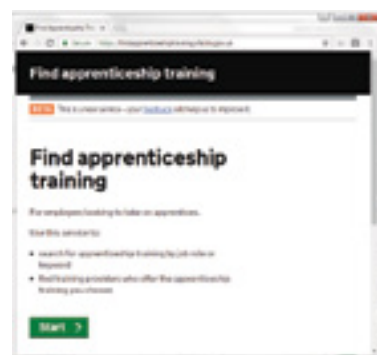
<https://www.gov.uk/hmrc-internal-manuals/apprenticeship-levy>



<https://manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk/>



<https://estimate-my-apprenticeship-funding.sfa.bis.gov.uk/forecast/>



<https://findapprenticeshiptraining.sfa.bis.gov.uk/>

ALSO, GUIDANCE FOR THE PROVIDER DATA STAFF



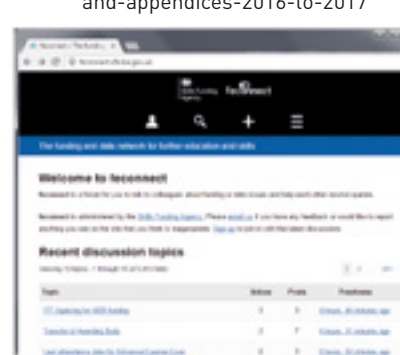
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-specification-validation-rules-and-appendices-2016-to-2017>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-service-bulk-upload-specification>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ilr-guides-and-templates-for-2016-to-2017>



<http://feconnect.sfa.bis.gov.uk/>



<https://sfadigital.blog.gov.uk/>



www.gov.uk/government/collections/skills-funding-agency-update

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