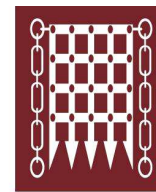


## Westminster Employment Forum Apprenticeship Series:

Improving participation and diversity in apprenticeships - tackling skills gaps, raising awareness and supporting under-represented groups

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Venue: Central London



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Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 9.05 - 9.20 **Addressing the drop in apprenticeship starts and responding to Brexit - priorities for policy**  
**Paul Warner**, Director of Research and Development, Association of Employment and Learning Providers
- 9.20 - 9.35 **Improving accessibility - coordinating action among regional partners to support those from disadvantaged groups**  
**Anthony Impey**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Optimity and member of the London Mayor's Skills and Employment taskforce
- 9.35 - 10.20 **Raising the profile of apprenticeships - careers advice, the apprenticeship 'brand' and raising employer participation**  
*In light of the 61% fall in the number of apprenticeship starts since May 2017 compared to the same period in the previous year, is additional training required to provide careers guidance staff with an understanding of labour market needs and the ability to negotiate with employers? With the Government's ambition to create 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020 and reforms to apprenticeship funding - which now require small businesses to provide 10% of the cost of training an apprenticeship - what steps can be taken to encourage such employers to provide apprenticeship opportunities? Is the additional amount of funding provided to employers and providers who take on a 16-18 year old apprentice - £1,000 for each - sufficient to cover the higher costs associated with training younger apprentices? With various levels of apprenticeships - ranging from level 2 to level 7 - can the full range of apprenticeships be included under a single and clear apprenticeship 'brand'?*  
**Brenda Cabras**, Director of Employment and Skills, Prospects  
**Peter Finegold**, Head of Education Policy, Institution of Mechanical Engineers  
**Simon Hawthorn**, Leadership Team, National Society of Apprentices  
Questions and comments from the floor with **Paul Warner**, Director of Research and Development, Association of Employment and Learning Providers and **Anthony Impey**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Optimity and member of the London Mayor's Skills and Employment taskforce
- 10.20 - 10.25 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 10.25 - 10.55 Coffee
- 10.55 - 11.00 **Chair's opening remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 - 11.30 **Widening participation and the role of the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network**  
**Claire Paul**, Director of Leadership Development & New Talent, BBC and Member, Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 - 12.25 **Improving participation amongst under-represented groups - entry requirements, career progression and re-assessing Government targets**  
*As the Government aims to improve the proportion of apprentices from BME backgrounds by 20%, does greater focus need to be applied to supporting individuals to complete apprenticeships and progress to higher positions of employment? Following the recommendations outlined by the Paul Maynard taskforce, which assessed the actions that can be taken by government and employers to improve the accessibility of apprenticeships for people with learning disabilities, should the funding model for apprenticeships be altered to incentivise employers to recruit apprentices with a learning disability? In light of the Social Mobility Commission's findings, that certain subject areas tend to be biased towards a particular gender - with construction skills being biased towards men and health and social care towards women - how can gender bias be addressed, and how important is it to measure progress to encourage further change?*  
**Peter Mayhew-Smith**, Group Principal and Chief Executive Officer, South Thames Colleges Group  
**Iain Murray**, Senior Policy Officer, TUC  
**Rob Holland**, Public Affairs and Parliamentary Lead, Mencap  
**Matthew Hussey**, Public Affairs Officer, The Children's Society  
**Ann Watson**, Chief Executive Officer, Semta  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.25 - 12.55 **Increasing apprenticeship starts - next steps for policy**  
**Matt Foulds**, Policy Advisor, Apprenticeships Strategy Unit, Department for Education  
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's closing remarks**  
Senior Parliamentarian  
**Marc Gammon**, Associate Editor, Westminster Employment Forum