

Skills – apprenticeships, plans and business engagement
Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills
28 January 2008

Introduction and objectives

The Government have launched a package of measures to improve and broaden Apprenticeships in England. This follows a review of Apprenticeships after recommendations made by Lord Leitch in his comprehensive study of skills needs in the UK. In autumn 2007 the Government committed to increased funding for Apprenticeships, anticipating that one in five young people will take an Apprenticeship in the next decade. With this in mind they published a plan with three significant objectives:

- Make Apprenticeships a mainstream option for 16-18 year olds
- Ensure an Apprenticeship is available for all qualified young people by 2013
- Grow Apprenticeship take-up for older learners

Publications

The Government has published three key documents as part of this strategy:

A Command Paper – Ready to Work, Skilled for Work: Unlocking Britain's Talent. This paper sets out how the Government intends to help employers to recruit job-ready individuals and raise the skills base of their staff. To access the document go to: www.dius.gov.uk/publications/ready_to_work.pdf

A report – World-class Apprenticeships: Unlocking Talent, Building Skills for All. This report sets out a wide range of steps which will improve Apprenticeships for the future. There is a particular focus on how Government can work with employers, through a new dedicated National Apprenticeships Service. To access the document go to: www.dius.gov.uk/publications/world_class_apprenticeships.pdf

Unlocking Britain's Talent: What you need to know to make the difference for your business. This document gives advice on contacts and support for businesses. To access the full document go to: www.dius.gov.uk/publications/britains_talent.pdf

Key measures

- A new *National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)* to lead the expansion and improvement of the apprenticeship programme with end-to-end accountability for the Apprenticeships programme. This will include a signed 'Apprenticeship Agreements' and a dedicated field force to support employers and learners. There will also be the appointment of a Director of the NAS to lead and champion at the most senior level.
- Action to make it easier for employers to improve the range of apprenticeships by, for example, enabling them to include their own accredited qualifications.
- Action to boost the supply of Apprenticeship opportunities, through a more flexible and responsive model for Apprenticeship frameworks, incentive



payments to targeted businesses, an Apprenticeships 'credit' delivered via Skills Accounts, and improving public sector supply of Apprenticeship places.

- A pilot wage subsidy programme for small businesses, to make it more attractive for them to offer high quality apprenticeship places.
- A task force to improve the take up of apprenticeships in London, where there is a current shortfall.
- An examination into how to use the public procurement process to encourage companies that benefit from significant Government-funded contracts to offer apprenticeships as a good way of meeting their responsibility to train and develop their staff.
- Increased efforts to improve the attractiveness of Apprenticeships to young people, in particular young women. As well as further changes to improve the value of Apprenticeships by providing a national 'matching service', and high-profile events celebrating the achievement of Apprentices.

For more information on the Government's strategy, please access the links above or go to: www.dius.gov.uk

Or should you require any further information, please contact Jennifer Huckstep at jhuckstep@smtt.co.uk or on 020 7344 9217

