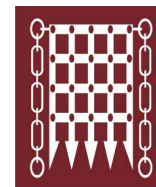


**Westminster Employment Forum Apprenticeships Series:
Improving apprenticeships in England - quality, assessment and options for policy**

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 5th September 2017

Venue: The Caledonian Club, 9 Halkin Street, London SW1X 7DR



**WESTMINSTER
EMPLOYMENT
FORUM**

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chair's opening remarks**
Lord Lucas
- 9.05 - 9.25 **Where are we now? The quality of apprenticeships in England**
John Higton, Research Director, CFE Research
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 - 9.55 **Quality, standards and assessment - latest challenges for policy**
Ruth Harries, Head of Standards, Assessment and Quality, Department for Education
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.55 - 10.45 **Improving the quality of apprenticeships - standard creation, Level 2 programmes and further opportunities**
How effective has the Trailblazer system proved so far and where could improvements come? What steps can be taken to limit the proliferation of new standards and to improve consistency in their quality; in order to maintain the quality of the apprenticeship brand, should Level 2 programmes be re-branded as traineeships, or do they represent an important first step on the apprenticeships ladder? Should government introduce further quality targets for those sectors highlighted in the Industrial Strategy, as called for by the Learning and Work Institute? How might the recent decision to remove the tender cap for apprenticeship providers affect the composition of training providers across England's nine regions; will this encourage a higher-quality composition of providers? What issues might the scale of the current target of three million apprenticeship starts by 2020 have on the IfA's work in improving the quality and rigour of programmes, and how could they be addressed? What lessons can be learnt from high-quality apprenticeship programmes from other countries? What steps can be taken to accelerate the transition from frameworks to standards? How much detail should apprenticeship standards include - where does the balance lie between occupational requirements and the requirements for a particular employer? How will the new scoring criteria and evaluation methodology introduced by the Education and Skills Funding Agency be received by training providers?
Graham Honeyman, Chief Executive, Sheffield Forgemasters International
Caroline Roberts, Head of Policy, Governance and Stakeholder Recognitions, City & Guilds
Kevin Rowan, Director, Unionlearn
Paul Warner, Director of Research and Development, Association of Employment and Learning Providers
David Willett, Director of Corporate Sales, The Open University
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.45 - 10.50 **Chair's closing remarks**
Lord Lucas
- 10.50 - 11.20 Coffee
- 11.20 - 11.25 **Chair's opening remarks**
Lord Young of Norwood Green, former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills and Apprenticeships
- 11.25 - 11.40 **Creating a rigorous assessment system for apprenticeships**
Lucy Sydney, Director of Strategic Relationships for VTQ, Ofqual
- 11.40 - 12.30 **Perspectives on the introduction of end-point assessment**
Should all standards have an approved assessment organisation in place before approval, as called for by the Sub-Committee on Education, Skills and the Economy? What further support can government provide Trailblazers with regard to setting-up assessment plans; could government offer more guidance to employers on an appropriate cost for end-point assessment? Does more need to be done to clarify the roles of the different external quality assessment bodies for apprenticeships assessment? Following the Institute of Apprenticeships appointment of Open Awards as its External Quality Assurance delivery partner, what challenges will the organisation face in ensuring that providers are equipping learners with the rights skills, and how can the two work together to further the quality of apprenticeship programmes? To what extent might the lack of intermediate assessments make it difficult for apprentices to continue an uninterrupted apprenticeship with a different employer, and how might these concerns be addressed?
Graham Hasting-Evans, Managing Director, NOCN
Jill Whittaker, Managing Director, HIT Training
Karen Redhead, Principal and Chief Executive, Derwentside College, County Durham
Alex Falcon Huerta, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, Soaring Falcon Accountancy
Questions and comments from the floor with Lucy Sydney, Director of Strategic Relationships for VTQ, Ofqual
- 12.30 - 12.55 **Ensuring high-quality apprenticeships - priorities for the Institute for Apprenticeships**
Richard Guy, Strategic Advisor, Institute of Apprenticeships
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Employment Forum closing remarks**
Lord Young of Norwood Green, former Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Skills and Apprenticeships
Marc Gammon, Associate Editor, Westminster Employment Forum