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National Apprenticeship Service

Introducing the National Apprenticeship Service

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is the dedicated support service and single contact point for employers and apprentices. We provide funding towards the training costs of apprentices and we support employers through the process of recruitment and training. This includes advising employers on what Apprenticeship frameworks available and signposting them towards training providers.

NAS was launched in April 2009 and reports to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). We are responsible for the national delivery of targets and co-ordination of funding for Apprenticeship places. We aim to bring about significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships by working to overcome barriers to growth and promoting the value of Apprenticeships to employers, learners and the country as a whole.

Our key objective is to ensure that Apprenticeships become a mainstream career option for young people. By 2020, the target is to have 1 in 5 young people undertaking an Apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship vacancies

A core part of our work programme is managing the *Apprenticeship vacancies* system – a free online recruitment tool that matches apprentices with prospective employers. It is a quick, easy and reliable ‘one-stop shop’ where employers can advertise vacancies and individuals can search and apply for Apprenticeship places. Since its launch in January 2009, over 100,000 young people have registered on the system.

Many Apprenticeships are advertised on Apprenticeship vacancies every week and the pool of candidates on the system highlights the depth in talent of young people. 54% of those registered are 16-18 year olds and all are looking to start an Apprenticeship in one of the 180 job roles on offer.

The system is free and available on the National Apprenticeships Service website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk

What are Apprenticeships

An Apprenticeship combines on-the-job training with nationally recognised qualifications. Each Apprenticeship framework is developed by employers (through Sector Skills Councils/Sector Bodies) to suit the sector in which they sit and there are more than 180 frameworks available across a range of occupational areas from accountancy to textiles, engineering to veterinary nursing, business administration to construction.

Apprenticeships generally fall into one of three categories:

- ‘Apprenticeships.’ These sit at Level 2 and are the equivalent to GCSEs.
- ‘Advanced Apprenticeships’ These sit at Level 3 and are the equivalent to A-levels.
- ‘Higher Apprenticeships’ – the equivalent to a foundation degree.

Why Apprenticeships?

Skills shortages are still one of the biggest threats to UK business. Even in difficult times like

To find out more about Apprenticeships, visit apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600

these, Apprenticeships are a vital way of improving the skills of staff and generating a committed and valuable workforce.

For employers, they provide a flexible resource to help businesses across all industries grow and provide a route to harness fresh talent. Having staff with the right skills for the job means they can do a wider range of tasks and take on new responsibilities - this can help to reduce skill shortages, minimise staff turnover and workplace accidents, and increase productivity.

For young people, Apprenticeships provide a successful way of developing skills and achieving qualifications while they are employed in a job. Career progression for apprentices is excellent with many advancing to highly skilled jobs or higher education in a college or university.

Why do employers invest in Apprenticeships?

Employers are increasingly realising the business benefits of taking on an apprentice and their investment in Apprenticeships is repaid many times over.

A study by Sheffield University measured the long term financial benefit to investing in Apprenticeships. A Level 3 Advanced apprentice will generate an additional lifetime benefit to themselves and their employer of £105,000 compared to someone who does not gain an Apprenticeship. The Level 2 additional benefit is £73,000.¹

A recent study by the University of Warwick Institute of Employment Research found that the costs of Apprenticeship training are recouped relatively quickly, and that where the investment is nurtured, the returns are significant.

A recent survey of businesses throughout the UK asked about the benefits of hiring an apprentice (Populus, January 2009). Of those surveyed:

- 81% said that employing apprentices generated higher overall productivity for their company.
- 66% said that their Apprenticeship programme made them more competitive in their industry.
- 92% said that their Apprenticeship programme better motivated staff and increased job satisfaction.
- 74% said that apprentices tended to be more loyal, remaining at their company longer than non-apprentices.

¹ *A Cost-Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications*, University of Sheffield, 2007