



FOCUS ON... The Value of Apprenticeships Individuals and Employers

March 2014

This *Focus on...* paper examines the value of Apprenticeships for individuals, staff and employers. The paper discusses what they are, what WAMITAB offers, who they are for and the benefits.

Introduction: What are Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are nationally recognised, work-based training programmes designed around the needs of employers to facilitate the development of practical, job specific skills by allowing inexperienced individuals to work alongside more experienced staff.

Statistics released by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (2013) indicate that in 2011/12 Apprenticeships starts increased by 13.9% compared to the previous year.

This increase can be attributed to the Government as they continue to place emphasis on using Apprenticeships to combat unemployment and boost the UK's ability to compete in global markets.

By completing an apprenticeship, individuals gain a qualification that is valued by employers and enhances their prospects for career progression in the future.

According to the National Apprenticeship Service (2013), an apprenticeship can take between one and four years to complete depending on the level of the Apprenticeship, the individuals' ability and the industry in which they are based.

Due to the time it takes to complete an apprenticeship, individuals have the opportunity to earn a wage (the minimum salary is £2.68 per hour), while working to gain job-specific skills. Employers therefore use apprenticeships to train both new and existing employees who are moving into a new or changed job role and need to learn new skills.

Who are they for?

Anyone living in England, over 16 years-old and not in full-time education can be an apprentice.



Apprenticeships

March 2014

Apprenticeships are an established route for new people to enter their chosen field of work by easing the sometimes difficult transition between full-time learning and employment. They also provide more experienced staff with the opportunity to develop their existing skills or re-train so that they can enter new industries.

What does an Apprenticeship involve?

Apprenticeships are designed with input from employers in the industry sectors, and offer a structured programme that takes individuals through the skills they need to undertake their job to a high standard. The Government covers a proportion of the cost associated with training apprentices; however, this is dependent on the age of the apprentice and employers are responsible for paying their apprentices wages.

The majority of the training is 'on-the-job' at the employer premises working alongside experienced staff, while the remaining training is delivered 'off-the-job' by a specialist training provider – usually on a day or block release basis. A paper by Asset Skills (2011) suggests that individuals looking to apply for an apprenticeship placement in today's competitive market would benefit from having a range of skills and attributes, including:

- Confidence
- Interview skills
- Communication skills
- Problem solving skills
- Independent and team working skills
- Basic literacy, numeracy and IT skills

How do individuals benefit from

Apprenticeships?

The National Apprenticeship Service (2013) argues that there are three main benefits for individuals that undertake an Apprenticeship:

A real Job

For many people Apprenticeships offer a practical solution to unemployment or a lack of work experience by giving individuals the opportunity to work for an employer – over 150,000 employers are offering Apprenticeships in more than 200,000 locations.



Apprenticeships

March 2014

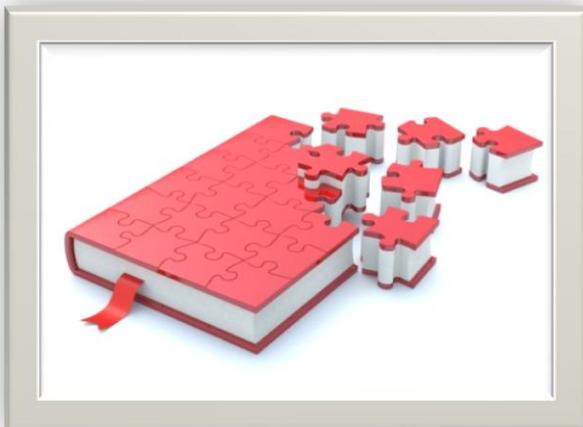
Earning a salary

Research by Union Learn (2011) indicates that across all UK industries, years and stages of an apprenticeship, 46% of apprentices earn salaries of between £10,001 and £15,000 with an average salary of £12,600.

Evidence suggests that as an apprentice's skills develop their salary will rise so those with a Level 2 Apprenticeship will earn £68,000 more over a lifetime than those with a Level 2 qualification or below (National Apprenticeship Service, 2011).

Qualifications provide a future

Gaining a nationally recognised qualification can have significant benefits for an individual's employment prospects – the National Apprenticeship Service (2013) reports that the majority of apprentices (85%) stay in employment after completing their Apprenticeships and a third (32%) of all former apprentices received a promotion within 12 months of finishing.



How do employers benefit from apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships have the potential to benefit organisations by ensuring that an organisation's workforce has the practical skills and qualifications to support business activity now and in the future. The National Apprenticeship Service (2013) argues that there are three main reasons for employers to use Apprenticeships to develop their business:

Apprenticeships help businesses to grow

Evidence suggests that 96% of employers that take on an apprentice report benefits to their business, while 72% of businesses report improved levels of productivity as a result of employing an apprentice.

This is because Apprenticeships represent a cost effective way for employers to develop the skills of new recruits and existing staff so organisations can be more competitive, exploit new opportunities and create new jobs (Asset Skills, 2011).

Apprenticeships develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce

Apprentices are typically more eager, motivated and loyal to an organisation that has invested in their professional development.

Apprenticeships

March 2014

As a result, Apprentices are more likely to support long-term business development as they take on more responsibility by ensuring that there is always a skilled employee familiar with the company values and goals ready to move into a more senior position within the organisation when required.

Apprenticeships improve productivity while reducing costs

Research indicates that the average person completing an apprenticeship increases productivity by £214 per week by expanding the skills and knowledge available within an organisation (National Apprenticeship Service, 2013) – 80% of employers with Apprenticeship programmes in England agree they increase staff productivity within the workplace because apprentices receive training which is not only relevant to the industry but directly related to the employer's business (National Apprenticeship Service, 2011).

What does WAMITAB offer?

WAMITAB is pleased to offer a range of apprenticeships suitable for organisations in the sustainable resource management, facilities management and cleaning industries, including:

- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Cleaning Services
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Local Environmental Services
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Facilities Services
- Level 2 Apprenticeship in Sustainable Resource Management
- Level 3 Apprenticeship in Facilities Management
- Level 3 Apprenticeship in Sustainable Resource Management

For more information visit www.wamitab.org.uk

Sources:

Asset Skills

<http://www.assetskills.org/>

National Apprenticeship Service

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

Union Learn

<http://www.unionlearn.org.uk/>

WAMITAB

<http://www.wamitab.org.uk/>

This paper has been written and produced by the Project Team at WAMITAB.