Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone – Research into collaboration opportunities to make a difference

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Northampton Waterside Enterprise Zone (NWEZ) has the long term ambition of becoming a national centre of excellence for advanced technologies, precision engineering, low carbon technology, sustainable construction and high performance engineering supported by related professional, financial, logistics, green economy, creative media, leisure and business services. To this end it has initiated a programme of research to facilitate the development of a “Skills Strategy and Action Plan” for NWEZ and its catchment area in order to support its vision and ambitions.

This research is part of that programme and addresses the key strategic theme of how to inspire people - especially the young - into the world of engineering and related technologies. More specifically, this research is focused on exploring how the following arenas might contribute to this strategic theme:

1. Opportunities for different types of collaboration between employers and skills/education providers. For example Employers Ownership Pilots, Apprenticeship Training Agencies, Innovation/Technology centres and the conditions required for implementing and sustaining them.

2. Alternative models for centres of excellence including the advantages and disadvantages of a single physical centre compared to other options such as satellite and virtual centres.

3. The appetite in the region amongst employers and skills/education providers for collaboration; investigating the forms of collaboration that are most favoured; assessing levels of support for investment and the return on investment expected. This will provide a clear sense of the starting point with regard to the level of engagement which currently exists and whether it is sufficient to support the NWEZ vision.
A review of the literature and information relating to Centres of Excellence (COEs) indicates that whilst COEs differ according to both size and purpose they can usefully be grouped into three categories. Each category is relevant in relation to NWEZ strategy and each category has different cost implications:

1. Large private or government funded centres as exemplified by Siemens/NSARE (National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering) and CEME (Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence). The former is an example of collaboration between private and not for profit organisations such as National Skills Academies whilst the latter is part of a major government regeneration programme. Often the focus is on developing specific expertise and skills in the form of vocational training such as apprenticeships.

2. Small to medium centres as exemplified by the Cambridge Science Centre. These centres are often characterised by strong relationships (either as founders or investors) with educational establishments. They are often not for profit with a focus on bringing science and technology to young people.

3. The third category is characterised by centres which offer opportunities such as access to knowledge, technology, equipment and processes which organisations might not otherwise be able to afford in order to build and test products. These vary in size and structure from small co-operative style arrangements such as MakeSpace (described below) to larger multi-partner arrangements between universities with government funding such as the High Value Manufacturing Technology Innovation Centre (HVM TIC). The commercial focus may also differ with some having a strong commercial and profit focus in the form of exploiting technologies developed at the associated university whilst for others the focus is to be self-funded for the benefit of their members.

Interviews and visits were held with five centres of excellence. These were selected on the basis of their relevance to the NWEZ industry sectors and as exemplars of different forms as described above. Brief descriptions of each are provided below along with 2 case studies (in appendix 1). The purpose of the interviews and visits was to establish criteria for success, their benefits and impact and then to consider which models might best fit with NWEZ strategy.

**Examples**

**Cambridge Science Centre**

A small centre set up to inform and inspire young and old around science. It is open in the afternoon to the public (a small entrance fee is required) and in the morning for school visits. The format is an interactive exhibition and is very experiential. The interactive pods which for the basis of the exhibition are portable allowing them to be rotated to keep interest for returning visitors. This system also allows them to take the interactive pods on road shows to schools and events. It is funded by private
investors and government initiatives and is located in a central position in Cambridge.

**MakeSpace**

A 24/7 shared open hack space set up for people to join as members. It enables the member community access to a space where they can come to use tools they may not have available to them to design, develop and build. The community also offers the opportunity for sharing knowledge and experience and the ability to work with other members on projects. The member community are the driving force behind decisions, equipment maintenance and budget control for the centre and what tools are needed. A grant initially supported set up (£40k) whilst private sponsors (four, each contributing £20k) and initial membership fees have enabled it to move forward. Its plans to be self-funded by monthly membership fees (£40 per member). It is centrally located in Cambridgeshire on a free lease provided by one of the Cambridge universities. Access is enabled 24/7 via electronic key fobs which can also measure usage.

It has two key objectives – to act as an outreach facility for engineering and manufacturing by providing access and knowledge to a wider community and to support new and existing businesses, with space, equipment and peer support. Importantly it is perceived as a “cool place to hang out to make and share”.

**nVision**

A 3D business modelling facility set up by Northampton University. Its purpose is threefold: To raise the profile of the University; to increase the level of commercial business engagement and research and provide a new revenue stream and to act as a facility that can be used and incorporated into courses. As part of the initiative SMEs have use of the facility free of charge.

It required a large investment of £2.5m and was part of the refurbishment of the university site (total cost £9m). It was the first of its kind when launched and as such was not able to benefit from learning from the experience of other similar arrangements. Consequently, it is reported that the initial research was not sufficient to ensure that it was effectively aligned to real business needs and thus the result has been a struggle in promotion and uptake of use. In hindsight the University would also have considered establishing a mobile unit providing greater access and opportunity for education.

**Siemens and the National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering (NSARE)**

This will be a Siemens owned bespoke facility to support education and training and is led by the industry skills and strategy requirements within the Traction Rolling Stock industry. Initial funding is £7m with 50% from Siemens and 50% from government. It is intended that the facility will be used by industry and the supply chain. NSARE is the driving force behind the collaboration with industry and supply chain.

It is seen as a great facility to pull people into Northampton and to showcase what can be achieved. It will support 8 apprenticeships per year, rising to 18 in following
years. The aspiration is that these numbers will be matched by industry and the supply chain.

The facility is seen as an important part of Siemens Corporate Responsibility Strategy and as a place to inspire the next generation into railway engineering by working with education and local community. The apprentices will also have the opportunity to work on local community projects.

CEME – The Centre for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence.

This is a large Centre of Excellence. It was initially set up 9 years ago with funding from government and support from Ford to be used as part of their training facility. The centre offers everything from industry training and apprenticeships, local education support for tailored events and teacher training which is funded by CEME, visits, conference facilities, office and manufacturing space. Ford, Toyota and AA all use the facility for industry training purposes. The centre has also recently set up a research institute for High Speed Manufacturing which is industry led and is embarking on opening a UTC with University College London and Ford. These are seen as ways to continue growth and sustainability.

CEME was heavily funded in the initial stages and over the last few years they have been driving to a self-funded model which by the end of this year will be realised. The setup is now managed and run by a group of 24 people who work directly for CEME to deliver the strategy and manage the connections and links; the rest of the setup such as conference facilities, café, office letting, site security and up keep of the site are outsourced.

High Value Manufacturing Centre

The High Value Manufacturing Catapult was established in October 2011. Seven partners are working together to form the Catapult centre, bringing together their expertise in different and complementary areas of high value manufacturing. The Catapult provides an integrated capability and embraces all forms of manufacture using metals and composites, in addition to process manufacturing technologies and bio-processing. The centres provide new opportunities for manufacturing knowledge and technology transfer, allowing accelerated testing, demonstration and industrialisation of manufacturing concepts, technologies and processes.

Findings and Conclusions

Success Criteria

The following were found to be important ingredients for success and/or questions which need to be addressed when considering a COE. We have elaborated each to indicate how it might inform the NWEZ approach:

Creation of clear vision, goals, objectives and terms of reference

These provide the framework to drive much of the other actions and decisions. The key is to establish the purpose of the COE in terms of the value it will bring to NWEZ; what is the motivation/need and what will be different as a result of the COE? This should be well thought out and articulated unambiguously to serve as the
foundation for the creation of any Centre of Excellence. Without this, it cannot be successful. However, the caution is that this should be the starting point. It is important to recognise the need to periodically revisit the terms of reference and shape them according to emerging learning and experiences. This is important to create ownership but also to recognise that the COE is a learning environment.

Early findings from the research\(^1\) (see table 1) indicate a high level of support for the following three functional areas from survey participants. These need to be interpreted with caution as the results may be influenced by the size and homogenous nature of the participants (these will be elaborated on and investigated further in the next phase of research).

- Support for higher and further education training
- A learning centre for primary and secondary education
- Advanced/prototype manufacturing

### Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Rank order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support higher and further education training</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning centre for primary and secondary education</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced/prototype manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAE/simulation technology support</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fully fitted facilities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share Equipment</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business function rooms</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference facilities</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display area (own products/suppliers)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networking and café area</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offices to let</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In essence the findings suggest that survey participants are seeking a combination of education, learning and training from a COE. Interestingly the three categories of COE described earlier place different levels of emphasis on each of these functions. For example the Cambridge Science Centre focuses on broad level education; that is acting as a funnel to capture and inspire young people to engage their interest in the sciences; MakeSpace focuses more on peer to peer learning and providing opportunities to experiment and develop ideas in a peer learning environment, whilst Siemens focus is to provide vocational training in specialised areas. The desired function naturally will influence form and what is interesting in this finding is that it suggests that all three categories of COE (in terms of what they deliver) are required or desired. How this might be achieved is discussed later in this section.

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\(^1\) courtesy of Stuart Banks who incorporated some research questions regarding the purpose of a COE into his interviews with Engineering Companies.
Passionate people

For a centre of excellence of any size a key contributing factor is the passion of the people leading it. They have a connection to the subject area of the centre of excellence and it is something they really want to work. This passion is driven by a range of motivations, values and beliefs which include; the desire to inspire people of all ages, to outreach and provide access to facilities, knowledge and experiences not readily accessible to many populations and to address a clear sector/organisational need with regard to sustainability of the business. This passion is the reason the centres of excellence we reviewed were able to get off the ground; it provides drive, resilience and tenacity in the face of the many challenges the founders experienced.

The passion is also needed from private investors. They need to be aligned to the value and belief systems on which the centre is founded and to be engaged with the long term vision.

Key questions for NWEZ, therefore, are where will these passionate people come from, and how might their passion be harnessed? The next stage of the research will go some way to answering this in that it will assess the appetite and desire for a centre of excellence amongst local organisations, the form it should take and levels of support for different types of investment (e.g. time, resources, and finance).

What form of COE?

As mentioned earlier the findings suggest that all three categories in terms of the function they provide are desirable. However, this is not to say that NWEZ need to establish three different COEs; rather we need to be innovative and look at how the ingredients of the three approaches might be combined to achieve the desired end goal. Examples are explored below; however our key recommendation is that this would be the subject of further participant and stakeholder working sessions to explore the data and findings in order to facilitate interpretation and testing of options. This will facilitate the building of a community of businesses which will provide momentum and focus in continuing and sustaining the options moving forward.

Function: higher and further education training

The building of a dedicated centre such as the Siemens/NSARE is clearly a long term undertaking and one which require substantial investment both in terms of time and resources. Additionally, the key requirement for this form of establishment is for a large organisation to drive and taking the lead. This necessarily reduces opportunities for collaboration between NWEZ organisations as ultimately the lead company is in the driving seat and their needs will commercially have to take priority. However, in the first instance it is possible for NWEZ to forge closer links with such centres in order to facilitate access for NWEZ organisations. This might be enhanced by combining this approach with the use of Apprenticeship Training Agencies (either established or by establishing a dedicated agency for NWEZ). This option is discussed in the ATA section of this research. In this way the vocational training need would be met.
**Function: primary and secondary education**

The Cambridge Science centre is an interesting model to consider replicating and is relatively low cost with regard to funding. This could be conceived as a combination of dedicated centre (only a small amount of space is required) and mobile facility based on the same principles as the new phenomenon of “pop up” shops. The nature of such a facility has the added advantage of creating closer links between different parts of the community, i.e. business, volunteers, educational establishments (at all levels) and current and future customers of all three sectors.

Such a facility can provide training to enable teachers to develop their understanding of areas like STEM which will enable them to enhance the classroom experience of their pupils. The small size also serves to ensure agility and flexibility and in turn the sustainability of the facility in that it will be able to experiment and play to see what works and doesn’t work. Consequently it is in a position to evolve and change in response to the changing needs and requirements of NWEZ.

**Function: learning and Advanced/prototype manufacturing. CAE/simulation technology support**

The need for such facilities as advanced prototyping might be met in similar way to that described for training: by accessing existing establishments such as nVision and the High Value Manufacturing Centre. The feasibility of establishing such a facility in NWEZ is very dependent on the expertise and technology which exists in regional academic institutions but is worth exploring as part of the next phase of research.

Superficially, support for a centre such as MakeSpace does not appear to be high. This may be due to the organisations surveyed and the manner in which the question was posed (i.e. learning from peers was not included, just sharing of equipment). The perceived benefits described by MakeSpace together with our own experience of facilitating peer to peer learning suggests that such an arrangement might have many direct and indirect benefits. These include:

- Creating communities of practice around shared interests and problems which can evolve into virtual centres of excellence.
- The emergence of creation spaces where the focus is on providing immediate value to participants in terms of helping them tackle difficult performance challenges while at the same time reducing the effort required to capture and disseminate the knowledge created.
- Acting as an attractor to create clusters of innovative firms which in turn generates benefits in the form of knowledge spill overs, the sharing of inputs and forward and backward linkages to research innovation, which make firms within the cluster more productive and innovative.

In conclusion the above discussion suggests that there is no single solution to the COE question. Rather the more productive and agile approach is to consider how the different ingredients might be incorporated to facilitate and create an energised and vibrant community of organisations exemplified by what happens between them in the form of linking, connecting and collaboration.
The Employer Ownership of Skills pilot is a competitive fund open to employers to invest in their current and future workforce in England. Employers are invited to develop proposals that raise skills, create jobs, and drive enterprise and economic growth. Government will invest in projects in which employers are also prepared to commit their own funds in order to make better use of our combined resources. In September 2012 the round one successful bids were notified of which there where 34 out of 269 applications in total. These ranged from consortiums of SMEs right up to large corporate companies like BAE Systems Plc. Round two launched in November 2012 and closed at the end of March 2013 with 314 applications.

Proposals have come from a wide range of leading businesses and include a substantial number of ambitious proposals to take “end to end” responsibility for skills through sector wide or local area based industrial partnerships. But this is not just about large companies. Many of the proposals are collaborative with the focus on innovative ways to encourage smaller firms to train for the first time. There is a strong emphasis on helping young people into work through high quality work experience, pre-apprenticeships, traineeships and apprenticeship programmes tailored directly to employer needs. The bids involve a large number of employers, universities, colleges, training providers, unions and other key partners in the skills landscape.

**Examples**

**Goodwin PLC**

Goodwin PLC a large international engineering company with its Head office in Stoke On Trent, it has 22 trading subsidiaries and globally employing over 1000 employees with approx. 750 of them based in the Stoke on Trent area of which over 500 are engineers. Each subsidiary is run independently with the benefits of being part of the larger group, the largest employs around 300 and the smallest 20 people. Being independent subsidiaries is how Goodwin PLC were able to secure funding as part of the round one Employer Ownership Pilots due to one of the parameters being that the bid could not be an individual company in its own right. Goodwin PLC already has an apprenticeship programme but wanted to up scale the operation and saw this as the opportunity to link to the current shortage of talent in engineering and their ageing workforce as a way of managing succession planning. The company culture is very much paternalistic with it still being run by the Goodwin family, it has a very low turnover of staff and enables fast and proactive decision making. Their plan of an academy will enable them to take on 125 apprentices (25 per year for 5 years), they have filled their quota for the first year with intake in December 2012 which includes 3 females.

**Barriers and challenges:**

- Engineering as an industry is not seen as a sexy sector to develop a career in.
- It is seen that schools are funded by bums on seats and not about supporting the learner journey.
- High cost and high resource requirement to provide this level of in house training development.
• Finding the right candidates for fulfilling the openings.
• The lack of interest from young women in wanting to get into engineering (only 3 out of 25 taken on are females, although the current level of the females is of an excellent standard).
• On receiving the go ahead to commence, the time frames were tight to recruit, source equipment for the academy and develop an interim facility.

Opportunities:
• To develop the academy as part of the business and to be continued on past the 5 year plan.
• To support the business as part of their 5 year succession plan for part of the aging workforce.
• The grant enabled the up scaling of existing apprenticeship programme.
• The offer to the local community to provide an engineering academy for up and coming engineers in a local business with great international career potential.

What has helped:
• Identifying that an in house programme would support the business better than using existing training providers. It means the apprentices are taught in the Goodwin way.
• Gaining the funding has enabled the vision of developing an academy.
• The whole business pulling together with hands on approach to delivering within the tight timescale.
• Developing a plan which had a strong purpose, project plan and vision.
• Being selfish as a business to ensure it delivered what you want and satisfying the need of the business and ensuring you are not being driven by the funding but the talent development potential.

What has hindered:
• The amount of bureaucratic form filling and loop holes to complete in such a short period of time.

**Energie Group and Construction Consortium**

The consortium is made up of some of the leading companies in construction, which includes Balfour Beatty, Costain, Galliford Try, Kier Group, Lend Lease, Lovell, Vinci, Wates Group and Willmott Dixon. The vision for this consortium is to provide a structured, consistent and sector specific training and development not only for themselves but their whole supply chain. By increasing the talent and knowledge within the supply chain they believe that the value to the end client will be realised through increased quality, project management and cost to delivery. All the companies are committed to achieving this vision and are working collaboratively to ensure the vision is achieved, it is a big move to working closely with direct competitors but the benefits over the long term to up skill and drive talent development is seen to be the key to success.
Barriers and challenges:

- Tight timescales to deliver what was expected.
- Pulling resources together to deliver initial bid.
- Collaboration between consortium; they have the same EOP vision but have to overcome the different individual company ways of working.

Opportunities:

- Being part of the first round winners and starting something big contributes to the company’s reputation.
- Delivering and changing the way training provision is provided through the whole supply chain.
- Driving consistency of knowledge and training through the whole supply chain.

What has helped:

- All companies in the consortium are committed to up skilling not only their employees but the supply chain to drive benefits back into the clients.
- Knowing that although it has been hard work all are prepared to realise the vision set out.

What has hindered:

- Government delaying the starting point, then expecting everything to be in place within very tight deadlines.

Findings and Conclusions

Success criteria

The following themes were found to be important to the successful Employer ownership pilot bids from the first round and shed some light on the approach needed to develop a shared and collaborative learning environment. Ranging from apprenticeships, to up skilling of current workforce and development of management with leadership skills to support and embed a new and different approach to skills and talent.

Skill and talent development, not funding focused

It is evident from the findings that the companies involved in Employer Ownership Pilots (EOPs) have identified the need and value of providing opportunities for bringing in and developing talent, up skilling current workforce and building a framework to replicate and share across the supply chain and competitors to drive consistent quality learner provision. There is also a need not only for general apprenticeships but also for specialist ones to ensure the uptake of new emerging skills and provide opportunities where there is no existing learning provision. EOPs have also highlighted the need to up skill current leadership capability around areas like coaching and mentoring so new talent coming through can be supported throughout the process.
Committed companies

For companies to deliver the above it is evident from the research they need to be tenacious to get through the funding process and committed to supporting the bigger picture and the long term plan for skill and talent development. This may require a change in mindset as many will be working closely with their competitors and their supply chain and may feel that their individual competitive advantage is at risk.

Clear strategy and vision

A clear strategy and vision for the short, medium and long term is critical for success. This is due to the strong collaboration needed from all parties to make it work which requires commitment, thinking and working differently. This is key to the successfully delivering something new and innovative to the industry which supports and drives skill and talent development. A clear strategy and vision supports this by setting out the requirements each business has to play in the EOP, what their part is and act as a benchmark to measure success.

Industry sector skills provision

What the EOP does is enable the industry to lead and drive the learning requirements needed, not only to bring young and fresh blood into the industry but also ensuring that the training provision meets the needs of the industry for future proofing and re-generation. As the industry will be in control it can act fast and be proactive in changing needs and requirements. For instance when an emerging skill or craft is identified it can be acted upon and the opportunity seized in real time to provide the right level of learning and at the right cost to benefit all.

By developing an industry led skill provision it provides the learners with the right skill sets required to secure a career at the end of the programme. This benefits the employer as a key issue highlighted from the research is work readiness or right skill level, both of which are seem to be lacking in the normal method of learning provision.

Doing it differently, doing it right

A common theme across the case studies is that the current offering is not good enough to deliver the right level of skill; it does not meet the needs of employers or employees. The feeling is that current apprenticeships do not prepare the apprentice ready for work or provide them with the right level of education and skills to secure a job at the end of the apprenticeship; this has a negative effect on the employer and apprentice. By taking the lead an EOP has the opportunity to drive the right level of education and skill training incorporated with the industry specific requirements. It also enables the EOP to address further up skilling of the existing workforce across the whole supply chain. This means higher numbers of learners can be accessed across a multitude of businesses and SMEs can benefit from on-going training and development which normally they would not be able to fund. All of this drives cost down and delivers consistency across the whole supply chain.
The lesson from the EOP research is collaboration is the key to success. Whether it is developing NWEZ or to drive sectorial change in thinking and performance then there is a need for strong and committed collaboration to make it happen. Although the common thread for the EOPs was funding providing leverage to start something this shouldn’t be a prerequisite to doing it, or at least building momentum to do something different.

Using the EOPs as an example of how businesses throughout the supply chain and even across sectors can work together to deliver business benefits should be seen as an opportunity for Northamptonshire. A need to approach and think differently about how areas such as skills and talent and inspiring the next generation is not down to one individual or a business but can be achieved as a collaborative community.
Apprenticeship Training Agency

As stated on the Apprenticeships website, Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) offer a unique approach to the recruitment of apprentices. The ATA model is intended to support the delivery of a high quality apprenticeship programme with a focus on small employers who wish to use the services of an ATA to source, arrange and host their apprenticeships. This could be for a number of reasons including them not being able to commit to the full framework, short term restrictions on employee numbers, or uncertainty about the value of an apprenticeship.

- ATA acts as employer and places them with a host employer
- Support with recruitment, finding the right apprentice to meet the employers’ needs
- Responsibility for the wages, tax, National Insurance as well as administration and performance management
- Supervision of the apprentice during the apprenticeship period
- Links with an approved training provider and support to both the apprentice and host employer throughout the apprenticeship

The ATA is not a ‘temporary work’ business but rather a means to manage and give real flexibility to the delivery of a high quality apprenticeship. This flexibility also applies where employers may not be able to offer all aspects of a framework but linking them with other host employers allows the full range to be covered.

For the apprentice the ATA gives another route into an apprenticeship which can offer them the opportunity to experience a range of employers and increased security around the continuation of their apprenticeship.

For a full description of the key features and behaviours of an ATA see Appendix 4 the ATA Framework.

Examples

SEAC – South East Apprenticeship Company

SEAC have built relationships with over 40 different colleges to support the delivery of apprenticeships across their region. They are not tied to one particular college to deliver their development programmes which enables them to be flexible and agile to work in any area, any sector and any job role the employer may require.

SEAC employ five people full time and permanent and one person part time. This can however be built upon if required by utilising SEAC’s parent company Keits Training Services Ltd. They have strong connections with local authorities and have placed over 34 apprentices in Bucks alone. They also provide apprenticeships into Mercedes Petronas F1 team in Northamptonshire. Working closely with employers SEAC gains the knowledge to understand employer needs helping ensure the right apprenticeship provision with the right training provider is offered. If an apprenticeship is not currently offered to support the business need SEAC look to industry to see how they can fulfil the requirement by tapping into their vast contacts and knowledge and putting a programme together.
Impact Apprenticeship

Impact has developed their ATA as a commercial business which they feel is highly focused on providing the best customer experience whether you are a business or apprentice. Impact is co-founded by MEGT and Loughborough College, although they are not tied to only providing training from Loughborough meaning they can link with any other training establishment which is best placed to provide this. MEGT are an Australian based ATA and bring over 30 years’ experience and over 10,500 apprenticeship placements. They offer a full pastoral service and use social media to interact with potential apprentices and as a way of advertising positions alongside their proactive team to ensure they get the best candidates matched to employers. Impact’s success rate for apprenticeship placements in 2011/2012 was 95% with an overall employer satisfaction of 98%, this lead to 81% of apprentices going into full time employment.

Success Criteria

Business readiness to take on apprentices

From the research into ATAs one of the hardest parts is the readiness of a business to take on an apprentice. It seems the majority of businesses lack an understanding of what apprenticeships can offer and the value they provide as a way of bringing young and new talent into their business. It was expressed that one of the benefits to having an apprentice is the company can mould the learner into the way of their business. Unfortunately in the eyes of some businesses it still seems that apprentices are seen as cheap labour or have the stigma attached of lower levels of intelligence. The strength of an ATA is being able to support and guide the business and provide the knowledge and understanding around apprenticeships, the value they can provide with the risk taken out.

Promotion and marketing of Apprenticeship Training Agencies

Part of the role of an ATA is to work with businesses and apprentices to support and guide them in securing the right company with the right role with the right candidate. However, to succeed the promotion and marketing of ATAs and apprenticeship is pivotal to successfully working with businesses. However this does not seem to be supported efficiently or proactively by the government agency NAS (National Apprenticeship Agency). It seems to fall foul of consistency of message, approach and support in some areas of the country.

Training providers

Without training providers apprenticeships would not be able to be delivered meaning selecting, working with and building relationships with training providers is fundamental to successfully driving an ATA.

Achieving business needs (not being specific but servicing all industries and areas)

ATA’s can be set up to service specific apprenticeship types i.e. construction or to cover a broad range of apprenticeships, this can be dependent on the background
and relationship of the ATA and the need at the time. If there is a desire to develop an ATA for Northamptonshire then the broad range of businesses and industries in and around the area could benefit from having access to the support, guidance and services an ATA has to offer. This could enable industry led relationships to develop the right programme, enhancing the offering and career potential for the learner, by working with a range of local and national training providers, local businesses and with the possibility of partnering with an existing ATA.

Providing full continued support through whole life cycle and beyond (relationship management)

It is evident from the research that a pivotal role of an ATA is not only to build and develop relationships with businesses and training providers but to provide a full cradle to grave service and beyond if needed for the business or apprentice. The people that work within the ATA are not seen as just an employer to the apprentice or a service to the business but also a friend, colleague, support, guidance and pastoral service to help both business and apprentice through the term of the apprenticeship. The key goal is to enable the business to be able to make an easy decision on offering a full time employment at the end of the apprenticeship.

Performance appreciation and pay

Apprenticeships are not seen as cheap labour through an ATA, rather the premise is about getting the right candidate for the role and the host company. Part of this is working with the business to ensure the value of an apprenticeship is understood and quantifiable. The ATAs interviewed stated that apprentices on their programmes tended to have a higher starting salary and remuneration attached to levels of achievement throughout their apprenticeship. This demonstrates that businesses using ATAs see the value and long term picture of using apprentices and ATA’s as a way to increase their talent pool.

Northamptonshire could benefit from an ATA whether in setting one up or partnering with an existing one. If the promotion and marketing is done right it could provide the kudos apprenticeships need to gain support from businesses and interest people into taking on an apprenticeship to develop and strengthen skills. Working with industry to help shape the right programmes would also go some way to managing the skill gaps and succession planning for an ageing workforce in all sectors.
Logistics Sector

The action plan being developed from the NWEZ research highlighted other sectors of influence of which one was Logistics. On this basis further research was conducted with a small sample of logistic companies in Northampton to gain their view of the challenges and barriers to recruiting talent within their industry sector. Part of this research was also to test whether they saw a Centre of Excellence as being able to support their industry and business.

Examples

Skills for Logistics

Skills for Logistics are the Sector Skills Council for Logistics. They have five strategic goals:

**Goal 1:** We will increase sector and public investment in training

**Goal 2:** We will produce relevant and fit for purpose skills development solutions

**Goal 3:** We will be a credible and respected voice in the sector on skills development and related policy issues

**Goal 4:** We will ensure that employers can benefit from the workforce skills that will increase business efficiency and contribute to meeting UK carbon reduction targets

**Goal 5:** We will strive to be regarded by employers and stakeholders as a high performing Sector Skills Council.

Their mission is to "Enable employers in the logistics sector to gain competitive advantage by developing workforce skills" which they are doing by working closely with the organisations within logistics to support and guide them where possible on developing an industry led programme around business need. Currently there is no specific provision for the logistics sector under the NAS (National Apprenticeship Service) framework. There is a Chartered body for Logistics CILT UK (Chartered Institute for Logistics and Transport) which is part of a larger body CILT International and has presence in more than 30 countries worldwide.

One of the biggest challenges Skills for Logistics has is raising the awareness of logistics as a viable career route. The general feeling, as with engineering, is that the industry is not seem as sexy and people seeing it as haulage and driving trucks or forklifts in warehouses.

As in most industries Skills for Logistics see a big area of concern around the SME businesses who suffer from not getting good talent and the right skill sets, and then being able to continue to develop the talent on tight budgets. The larger organisations are able to run in house development programmes to provide further training and up skilling but also suffer from getting good quality management and leaders into the business. One of the largest skill shortages are HGV drivers which will only get more difficult due to the new Drivers CPC requirement which comes into law in September 2014. All drivers need to have passed this to be able to carry on doing their job. Whether it is a large or small company this has a big cost impact to the business and the general consensus is that many of the aging workforce have decided not to take the test and retire in September 2014 when it comes into force.
Skills for Logistics see a great opportunity for driving SME collaboration around doing things differently with the promotion and marketing of logistics and also by providing multi organisation drivers. They see a huge benefit of being a Centre of Excellence (COE) which supports inspiring the next generation and training and development of new and existing staff across the industry. There is also a level of engineering support needed for logistics with maintenance staff for warehousing and machinery such as fork lift trucks. They are already initiating the possibility of a COE for logistics but have been having issues with location and space.

Skills for Logistics are constantly looking at ways to engage with the industry, schools and work ready people in order to promote logistics as a viable career option. To support this Skills for Logistics have recently developed a career framework called “The Professional Development Stairway” providing people with a route map on how to plan their career in logistics. They are also working hard to set up a framework which supports ex-armed forces personnel into a career in logistics.

**Brown Bros**

Brown Brothers Distribution is the leading national distributor to the UK crash repair industry and has been going since 1889. They have had a centre in Northampton for over 45 years. Over the last 18 months they have been through a re-organisation and closed down a few of their centres, however Northampton has been retained due to its network links and prime location. They have 10 employees at Northampton and over 160 across the UK. Brown Bros are owned by PPG industries an international business that employs over 3000 people across the UK.

Their biggest issue is finding the right person with the right attitude to work at their Northampton branch. As a bigger organisation there are career opportunities across the UK and worldwide with diverse opportunities in Brown Bros and PPG Industries. They had an apprentice working for them around a year ago who left to work on the tools as a labourer due to better financial reward at the time. They currently use JHP for training across the UK but feel this has limitations as they do not get the right support locally or the right people for the job. They have current concerns over an ageing workforce and understand that they need to get people into the business to able to succession plan.

As part of the re-organisation the wider business has started to engage with their employees through culture surveys like Your Say, this is to try and understand what is driving the business from the employee’s perspective. Part of the re-organisation is planned refurbishments or relocation of premises into new developments to assist in developing in house capability and creating training rooms across sites. This has all led to new development and excellence programmes internally to shift the thinking across the business and step up their game.

As a local business they currently do not get involved in any sponsorship or projects. If there was a COE they would be interested in seeing how they could support projects with schools. In general see that a COE could also support local businesses in learning and development to overcome the skills gaps and shortages.
Bookers

Bookers are a wholesale, distribution and logistics company with sites across the whole of the UK. At the Wellingborough depot they employ around 180 staff across warehousing, office and management. They use their internal training and external training resources to deliver development programmes. These programmes are ad-hoc and set up on an as needed basis which may be in collaboration with other depots to help reduce and manage budget requirements. Currently, they do not use apprentices; however this is being trialled at another depot and if successful will be rolled out across the rest of the UK. As a depot they have a strong workforce that is committed to achieving the highest standards possible. Within warehousing they have very little churn which could be due to the performance related bonus structure. However due to this being in place it has a knock on effect when new staff joins as the warehouse management and staff are focused on achieving their targets and not engaging or supporting new staff and personal development. An area they have found difficult to recruit for is more specialist areas with the office environment.

All staff have personal development plans based over the upcoming 12 month period with annual appraisals and with a new initiative for annualised working hours which provides flexible working around study. They regularly get involved in work experience but only through colleagues or friends children and only in the office environment as the warehouse has a strict 18+ age policy.

There is a genuine interest in supporting local initiatives around inspiring the next generation and they see working with schools around projects would be beneficial to get across how logistics really works and the career opportunities available. They see benefits to having a COE within Northampton either virtual or physical and see a link with logistics could support open learning across industry with shared learning and development of incoming and existing staff.

Action Express

Action Express are an independent logistics company who are currently expanding, they have been established for over 30 years and are part of a bigger collaborative network through Pallettrack (65 other independents in network) and APC (118). They employ around 408 people and have a fleet of 40 vehicles to support the business.

They currently employ 2 apprentices in the office who they recruited through “Starting Off” who are a recruitment and training company, specialising in careers and apprenticeships in business related environments. They have recently promoted 2 people internally who are going on external development courses to support their new roles within the business.

A key challenge for Action Express is recruiting quality drivers who are looking for a permanent position rather than through agencies where due to demand they can earn a better rate. They are restricted through their insurance company and have to employ drivers who have more than 2 years HGV driving experience. This means that they are unable to promote quality and committed internal drivers who want to take
the step up to HGV. With the CPC driver compliance regulation coming into force Action Express are paying for all their drivers to complete the training.

Due to the size of the business they have a small budget for training and development but ensure where possible especially if there is a business need their people receive the development they need. Currently, the majority of the budget has been used to support the CPC Driver regulations.

They really see the benefit of employing apprentices and plan to continue this when needed. By working with the apprentices they can mould and shape them in the Action Express way. They pay above the apprenticeship rate and treat them as employees not as cheap labour. Apart from Starting Off they use the Chamber of Commerce for all other training requirements and feel this supports and provides all the provision they need. They have a close working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce, and have not thought about using local colleges to provide training. Action Express is very keen to be involved in the ex-armed forces recruitment and 6 months ago employed one as their Transport Operations Manager. This has already proved successful by supporting the business and bringing a more structured approach to how the business is run. Although they have been able to do this they feel that the initiative to set something up with Skills for Logistics has not progressed enough and are keen to continue to build momentum especially with their planned growth.

An area they feel they lack support from was Job Centre Plus who did not seem to understand the requirements needed to recruit someone into their business, e.g. age restraints and English as a first language. They were told this was discriminative, which led to having hundreds of applicants for roles which they were not able to do. This has meant that Action Express no longer have a working relationship with JCP and use either their own network or advertising.

Action Express would be happy to be involved in a COE as part of school projects and inspiring the next generation. They see there would be a benefit to the local education and training and development of people and see that logistics as an industry could play a big part in this.

**Findings and Conclusions**

**Challenges and barriers**

- Logistics industry not seen as a career choice
- No formal apprenticeship specific for logistics sector
- Good drivers seeking higher pay through agency driving rather than benefits of working for a company
- The new CPC driver requirement, big cost on business or individual and high potential of losing an ageing workforce who would rather retire than taking test
- Restrictions on driver experience via insurance companies, this makes it hard for people who want to make a career change
• Relationship with Job Centre Plus is not strong, not providing quality applicants but flooding businesses with people who do not fit the requirements
• Finding young people with the right attitude to work and being work ready

Opportunities
• Apprenticeships seen as a good choice to bring people into the industry
• Ex-Armed Forces initiative seen as a good step to recruiting quality people into industry who are committed and hardworking, they have a lot of experience and knowledge to bring
• Supporting an inspiring the next generation project to raise awareness levels of logistics and the career opportunities
• A collaborative approach to sector training for logistics and closer working with larger and SME organisations to develop this, maybe along the lines of an Employer Ownership type programme
• Cross industry projects for education and unemployed

Further research or engagement would be needed but there seems to be a need for better communication and collaboration across the different industries in Northampton to share, link and connect opportunities. This is could be around working with education and other businesses to promote and market career opportunities providing a more in depth and company perspective of career choices. A COE and an ATA approach could go some way to supporting this within Northampton to inform and raise the awareness of learning and development through apprenticeships, linking different activities with education projects where business supports and sponsors. Or even provide a scheme where drivers are employed but work across different organisations.

The research findings provide strong evidence that businesses are hungry to know what is going on in Northamptonshire but don’t know where to turn or where to offer support. This should be seen as a positive and something to act upon to build and drive momentum in engaging and informing proactively what is happening. A COE in any form could form the basis of knowledge share and transfer and be the driving force behind making a difference.
1 Siemens and NSARE (National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering)

Introduction and background

Interview conducted with Sue Gill from NSARE

Project: National Training Academy for Traction & Rolling Stock - Joint project with SIEMENS Rail Systems UK.

Location: Kingsheath Northampton

Siemens approached NSARE to support the development of the National Training Academy for Traction and Rolling Stock. The project cost was identified at £7m. The facility will be Siemens owned and purpose built for their own training and provision. If Siemens and NSARE are able to secure rail sector use of the facility for industry and supply chain then the government will match fund 50% of the project, a provision of 50% capacity for industry use is required for this to come into force. The project is due for completion April 2014.

The initial intake of Siemen apprentices is targeted at 8 per year with an increase to 16/18 apprentices over time, it is expected that industry and supply chain will match these figures.

To support the provision of apprenticeships it is planned for Siemens to provide the technical requirement for industry and to work with local colleges in delivering the core requirements.

There is a desire to work with other Academies, initiatives and the HPT industry in Northamptonshire to promote and inspire the next generation into engineering.

The development of this facility is to inspire learners and they believe that this is not being offered elsewhere. The setup will enable learners to have access to the latest technology for classroom training and access and to a 3D - visualisation suite (initially being developed as a sales aid). Within the academy there will be a training hall which will have an 80-100 metre powered line to enable trains and carriages to be brought in for the apprentices to work on real problem solving and maintenance. Once the train station has been redeveloped there will be access along a walkway direct to the academy.

There is also a desire for the academy to be used as part of developing the local community by hosting school visits, mentoring and continuing to grow the apprenticeship programme and by involving apprentices in local community projects and school projects. There is a need that the links and connections are developed and supported by administration to ensure this happens.
Commercial Drivers

Siemens continued success in the UK & the recent awards of Eurostar and Thames link resulted in the need to:

- Increase the training requirement of 3000 man-days per annum to 4500 man-days per annum.
- Increase the Apprentice intake
- Further strengthen training and skills specific to new rolling stock with ever increasing levels of technical complexity e.g. Desiro City and Velaro E
- Position Siemens to respond from a skills perspective to further contract success
- Ensure cultural alignment of new and existing Siemens staff
- Play a leading role in the new Railway Skills development programmes being driven by NSARE
- Ensure the development of an adequate supply of skilled staff at a time when the railway industry is facing a critical shortage of qualified people.
- Position Siemens to respond from a skills perspective to further contract success
- Ensure cultural alignment of new and existing Siemens staff
- Play a leading role in the new Railway Skills development programmes being driven by NSARE
- Ensure the development of an adequate supply of skilled staff at a time when the railway industry is facing a critical shortage of qualified people.
- Provide world class training to the entire UK Railway Industry

The decision to make Northampton Kings Heath the preferred location for the Academy was made following a detailed analysis of all possible locations. The evaluation of the best site was based upon:

- Minimising staff travel requirements
- Effectiveness of the regional transport network
- Providing ‘Hub’ based training opportunities to the greatest number of people
- Partnership possibilities with ‘excellent’ local colleges (particularly for Apprentices)
- Availability of a suitable land footprint
- Optimising location in respect of Customers and Suppliers
- Optimised ‘dovetailing’ with existing training programmes
- The level of support from Local Authorities
### Key Challenges in establishing the facility:
- Process to secure government funding complicated and time consuming
- Government Personnel frequently changed
- Lack of cognisance of UK Industry drivers
- Varied approaches and not consistent
- Timeframes – still waiting on final outcome
- Selecting the right location
- Commercial approach to working partnerships with further education
- Keeping the interest and buy in of stakeholders

### Successes:
- Working collaboratively with industry competitors to make it work
- Smooth transition through project
- Identification of the right training and developments needs for Siemens and industry

### Benefits:
- Showcases Siemens commitment to developing talent
- Supports Siemens succession planning for an aging workforce and provision of skilled workers for securing current and future contracts
- Support for industry and supply chain to train and develop their people

### What does the future hold?
- A Centre of Excellence for Traction and Rolling Stock
- A facility to promote UK PLC capability
- Delivery of training and development in a state of the art facility
- To showcase Siemens capability
- Bringing people to Northampton
- Developing talent from Northampton

### Advice for others:
- Ensure true collaboration - willingness to collaborate with competitors
- NSARE were key due to providing independent consultation
- Clear understanding and total commitment
- Allocate sufficient resources – personnel not just financial
- To secure funding allow plenty of time if this is a prerequisite
- Need expertise in working with government
About NSARE: (provided by the NSARE website http://www.nsare.org/about-us.aspx)

NSARE Ltd was established with wide railway industry support to help tackle current and future skills needs within the railway engineering industry. The industry’s vision is that by 2015, its engineering workforce will have the necessary skills to support the maintenance, development and expansion of a first-class, cost effective 21st Century railway.

NSARE doesn’t deliver training — it works with employers to understand their skills needs, with training providers to ensure they are delivering what the industry needs and with other stakeholders, such as sector skills bodies and Government, to make sure that the industry has the right qualifications to support its vision.

The Board is made up of a number of senior railway engineering employer and stakeholder representatives. Key activities include:

• Training provision accreditation. From January 2012 they are managing the Network Rail training and assessment scheme (known as the RTAS scheme). They plan to extend the opportunity for providers to become accredited to deliver other railway engineering training later in the year.

• Development of a national competence database (SkillsID). Work is underway to develop a national database that will be capable of holding records of training and competence for all workers in the railway engineering industry.

• Working with employers. They provide advice and support as well as more complex consultancy.

• Industry promotion. They believe the railway engineering industry offers some great career opportunities — but there is a need to get this message out to school leavers and graduates. They are working closely with The Smallpiece Trust to deliver a number of activities aimed at different age groups, including the following courses:
  o Railway Systems Engineering for 15 to 17 year-olds at Birmingham University
  o Railway Engineering for 13 and 14 year-olds at Bath University

NSARE is part of a national network of National Skills Academies (NSAs). Funding to enable establishment of NSARE was confirmed as part of the Government’s new skills strategy in November, 2010, and the Academy was launched on 1 December 2010 at the House of Commons with more than 150 industry representatives present. In January 2011 NSARE was incorporated as a ‘not for profit’ Company Limited by Guarantee, wholly-owned by its Members.
2 Cambridge Science Centre

Introduction and background

Interview conducted with Chris Lennard (CEO) and Katia Smith-Litiere 21st February 2013

Location: Jesus Lane, Cambridge

Nature of facility: walk in science centre to inspire children and adults about science

Number of employees at this site: 5-6 inclusive of full time and volunteers

Main objective of project:

A registered educational charity guided by three main principles:

- To develop and host exhibitions, events and outreach programmes which advance education and inspire young people to engage with science and technology.
- To provide a physical and online hub for public engagement with scientific research. To enhance the public understanding and debate around public policy and ethics related to scientific progress.
- To deliver targeted outreach and travelling exhibitions that will improve access to science and technology for underserved communities around Cambridgeshire and East Anglia.

The role of a public science centre

Science centres are institutes of informal science education which directly engage the public and help extend curriculum teaching. There is about one centre for every 1 million people in the UK. They are a place for families to play around with science and they help inspire individual self-guided learning. Science centres offer an environment which can showcase research and are a dynamic place for experience sharing. As part of the UK science centre network they aim to be:

- A place of engaging hands-on exhibits, projects and interactivity for families on a rainy day
- A place for curiosity-inspiring events for a wide range of audiences including school groups, youth and adults
- A window into world-famous Cambridge science and a place for public collaboration with researchers
- An online presence to enhance the visitors’ experience and help them remain engaged after their visit
- A community space where town and gown celebrate the joy of scientific discovery
- A place for tourists to drop in and get a sense of the rich scientific culture of Cambridge
**Inspiring teachers, pupils and the next generation**

As an educational charity, the Science Centre in Cambridge will help establish the value of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as vital skills for day-to-day life and future careers. The centre also develops cross-disciplinary programmes, stocks teaching kit and hosts sophisticated scientific assets to supplement resources currently available to teachers. They aim to create high quality, curriculum-linked online content from multiple sources to enhance the in-class experience. School groups are able to interact both directly on-site and through online forums with staff who are experienced in enhancing curriculum learning.

To ensure that their impact reaches well beyond those able to visit central Cambridge, they have developed an extensive science outreach programme, delivered both directly and eventually through partners. All of the on-site exhibition space, mobile exhibits and school kits will be brought to life with lively chats, intriguing experiments and amazing demonstrations. The centre hosts regular events for teachers and educators to help share best practices and enhance the classroom experience by injecting informal learning techniques.

**Current set up and how it works:**

Funding is a combination of private investors and a government funded initiative.

It has a very strong link with education with the purpose of supporting and inspiring children and teachers with regard to STEM and plays a pivotal role in enabling access to this support.

The setup is seen as a being at the top of a funnel of activities which help inspire and generate learning around STEM, as the funnel gets closer to the bottom the more defined the activity or area being promoted or taught is. The plan is for it to be part of a community/network of other activities to support, inspire and promote STEM.

The centre’s environment is very interactive and immersive. On our visit it was a hive of activity and energy and was clearly engaging visitors who included young children and parents. Every part of the centre is dedicated to providing an interactive activity to inspire or provide interest for the learner young or old. Staff are always walking around supporting or assisting their visitors with further understanding of how things work or what to do. Every hour one of the staff calls all the visitors to one corner of the centre where there is a workbench. The member of staff will put on an interactive learning show demonstrating an experiment and explain what it is, how it works and what the outcome is.

The location is ideal with regard to access and is ideally located to generate footfall from passers-by. The setup has been developed and designed to be portable and is purposefully small to facilitate sustainability, growth and learning from the local environment and to be able to test what works and doesn’t work.
1. Goodwin International

Goodwin International Ltd. is part of Goodwin PLC’s UK group of companies, a major employer in the UK, with locations around the world. Based in Stoke-on-Trent, the Group has been a supplier of machined castings since 1883 and employs over 500 engineers across several sites in the UK, most of whom are highly qualified and require training to a very high standard. The Group’s success is dependent upon continued engineering excellence and the ability to train sufficient engineers to satisfy future job requirements and growth.

There is a significant skills shortage of high quality engineers in the UK. The business needs to grow the next generation of highly technical engineers to allow its UK operations to thrive. Training delivered through mainstream provision is slow, expensive and not delivering the right business results. This gap in provision needs to be addressed to ensure that the business remains competitive and engineering activity in the UK remains viable. A radical new approach is needed to raise the skill level of the individual worker to the standard that Goodwin requires for the future.

The solution

Supported by investment from the Employer Ownership of Skills pilot (EOP), alongside investment from the Regional Growth Fund, Goodwin will create a new purpose built training school that will be the centre of excellence for 125 engineering Apprentices over the next 5 years. 75 Apprentices will be directly supported by the EOP in the first two years. The business is developing its own advanced Apprenticeship programme with the intention that Apprentices will be employed by the business on a long term basis.

The Apprenticeship programme will:

- Be supported by the development of a new purpose built training facility which will be the centre for training 25 engineering Apprentices each year for a period of at least 5 years
- Facilitate vocational training at Goodwin International and its six UK sister companies based around Stoke-on-Trent
• Provide accelerated career development opportunities and long term sustainable employment for the region
• Include 368 hours each year of specialist training delivered by industry experts
• Facilitate a mentoring programme at each stage of the process
• Provide guaranteed employment at the end of the programme

**Impact**

This project will provide increased opportunities for young people to participate in a training experience that will see them fast tracked to an Advanced Apprenticeship level and provide them with real long term employment with Goodwin. 125 new Apprentices will be fast tracked to a status comparable to Advanced Apprenticeship level within four years and 50 existing employees will be advanced to Higher Apprenticeship equivalent in the same time period. The EOP will support 75 Apprentices within the first two years of the programme.

The training programme will enable 80% of the Apprentices to achieve level 4 within a four year period, a much shorter time scale than has been historically achieved. Young engineers will be qualified quicker and have the right skills to make a significant impact within the Goodwin group, both in the UK and worldwide.

The training and development of young people, giving them the technical skills to progress to senior careers, benefits not only the individual and the company but makes UK engineering more profitable, competitive and hence benefits the UK economy as a whole.

**Investment**

- **Employer investment:** £2,927,266
- **Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £1,738,590
- **Total:** £4,665,856
2. Energie Group and Construction Employers Consortium

Industry collaboration to help share best practice, increase relevant skills development and utilise their collective purchasing power to drive the relevance, availability and quality of training provision. It will also develop the workforce in the key skills needed for growth.

The skills challenge

Construction is fundamental to the UK economy’s health representing up to 13% of GDP and employing over 2.6 million workers. Every £1 spent on construction output generates a total of £2.84 in GDP*. Investment in construction activity and training is good for the economy, productivity, employers and employees.

This Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot (EOP) project is being delivered by a consortium of construction employers, led by Balfour Beatty, and including Kier Group, Wates Group and BAM Nuttall. The consortium includes a total of 18 businesses, including SMEs, and is backed by industry bodies.

A number of skills challenges have been identified by the consortium. There is an urgent need to address the lack of work readiness amongst new entrants to the sector including ‘softer’ skills. The consortium has also identified a lack of Apprenticeship entry routes in a range of critical occupations and a restricted uptake of specialist Apprenticeships. A key concern is also the lack of leadership and management skills to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing environment.

The solution

The EOP project will support industry collaboration to help share best practice, increase relevant skills development and utilise their collective purchasing power to drive the relevance, availability and quality of training provision. It will also develop the workforce in the key skills needed for growth.

Encompassing employability, Apprenticeships and up-skilling, there are expected to be in excess of 150 employers involved in the project. Previously employers have tended to tackle skills issues within their own business but this collaboration begins a move to address issues on a larger scale which benefits the sector and the wider economy as a whole.
The project will:

- Pilot a sector recognised work experience programme and new entry routes
- Develop five new Apprenticeships in areas with key skills gaps
- Increase the uptake of specialist Apprenticeships to address skills gaps via engagement with more and harder to reach SMEs
- Deliver almost 15,000 additional workforce up-skilling interventions
- Deliver over 3,600 training interventions for managers and future leaders
- Enhance best practice through sector-led course design and collective purchasing power

**Impact**

The EOP creates a unique opportunity for companies in the sector to collaborate on skills solutions. Usually the companies only concentrate on their own organisation’s skills and development issues and traditionally there is a reluctance to collaborate due to competitive advantage.

The project will provide almost 900 young people and over 700 adults with access to pre-employment work placements, enabling them to gain relevant experience better placing them to take up jobs in the sector. It will create almost 700 Apprenticeships in areas of skills shortage and with SMEs in the supply chain. Over 18,000 skills training interventions will be implemented to up-skill the current workforce and increase the sector’s capacity and capability through its leaders, managers and skilled occupations.

The project will reduce duplicate training interventions, costs and will be a catalyst for the sharing, management and implementation of best practice skills solutions.

*L.E.K. Consulting 2009

**Investment**

Employer investment: £6,076,546

Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £6,076,546

Total: £12,153,092
3 Agilisys

Agilisys working with other sector employers such as Google as well as partners from the skills industry including Sector Skills Councils, awarding bodies and colleges, local authorities and organisations in the third sector including the Charity Technology Trust, are leading the transformation of how skills are developed and deployed in the rapidly growing digital marketing industry.

The skills challenge

Digital marketing is the use of digital media to attract and engage with current and potential customers for example online advertising, email marketing, social media campaigning, and search engine optimisation. It is growing in importance for many organisations, but many do not have the skills and capacity they need to take advantage of the opportunities it presents. A survey of over 500 companies carried out by eConsultancy /Experian in January 2012 found many firms planned to expand their digital marketing departments.

Current capability remains low and expensive, supplied mainly through micro-agencies and providing only a short-term solution. This leads to under-investment and a resulting lack of growth and innovation. Sector employers need access to effective, in-house expertise that they can grow and nurture and they need their existing managers to understand and utilise these skills effectively.

The solution

Agilisys is a fast-growing service provider serving local authorities, other public bodies and private sector companies. Working with other sector employers such as Google as well as partners from the skills industry including Sector Skills Councils, awarding bodies and colleges, local authorities and organisations in the third sector including the Charity Technology Trust, they are leading the transformation of how skills are developed and deployed in this rapidly growing industry.

Three areas have been identified as key in achieving the sector’s needs:

• **Work experience to inspire 16-18 year olds in digital marketing:** Places are being identified within Agilisys and partners and their networks for young people to experience digital marketing work for 2-4 weeks. In total, 150 work placement opportunities will be created and participants who successfully complete the work experience can then apply for the apprenticeship.
• Road-testing a digital marketing apprenticeship at level 3 and developing a new level 4 apprenticeship: The project partners are “road-testing” an existing level 3 digital marketing apprenticeship, making assessments on its suitability and recommendations for improvement. A new level 4 apprenticeship is also being developed. In total, 150 apprentices will be employed by Agilisys and the other partners and members of the network.

• Training for managers so they can recruit and manage young people effectively: Management training will ensure employers take advantage of the new found employees’ capability and capacity, allowing them and the business to achieve their full potential. A programme to ensure managers can confidently recruit school leavers is also being delivered.

Impact

The project is creating a vital new talent pool and a deeper understanding of digital marketing. By linking young people (school and college leavers) with employers’ digital marketing needs, it will enhance sector productivity while creating new jobs especially suitable for young people. The sector will benefit from new, proven, apprenticeship frameworks and the practical experience of delivering digital marketing training. New jobs will lead to greater digital marketing capacity and managers will be better trained in identifying and developing digital marketing talent. 150 work placement opportunities will be provided and 150 apprentices employed by Agilisys and other members of the network. 150 managers will be trained in managing young people more effectively.

Investment

Employer investment: £2,152,000
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £2,145,000
Total: £4,297,000
4. AJ Woods

A group of local SMEs realised that unless they address recruitment and training issues quickly, local firms will lose out on a once-in-a-generation opportunity to generate new private sector growth and employment.

Summary

Harwich Port, in the east of England, provides shore-based facilities for the construction of the UK’s largest wind farms, but most workers come from outside the region. A group of local employers are working together for the first time in order to energise both businesses and the potential workforce in Harwich and to tackle the skills issues holding them back. They plan to help local small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) to develop their ability to compete for contracts, and to get local people into work using apprenticeships, work placements and a new skills passport.

“This is a deprived coastal community with few other economic growth options. This project is a vital opportunity for the future of Harwich’s businesses and its local community - and it’s just the beginning.”
Alistair Davidson, Managing Director, Pontoon Hire Limited

The skills challenges

Government figures suggest that by 2020 the UK’s offshore wind industry could be worth £75 billion and support 70,000 new jobs. Energy engineering construction contracts are generally held by large multinational companies that rely on contracting smaller companies to deliver projects. Each major contractor has different compliance requirements, and it can cost thousands of pounds for supply chain firms to obtain the accreditations needed for each worker. SMEs find these costs prohibitive, and even though Harwich is an established offshore community, local businesses are missing out. The region suffers from high unemployment and skills shortages and has one of the highest national percentages of people with no qualifications.

The solution

A group of local SMEs realised that unless they address recruitment and training issues quickly, local firms will lose out on a once-in-a-generation opportunity to generate new private sector growth and employment.

The employers are pooling their expertise and are working together for the first time to develop a programme of skills development, shared work experience and support for new entrants to the sector. They aim to:
• Help them to win contracts by providing support such as business needs analysis, and developing the workforce needed to deliver contracts to the high quality required
• Promote the sector to the local workforce and create a “Passport to Work”. This will include employability skills, work experience provided by consortium members and mandatory accreditations that will lead new employment opportunities and apprenticeships
• Immediately create 30 apprenticeships and 60 work placements.

Experienced employees will act as mentors to pass on skills, experience and knowledge to younger employees. The project will also offer unemployed people the opportunity to improve their skills or re-train.

**Impact**

The project will make the identification and delivery of training much more cost effective for local employers. Planned outcomes include:

• 90 ready-to-work employees with a passport to work
• 30 of these employed or on an apprenticeship scheme
• 35 supervisory and leadership qualifications
• 138 technical training interventions specific to employers’ needs.

The employers are confident that they have come up with a package of training and support that, for the first time, will really meet their needs and enable firms in the area to compete for business. Success will mean new contracts in a growth industry awarded to local firms, and increased local employment.

**Who’s involved?**

Ten local SMEs are working as a consortium, with up to 30 more employers identified as having the potential to come on board later. The consortium has partnered with Essex County Council, Tendring District Council, Job Centre Plus, The Haven Gateway Partnership, SEMTA, the East of England Energy Group and Colchester Institute leading training provision. Regional employers will contribute more than £3m to the project over two years, supported by £0.85m of public funding through the Employer Ownership Pilot.

“As employers, we know we needed some genuinely out-of-the-box thinking to get local people skilled up. The truly innovative part of this project is that local employers have joined together, identified the issues and created solutions that can get people into work straight away.”

Tony Woods, Managing Director, AJ Woods Engineering Limited

**Investment**

**Employer investment:** £2,538,068
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £850,977
**Total:** £3,389,045
5. AkzoNobel

AkzoNobel are developing a new range of learning products and qualifications tailored towards business need, ease of delivery, value for money and the benefit to the wider local economy.

The skills challenge

The chemical sector in which AkzoNobel operates is highly competitive and cost sensitive. The reduction of manufacturing costs is needed for continued innovation, product development and UK operational viability. AkzoNobel has participated previously in vocational qualification programmes but has found success levels to be varied and limited. Despite there being a strong recruitment pool, there are major skills gaps within 16-24 year olds in both knowledge of chemistry and general business acumen.

AkzoNobel need the right skills to be developed and at an accelerated pace to remain competitive.

The solution

A new range of learning products and qualifications are being developed tailored towards business need, ease of delivery, value for money and the benefit to the wider local economy.

AkzoNobel operates a range of business units in the UK, including the International Paint and Dulux brands. Working with training providers, awarding organisations, schools, colleges and JobCentrePlus, the business will take the lead in developing new qualifications as a "pilot" before rolling out into other parts of AkzoNobel and other supply chain employers in the region.

Four themes have been identified to achieve the sector's needs:

- **Employability & Internships in Production, Research, Marketing and Logistics:**
  AkzoNobel will work with local young unemployed people and deliver teaching across core subjects. The programme will include project work within AkzoNobel with delegates being signposted to Apprenticeship opportunities in the sector. 200 delegates will enrol from April 2013.

- **Employability - Female graduates:**
  This will encourage female graduates to consider the chemical industry as an employment route by raising the profile of the industry as a whole with
emphasis on coatings manufacture, marketing and sales. 60 graduates or undergraduates will be recruited through a network of four universities.

- **Sector leadership:**
  This theme is aimed at existing experienced employees and will develop leadership, coaching and mentoring skills enabling them to support people development in their own work areas. Training will be delivered to over 100 employees across four UK sites.

- **Apprenticeships:**
  A specialist Apprenticeship style pathway will begin at our oldest manufacturing facility based at Felling, Gateshead. The programme is developed to combine specific teaching in either coatings design and production or supply chain. 260 apprentices will be recruited across three production sites in total.

**Impact**

This project will address a skills shortage in the chemical and coatings sector. It will specifically increase employability in the manufacturing sector for a minimum of 200 people. More opportunities will become available for female graduates and a new Apprenticeship pathway will create opportunities for new entrants. Long term leadership and coaching skills will also be developed to support young people entering the sector.

**Investment**

**Employer investment:** £1,530,748  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £1,017,998  
**Total:** £2,548,746
6. Arla Foods

The industry needs world-class training provision for all their staff, to ensure that high value products are produced efficiently and to provide a sustainable future.

World-class training means more than just learning the technical aspects of the job or demonstrating competence in a job role. It means developing a workforce for the future who are united by the core values associated with the industry such as pride, passion, excellence and ambition as well as the behavioural, technical and attitudinal capability to drive the industry to become the best in Europe. For geographically dispersed organisations, who compete with one another, having such a vision and making it a reality requires an unusual and ground breaking approach to skills delivery.

The skills challenge

At the start of this journey, six dairy employers*, representing 80% of the industry’s workforce will work in partnership, led by Arla Foods, to meet their common vision. The project will build on previous sector collaboration, which has developed dedicated training facilities and curriculum at Reaseheath College, Cheshire for its dairy technology needs and Midlands Group Training Services (MGTS), Coventry where the industry has access to a talent pipeline of dedicated dairy engineers. Delivery of the project will be supported by the NSA for Food and Drink and Dairy UK.

The employers will collaborate in developing industry-led, fit for purpose cross sector qualifications and apprenticeship programmes that are specific to the industry’s needs. A range of programmes will be developed either from scratch or from existing programmes that require modification. At the heart of all training and learning, the six employers have set the following principles:

• Giving learners the right time and space to learn
• Providing the best education available in Europe by the most talented providers – all operating under one ‘roof’ and with the best conditions to learn
• Supporting learners in the workplace through specially trained mentors
• Adding value to the UK dairy industry supply chain from Farmer to Consumer
• Ensuring the talent pipeline has sufficient dedicated professionals to meet the advanced skills needs of the future
Impact

The dairy industry is fiercely competitive and to have six major employers working together is hugely innovative. The project supports the industry’s desire to lead and improve the quality and robustness of training provision available. It will lead to better trained employees able to contribute to sustainable business success and growth.

Over 270 apprenticeships at various levels and over 6,000 other qualification based training outcomes will be achieved. It will lead to the creation of new jobs, 300 qualified dairy jobs in Aylesbury alone, around 700 in total as the world’s largest fresh milk site is developed, as well as improved sustainability and productivity savings. Engineering and logistics qualifications will be extended to reflect the specific technical requirements of the sector. Conservative industry estimates are that around £1.2m of savings might be unlocked through the reduction in carbon emissions arising from improved logistics and reductions in water and energy usage across all plants.

* Arla Foods; Dairy Crest; Milk Link Ltd; Robert Wiseman Dairies; Müller Dairy; First Milk

Investment

**Employer investment:** £2,520,162  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £2,291,990  
**Total:** £4,812,152
The skills challenge

The UK print industry is the world’s 5th largest producer of printed products. It contributes £14.3 billion of turnover and employs 140,000 people, mainly in small and medium-sized companies (SMEs). Print is an advanced manufacturing sector that utilises cutting edge information and production technologies.

The industry is facing significant skills and management challenges in terms of an aging workforce (the average age in the industry is over 50), rapidly changing technology, supply chain dynamics and, most importantly, a move away from national agreements and bargaining to local company based performance.

Employers have identified management skill shortages in SMEs within the Printing Industry. The industry has typically promoted from within without formal management training to support career progression. Consequently there is perceived to be a lack of professional management within the industry, making it difficult to attract high calibre recruits. Within the industry, there is no specifically tailored training or structured management education beyond level 4. The industry needs to invest in professional leadership and management skills to improve operational performance, leading to growth and sustainability. However, the current financial status and size of many of the companies in the sector prevents them from implementing appropriate management development programmes of their own.

The solution

SMEs in the sector are collaborating to introduce a new management development programme for the sector. The Employer Ownership Pilot will support the introduction of an employer-led higher level Apprenticeship programme to extend craft Apprenticeships into formal management qualifications based on the evolving needs of the sector.

Employers will lead the programme design to harness the latest industry developments in work flow, materials and inventory management and printing processes whilst also developing core management and leadership skills.

Individuals participating in the programme will gain both core leadership and management skills and specific industry knowledge and application that will enable
them to transfer learning directly to operational performance improvement. They will also have the opportunity to gain a transferable qualification to support their career development. They will build networks to support their development and experience mentoring relationships to enhance both their own effectiveness and to value the concept for their own staff. A new web portal, support seminars and mentoring programme with enhance the development programme giving every participant access to the best support and resources.

Typically, between 10 and 20 employers will be involved per region. The project will be piloted in the East of England region where there are many print and media companies typically employing fewer than 50 people. After evaluation, the project will be extended to six other regions: North East; North West; Midlands; South West; and East of England. The British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF) will oversee the implementation of the programme.

Impact

200 individuals will be supported through the programme. The increased support for current and potential managers will increase the operational efficiency of participating companies. It will enable them to offer new services to their clients and increase their operating margins by implementing efficiency programmes. It is anticipated that the project will deliver a 100% return on investment within two years of implementation. It will also enable the sector to attract high calibre managers from other industries by giving the sector a reputation for investing in the development of its people.

Investment

Employer investment: £997,752
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £1,096,000
Total: £2,093,752
Yorkshire and Humber energy, process and renewable employers have an ambitious plan to offer a new form of authentic, site-based training. The employer-led ‘Skills Enhancement Centre’ creates opportunities for new apprentices, employees and unemployed people in the region. It offers on-site experience ranging from plant build, fit out and commissioning to emergency response training and hazardous plant shutdown - all vital skills where current learning opportunities are highly restricted.

“This funding will enable us to provide real solutions to employer needs in skills, training and competency programmes.”

Sabine Holmes, Skills Manager, Humber Chemical Focus Ltd

The skills challenges

Yorkshire and Humber is the UK’s powerhouse for the process, energy and renewable sectors, with a potential £6bn of new capital projects in the pipeline. However, nationally these sectors face a skills shortfall of 56,000 skilled workers, and need 500 new apprentices every year until 2020. Employers are finding skilled vacancies hard to fill. Many supply chain employers can’t afford to take on apprentices or to offer site-based assessment or training opportunities in high-risk environments.

The solution

More than a dozen regional oil, gas, power, chemical and process industries employers have joined forces to tackle these major skills challenges and leave a legacy of greater productivity and growth. This project aims to help boost apprentice numbers and improve the work-readiness of new recruits and unemployed people by creating a new ‘Skills Enhancement Centre’. The centre will be established within a pre-existing £12m industrial training centre in the Humber, the largest training facility of its kind in the UK.

The centre will provide training and assessment in an environment that mirrors real life engineering tasks on industrial sites. The most innovative element will be the creation of the UK’s first advanced training programme to replicate key elements of a main plant shutdown, re-engineering and start up. All programmes will be designed by employers to meet entry requirements into their organisations, with a high level of employer engagement including site visits and practice with consortium
employers. The programme will also create opportunities for unemployed people in the Humber, with programmes that directly address hard-to-fill vacancies in the sector.

Impact

This innovative approach to training will enable 80 advanced apprentices to complete their apprenticeships with enhanced skills and more quickly, potentially leading to the creation of more apprenticeship places. Outcomes will also include 60 pre-apprenticeship work experience opportunities, 160 pre-employment programmes, and 90 candidates undertaking ‘project shutdown’ for assessment at intermediate and advanced levels. The employers aim to improve the current productivity rate of 55% for a newly qualified apprentice to 77% using this new way of delivering training, and believe that the pilot has the potential for wider roll out nationally.

Who’s involved?

The consortium is led by Fabricom Oil, Gas and Power Ltd. Regional employers will contribute more than £1m to the project over two years, leveraging £1m public funding through the Employer Ownership Pilot. Managing agents, Humber Chemical Focus Ltd estimate that, in addition to the consortium members, 15 manufacturing companies and 25 supply chain companies will also benefit.

“This consortium is uniquely placed to address critical barriers to increasing apprentice numbers. We have developed an innovative and purpose built industrial training centre, led by employers and providing a ground-breaking, authentic industrial-scale training and skills environment.”

Nigel Carlton, Chief Executive Officer UK, Fabricom Oil Gas and Power

Investment

Employer investment: £765,424
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £1,047,161
Total: £1,812,585
9. GE Aviation

Gloucestershire-based GE Aviation is one of the top five avionics and electrical power systems plants in the world, and its business is growing. It faces an urgent and ongoing need for new entrants, but the number of young people and graduates taking science and technical subjects is dwindling. GE Aviation plans a large work experience and school engagement programme that includes its own apprenticeship programme and the development of its young employees as industry mentors in schools. It aims to encourage the next generation of the local community into employment in the avionics industry.

The skills challenges

GE Aviation’s Cheltenham plant employs 1,600 people in areas ranging from software and hardware design to the development of power distribution systems for commercial and military aircraft. Some parts of the business are projected to grow by up to 30% in the next three to five years but the company is facing major recruitment challenges to meet this growth. Fewer young people and graduates are opting for STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), and many courses are not delivering ‘work ready’ trainees. Limited careers advice also means that young people may not realise the opportunities the sector offers them.

“It’s a chance to commit to young people in schools and colleges and give them opportunities to work in the future of flight.”

Alan Jones, Executive Site Leader, Cheltenham, GE Aviation

The solution

GE Aviation’s integrated solution involves young people at school and college, teachers and lecturers, and young employees and trainees. It combines STEM subject promotion with early career development, and aims to deliver certified manufacturing training in areas increasingly outsourced from the UK. GE is establishing an in-house enhanced apprenticeship programme, offering additional accreditations and experience for 35 apprentices at advanced and higher levels. The solution also offers a wide range of opportunities for young people in more than 120 Gloucestershire schools to engage with STEM subjects and explore relevant careers. GE Aviation’s outreach work with the schools takes young mentors from the company, close to the pupils’ own ages and to whom they can relate, into a network of schools, helping young people understand the world of work and the skills they
will need. The young mentors will also receive training in skills such as organisational ability and communication skills to support their outreach work.

“The programme gives GE Aviation the opportunity to partner with government and education providers, so that we can all be accountable and learning objectives can be tailored to the strategy and the culture of the business.”

Alan Jones, Executive Site Leader Cheltenham, GE Aviation

Impact

The collaboration aims to have a substantial impact on career options for young people in Gloucestershire. GE Aviation sees the programme as an essential driver for its future productivity and growth, and important both to its succession planning and development of a diverse workforce. Young professionals will gain coaching and mentoring skills, whilst pupils will have the opportunity to engage with industry on repeated occasions throughout their schooling, especially for those taking STEM subjects. The pilot will create sustainable career opportunities and the company envisages recruiting an additional 80 – 100 young people as a result of the programme.

Who’s involved?

GE Aviation in Cheltenham and in Gloucester lead the pilot and will involve other local employers in shared skills areas. The University of the West of England, SEMTA and the Institution of Engineering and Technology will collaborate on benchmarking training quality. GE Aviation will contribute over £2m to the project over two years, matched by £2m from the Employer Ownership Pilot.

Investment

Employer investment: £1,103,997
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £1,105,998
Total: £2,209,995
10. Manchester Airport Group

Manchester Airport Group (MAG) has developed a community strategy to increase employability, address youth unemployment in a deprived area and extend career progression opportunities in the business.

The skills challenge

In 2011 Manchester Airport was the third busiest airport in the United Kingdom in terms of passenger numbers, and the 23rd busiest airport in Europe. This Employer Ownership Pilot (EOP) project is a consortium between the Airport, Stockport College, Manchester Metropolitan University, the food travel business SSP, and World Duty Free.

The North West of England has a high percentage of young people currently not in education, employment or training. Additionally, those who leave full time education are often faced with a lack of work skills, self-confidence and find it challenging to relate to older people or those already in the work environment. This is particularly prevalent in Wythenshawe where in the neighbouring ward of Woodhouse Park, youth unemployment is currently 34.9% (March 2012).

Many Wythenshawe residents have never travelled outside of the local area and have very little personal confidence and self-esteem.

The solution

The Airport has traditionally struggled to attract young unemployed people to start careers in entry level jobs. Therefore, Manchester Airport Group (MAG) has developed a community strategy to increase employability, address youth unemployment in a deprived area and extend career progression opportunities in the business.

EOP investment will support the creation of a new Young Person’s Airport Skills Academy - building clear development pathways from work experience through to employment. The Academy will provide learning and work opportunities and experiences, including paid employment, to young people helping to fill the entry level jobs on site which have been traditionally very difficult to fill due to the nature of the roles and the anti-social hours. It will also align with the Airport’s existing Adult Academy by seamlessly linking students to employer-led Apprenticeships and work experience.
The project will:

- Provide an offer to local school leavers, giving coaching, employability, basic skills training, work experience and qualifications
- Deliver a talent management programme for 11-21 year olds to inspire students through a structured programme to run alongside their secondary education
- Give opportunities for young people to progress onto an Apprenticeship within the MAG and/or service companies linked to the Airport
- Train existing staff in coaching and mentoring to support students and develop talent

Impact

Supported by the EOP, the Young Person’s Airport Skills Academy will implement a strategy to tackle the youth unemployment challenges in the local area. The project will support a flow of young people into the world of work and to progress into a future of economic activity. In total the project will support 123 people through an Apprenticeship programme.

At least 75 students will start at the Young Person’s Academy in the first two years. Any 18-21 year-old learners who apply for the Young People’s Academy will be referred to the Adult Airport Academy and receive an extended programme to ensure employability. This will support 100 students over the two years.

The EOP will enable the Airport to extend its community strategy and provide valuable work experience opportunities to local students. It will both continue and expand the Airport’s training link to employment for local people, especially young people, who could benefit from the ground transport infrastructure at Manchester Airport.

Investment

*Employer investment*: £1,320,650  
*Employer Ownership Pilot Funding*: £1,366,719  
*Total*: £2,687,369
The skills challenge

The global economic climate has put many retailers in a vulnerable position resulting in many chain and independent stores losing their market position, or even closing down. National chains, SMEs and independent retailers have recognised the need to address skills issues to strengthen their position and stay on our high streets.

Employers have identified that additional training beyond what is currently available is essential to develop their workforce and support business growth. Bespoke sector-specific solutions are urgently needed to ensure retailers and their employees can thrive. Employers have identified some urgent training needs:

- Pre-employment training: To ensure young people are ‘work-ready’ whilst also developing their ‘soft’ skills
- Numeracy and literacy training: Nearly a fifth of retail employers cited ‘good basic’ literacy and numeracy skills to be lacking in younger applicants
- Customer service training: Industry research found nearly half of retailers thought customer service skills need to be improved in their staff
- Independent and SME business support: Support is needed across a range of areas including business planning, finance, driving sales, merchandising, buying and mentoring
- Mapping existing in-house and industry programmes: This will ensure retailers and employees undertake the training of most benefit to drive up the sector’s skills base

The solution

This Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot (EOP) project brings major competitors together in a collaboration supported by the National Skills Academy for Retail and Skillsmart Retail Ltd. Midlands Co-operative Society are leading the project but also involved are: NISA Today; Miss Sixty; Poundworld; TK Maxx; JJB Sports Ltd; Solihull College; and many others.

The consortium will lead the development a programme of industry recognised, bespoke and accredited learning and development solutions to support the growth
of their individual businesses, alongside supporting the wider professionalisation of the sector.

The project will:

- Develop a clear and focused route that new recruits and existing staff can follow in order to grow capability and skills, therefore maximising performance
- Enable medium-sized employers who have not previously worked with the National Apprenticeship Service to engage in Apprenticeships nationally
- Support SME and independent retailers who have not engaged with the skills agenda in the development of their HR and learning and development functions
- Offer retail specific courses across a range of business needs e.g. finance, business planning and sales, through various delivery channels including webinars.

**Impact**

This EOP project will uniquely support retailers in collaborating, developing and delivering high quality training and development programmes, equipping them to be leaders in the sector. It will share best practice and raise the standard of training across the sector, especially amongst those retailers who have only previously engaged in mandatory training i.e. compliance training.

Fifty additional retailers will start delivering Apprenticeship programmes creating new employment opportunities across the retail sector for 800 16 – 18 year olds and support circa 10,000 existing employees in their personal and professional development.

Ultimately the project will improve business productivity and growth through people development.

**Investment**

**Employer investment:** £945,158  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £1,764,719  
**Total:** £2,709,877
Typically, a car plant launches a new model every two years. The award of new contracts means that Nissan’s Sunderland plant, which employs 5,000 people, is set to launch four new models in the next two years, and recruit 2,000 additional workers. This is a huge boost to an area with high unemployment, but creates an urgent need to tackle regional skills shortages. Nissan’s new programme will bridge skills gaps for more than 3,600 people: new recruits, technical staff, and supply chain workers involved in producing new models and working with new technologies, such as electric vehicles. The programme, operating alongside Nissan’s current £2m p.a. training programme, will also offer training for more senior roles, as the growth creates new opportunities to promote from within.

“These new contracts are hugely important to the region, and we have a great opportunity to show what we can do. This programme means that suppliers can ensure they have the skilled people they need to deliver.”

Neil Prest, Training Manager, Unipres Limited

The skills challenges

There is widespread concern amongst Nissan and its key suppliers that urgent action on new labour and skills is needed to prevent critical jobs and export earnings being lost from the UK. There is a serious regional shortage of recruits at technician level, and future severe skills shortages are likely. New recruits are unlikely to be able to achieve Nissan’s required standard without additional training and a better understanding of the rapidly changing working environment, employer expectations, and the importance of quality, productivity and team working.

“Our USP is our workforce, and we need to equip them with the skills they need to enable Nissan to grow. This project will enable us to do that, and to create new job opportunities for thousands of people in the region.”

Steve Pallas, Manager - Training & Development / Global Training Centre (GTC) UK, Nissan Motor Manufacturing (UK) Ltd

The solution

Nissan has developed a major skills programme that will enable the company to implement its ambitious growth plans. 40% of the programme will support key suppliers in the north-east: Nissan relies on its supply chain for up to 80% of its parts.
There are four categories of training: Enhanced apprenticeship programmes, enabling new recruits to work in manufacturing production and maintenance, and developing specialist skills not currently supported by apprenticeship programmes; An enhanced introduction to modern manufacturing, giving new recruits more time for workplace familiarisation than is currently supported to get new recruits to the right level; Filling skills gaps caused by the planned growth, including developing manufacturing staff into team leaders, and team leaders into supervisors; Addressing skills shortfalls in new and existing staff, enabling them to cope with new technologies and meet Nissan’s exacting standards.

Impact

The programme will make a vital contribution to skills development at a critical time in the expansion of the north-east’s automotive sector, and foster an environment of continuous improvement and innovation. Outcomes include training for a total of 3,662 staff via a range of programmes, including four apprenticeship programmes and the delivery of more than 250 courses, resulting in nearly 2,500 formal qualifications.

Nissan is the largest private employer in the region and, at around £4bn, its largest exporter. Being able to win new models and then deliver them is key to the Sunderland plant’s continuing success. The resulting growth leads to substantial regional benefits including the creation of a significant number of high quality, sustainable job opportunities with a resultant reduction in unemployment – especially among young people.

Who’s involved?

Nissan Motor Manufacturing (UK) Ltd, large regional suppliers, Gateshead College and the University of Sunderland. Nissan will contribute more than £4m over two years, with public finding of £2.7m from the Employer Ownership Pilot.

Investment

Employer investment: £4,036,320
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £2,690,880
Total: £6,727,200
13. PwC

PwC will foster collaboration amongst professional services employers to address the ‘talent crunch’ constraining SME potential to drive growth. The project will give streamlined access to funding direct to employers who will work with the best of Further and Higher Education in training delivery.

The skills challenge

Employers of all sizes in all sectors need access to a range business services skills to support and improve their businesses: payroll, audit, accounting, tax, IT and HR to name a few. For many smaller employers, having fast and reliable access to these skillsets has proved a challenge for years, a situation not helped by limited collaboration in the professional services sector and the real (and perceived) complexity of the ‘skills system’. This has led to a recognisable ‘talent crunch’ constraining SME potential to drive growth.

The solution

The PwC proposal is the creation of a skills ecosystem established and facilitated by PwC for all professional services occupations and employers in England. PwC will work with employers to define shared skills needs, develop and deliver the training programmes to address them.

The overarching objective is to foster collaboration amongst professional services employers to address the ‘talent crunch’. PwC will take overall responsibility for the ecosystem and the public funding flowing through it, giving streamlined access to funding direct to employers who will work with the best of Further and Higher Education in training delivery. Within the ecosystem there will be two distinct routes for employers to access training: in the first route PwC will support individual employers to identify their training needs and access provision to address those needs; in the second, specifically designed to meet the need of SMEs, PwC will manage an end-to-end service enabling employers to access the same high quality training that PwC provides for its own people. In developing this solution, PwC took feedback from the Higher Apprenticeship working groups including representation from over 30 employers: Detica, Challenge Consulting, UCLH and Right Management have all been involved.

Impact

This proposal will realise five critical outcomes: strong, sustainable talent pipeline; broad, diverse talent pool; workforce with the business skills employers need; new entrants possessing the business competence employers need; and, substantial SME engagement. The work will deliver benefits with an NPV of £80m p.a.
SME employers will be able to access the same high quality training that PwC provides for its own people: More than half of PwC’s clients are SMEs - served by PwC offices across the UK. PwC’s support to those SME clients across all aspects of their businesses gives them real insight to the issues and barriers SMEs face in engaging with the skills agenda. Through this proposal PwC will leverage that insight, along with in-house expertise in the design and delivery of professional services training, to deliver an end-to-end service shaped to meet the needs of SME employers. PwC will itself play an active, substantial role in delivery, working with a carefully selected group of delivery partners.

Investment

Employer investment: £4,376,000
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £11,452,000
Total: £15,828,000
14. Siemens

Siemens recognises that skills development is a central component in its continued success. Whilst the organisation attracts sufficient numbers of suitably qualified applicants for its entry level positions there is recognition that this is not the case for the SME supply chain in the Energy and Utility sector.

Although Siemens already offers Apprenticeships, the company believes there is a need for a stronger regional pipeline of talent, to meet current requirements. Siemens also wants to ensure a competitive supply chain which will be both sustainable and productive in the long term. Through improved knowledge and understanding of best practices, those in the supply chain may operate more effectively.

The solution

Siemens is working collaboratively with organisations including SBMW and SEMTA to roll-out a wide-ranging skills programme. The programme includes pre-employment training and enhancing their Apprenticeship training, with the aim of developing the skills of their supply chain.

To improve the talent available in regional labour markets for the SME supply chain in the Energy and Utility sector, a customised pre-employment training programme will focus on giving numerous cohorts of those Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) the opportunity to acquire the skills and experience which will allow them to successfully enter employment as an Apprentice.

By extending Siemens’ Apprenticeship offer to the South and North West of England, the organisation will improve the local provision of talent. In Oxfordshire, BMW are currently developing a technical training centre to deliver high quality advanced Apprenticeships in Engineering. Siemens will work with BMW to introduce a world-class training centre which will introduce the German Apprenticeship model to the UK.

Working with supply chains to increase skill levels, Siemens Magnet Technology plans to share best practices in lean practices to reduce waste, improve quality, stimulate innovation and reduce cost; enabling continuous improvement and raised productivity.
All three elements of this project will pilot a simplified funding approach for Apprenticeships.

**Impact**

Working collaboratively, organisations from across the manufacturing, energy and automotive industries will help to achieve significant impact through the different strands of activity.

Pre-employment training will improve the supply of work-ready applicants for the Energy and Utility sector, creating additional entry routes into the workplace for young people.

Working with various partners, Siemens will expand its Apprenticeship offer in regions across the country, ensuring that the best training models are implemented for as many employees as possible. This joined-up approach will ensure that best practice skills development is realised beyond Siemens and in total will create 45 advanced Apprenticeship places.

The knowledge transfer from Siemens to its supply chain companies will enable more to adopt best in class training. Expected outcomes include greater competitiveness, the safeguarding of jobs and improved productivity.

**Investment**

**Employer investment:** £2,223,223  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £1,105,000  
**Total:** £3,328,223
15. Spiral Construction

A collaboration of (at least) 12 SME employers, led by Spiral Construction, are working to identify and commission bespoke training for SME manufacturers in Cornwall.

The skills challenge

SME manufacturers in Cornwall are finding it difficult to access the training they need to develop and grow their organisations due to high costs and poor economies of scale. As a result of the economic climate and technology developments they are finding it increasingly difficult to change their businesses to meet these challenges. Training, although viewed as important, is often considered to be too expensive.

The solution

To address this, a collaboration of (at least) 12 SME employers, led by Spiral Construction, will work to identify and commission the bespoke training they believe will have the greatest impact on their future growth.

The employers have identified four key areas of skills need:

- **Apprenticeships:** The employers identified that existing Apprenticeship programmes are ‘difficult’ to fit into their own processes. As a result, the SMEs have identified the need for a ‘cross company’ Apprenticeship for those in manufacturing. The employers will work together to develop an innovative level 3 Apprenticeship specifically for SME manufacturers, creating a delivery mechanism more suitable to the needs of the sector. At present none of the companies involved currently employ Apprentices. The project will create more opportunities for more young people, delivering a minimum of 11 new Apprentice places initially and more in the future.

- **Marketing:** Through the initiative the SMEs will improve their marketing capabilities, focusing on currently untapped opportunities the internet presents them. Employees will attend training to develop integrated, multi-channel marketing plans, combining traditional and digital tools and techniques with appropriate multi-channel metrics to assess performance. Training will be delivered in Cornwall, negating the need for substantial travel and resulting loss of time.
• **A design ‘community’**: Several of the companies involved in the consortium identified the need to find new ways to diversify and / or meet increased demands for individualised products from their customers. The SMEs will work together to develop a manufacturing ‘design’ community, allowing for collective development of ideas, products and solutions. Working with University College Falmouth, a programme of five one-day workshops will be developed and delivered covering a mixture of design and software skills.

• **Continuous improvement**: For many SMEs, lean production techniques and reducing waste is essential if they are to remain competitive. With training costs of approximately £1,000 per day for up to 20 days, it is a substantial outlay that can put it beyond the means of many smaller companies. Using previously tried and tested providers that have worked with larger manufacturers in Cornwall, investment will deliver one set of 20 days in each of two years, for 10 individuals per year. There is a clear expectation that waste and cost will be reduced by a minimum of 10% across the board.

**Impact**

The Employer Ownership of Skills pilot provides the opportunity to develop a strong and supportive network of smaller manufacturers to become more able to commission the skills delivery they need by enabling a collective approach to their design and delivery. This will be a key legacy of the project when the public funding has ceased.

**Investment**

*Employer investment: £549,375*
*Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £312,960*
*Total: £862,335*
16. The Academy of Music and Sound

The Academy of Music and Sound are working with music instrument retailers and distributors to establish the first-ever apprenticeships for music instrument retail.

Summary

Music instrument retailers, distributors and their trade body are working together to establish the first-ever apprenticeships for music instrument retail. There are more than 1,000 music instrument shops across the UK, but there has not been any formal training, qualifications or assessment structure for the sector, even though it requires specialist skills. This pilot offers apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities for young people, as well as continuing professional development (CPD). The employers involved envisage that the resulting improvements in service skills and professionalism will help to revitalise a retail sector under threat from online competition and a general decline in high street sales and the number of businesses.

“I haven’t spoken to a music instrument retailer or manufacturer that hasn’t been overjoyed by the news of this investment. It will make a big difference to the viability of the sector and we want to ensure that this project has the widest possible economic impact nationally. Even at this early stage, we are seeing the benefits of a new era in industry collaboration.”

Kevin Harding, Project Director (Employer Ownership of Skills), Academy of Music & Sound

The skills challenges

Currently on average, one music instrument shop closes down every week. Retailers are often small businesses and tend to recruit freelance musicians or young people who are passionate about music but lack customer service and specialist skills and have no opportunities for formal training. There are more than 100 distributors and manufacturers operating in the UK, who are equally keen to be involved in the development of sector training. Without being able to offer value-added service, retailers are losing out to online and catalogue sales.

The solution

A new employability skills programme will address the collective barriers faced by employers. It will tackle recruitment problems using a new three-month pre-apprenticeship programme, providing employability skills such as ICT, retail and customer service skills, as well as work experience with retailers. The lack of
structured training will be addressed through a new apprenticeship programme. Advanced apprenticeships and CPD will, for the first time, offer opportunities for structured career development.

Training will be provided by the Academy of Music & Sound (UK) via six existing centres across England, with the National Skills Academy for Creative & Cultural benchmarking standards across the project. Trainees and small retailers that don’t have easy access to a regional centre will be able to access an online Virtual Learning Environment and attend offsite training hosted by other employers in the network who are pledging support.

A new centre of excellence, the “Music Innovation Centre” is being established in Birmingham city centre and will pilot all stages of the programme.

Impact

The pilot aims to build the foundation for the development of industry standards linked to employment, qualifications and improved employee engagement. During the two years of the programme 246 young people are expected to be recruited to the pre-apprenticeship programme. The programme will liaise closely with employers to decide which candidates will progress to a full level 2 or 3 apprenticeship and a one-year employment contract, resulting in 164 apprentices nationally.

“Having a recognised framework in training will allow the industry to ensure existing staff have the key skills required and, perhaps more importantly, that a new generation of employment seekers can start employment quickly and show productive results.”

Adrian Ashton, Manson’s Guitars

Who’s involved?

Employers involved include Manson’s Guitars, Sheehan’s Music, Absolute Music, Professional Music Technology, Music Industries Association (MIA) retail members, and manufacturers and distributors such as Yamaha, Peavey, and JHS. The Academy of Music & Sound (UK) Ltd leads the initiative, in partnership with the MIA, sector skills council Creative and Cultural Skills, and the sector’s National Skills Academy.

Together, employers and the Employer Ownership Pilot have established a fund of more than £1.4m over two years.

Investment

Employer Investment: £140,894
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £1,320,450
Total: £1,461,344
17. The Glass Academy

British Glass has launched its own industry-led learning and skills development programme, ‘The Glass Academy’, designed to ensure the industry has the skills to be a world leader by 2020.

The skills challenge

The combined UK turnover of glass manufacturers is approximately £1.7 billion and employs approximately 7,000 people directly plus many tens of thousands more in both customer and supplier industries. Glass making today is a hi-tech industry operating in a fiercely competitive global market where quality, design and service levels are critical to achieving and maintaining market share. Many aspects of our lives depend on glass manufacturers – from touch-screen technologies and components for computer chips to food and drink containers.

The industry has identified skills gaps in technical and ‘soft’ skills, due to the combination of an ageing work force allied with the difficulty in attracting young people into the industry. The industry needs a workforce that is properly trained and highly skilled in all aspects of manufacture, not just with the appropriate technical skills, but also with specialist commercial, management and leadership skills.

The UK glass industry faces a challenge in persuading school leavers (16-18 year old) that industry is a viable career choice. Presently there is no mechanism for the industry to easily promote itself to those making decisions about their academic future.

The solution

British Glass has launched its own industry-led learning and skills development programme, ‘The Glass Academy’, designed to ensure the industry has the skills to be a world leader by 2020. Already active, the Academy will create and deliver a range of innovative learning programmes across all levels of the industry and respond actively to its needs. Along with funding from the Employer Ownership Pilot, the Academy is co-financed by British Glass (British Glass Manufacturers’ Confederation) and member companies.

The Academy will co-ordinate Apprenticeships across the industry and its associated supply chain, whilst developing a range of more innovative and learner-led programmes to significantly improve upon the current provision. It will also offer
new, higher level Apprenticeships targeted specifically at the future leaders of the manufacturing sector.

The industry also needs to ensure that it has a steady supply of young people with the skills and behaviours to give them the best chance of building a career. In order to make the industry attractive to students the Academy will design and deliver multimedia interventions that will support the key stage three (KS3) curriculum. The Academy will also work closely with schools, colleges, universities and businesses to offer well-structured and meaningful work placements and sandwich-courses within the industry. It will provide career opportunities to school and college leavers that are visible, attractive and tangible.

Impact

Through this innovative and industry led Academy, over 350 new Apprenticeships for 16 to 23 year olds and over 2,000 supporting programmes to enhance the skills of those already in more advanced positions, will be developed. These will vary from simple day, or two day events, to much more substantial interventions at levels up to and beyond a first degree.

The work with schools and other learning establishments will help ensure that the glass industry has a steady supply of young people with the skills and behaviours it needs and which will give individuals the best chance of building a long-term and fulfilling career.

Self-sustaining in subsequent years, the Academy will up-skill the sector to improve profitability and increase the competitiveness of UK manufacturing on the global stage.

Investment

**Employer Investment:** £2,519,129  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £2,735,159  
**Total:** £5,254,288
18. Timpson Group

This project will expand and develop the ground breaking ex-offender training already in place at Timpson.

The skills challenge

The Timpson Group is a private business owned by John Timpson and his family. There are over 900 Timpson shops in the UK offering a range of services such as shoe repairs, key cutting, watch repairs and dry cleaning.

The company is passionate about solving the issue of mass unemployment amongst ex-offenders and believe that the ex-offender population presents a pool of untapped potential to UK businesses. The Group already works with over 75 prisons and is the largest employer of ex-offenders in the UK. Re-offending blights lives and communities, carrying personal, social and economic costs of between £9.5 billion and £13 billion a year. A quarter of claims for out-of-work benefits as at 1 December 2010 in England and Wales were made by offenders who had received at least one caution or conviction between 2000 to 2010. For about half of all job vacancies, employers are likely to reject most people with a criminal record.

The solution

This project will expand and develop the ground breaking ex-offender training already in place at Timpson. The programme recruits and trains ex-offenders (and ‘disadvantaged’ individuals referred by other agencies) in the full range of skills required for long term employment within the shoe repair, key cutting, dry cleaning and photo retail industries.

Ex-offenders are trained in the same way as other employees, through the Group’s internal ‘Apprenticeship’ scheme, which teaches and assesses both industry specific and transferable skills. If new recruits have a great personality and some practical aptitude, they can succeed, regardless of educational background or their ability to thrive in a ‘classroom’ environment. This is why the training is suitable for people who traditionally struggle to find employment. The project will:

• Expand the in-prison training academies, training over 300 inmates over 2 years. On release, all trainees are guaranteed a three month trial in the business and many (c40 per cent so far) secure permanent roles at the end of this
• Provide work experience and hands on training to 225 young offenders and inmates on ROTL (release on temporary licence)
• Provide advanced skills training to 200 'Foundation colleagues' (ex-offenders) recruited into the Timpson and Max Spielmann businesses, through the apprenticeship to ‘master craftsman’ programmes.

Impact

The programme will give over 300 inmates the quality skills training, confidence and discipline that will help them find a job post release. 200 ex-offenders will be recruited and provided with the skills and support they need to secure permanent employment in the industry.

In essence, the programme provides the opportunities that enable ex-offenders to secure sustainable long term employment and avoid re-offending.

16 of Timpson shops are now managed by people recruited from prison. Out of nearly 300 men and women who have joined Timpson over the last four years they only know of seven who have re-offended.

Investment

**Employer investment:** £2,123,838  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £1,201,992  
**Total:** £3,325,830
19. Whitbread

Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants has joined with other major employers in the hospitality sector to create a wide-ranging skills initiative that will make a significant difference to the skills and knowledge of prospective employees, existing workers who want to progress, and to the Company’s high potential employees. An employer-led skills initiative enables Whitbread and its partners to combine the rigour of national standards and qualifications with design and delivery which really works for the sector. The programme is also designed to support the hardest to reach people, who are unemployed and potentially disengaged with opportunities in their community, and to create a pipeline of talent from schools through apprenticeships into management roles.

The skills challenges

The hospitality sector suffers from negative perceptions and an outdated image amongst schools, parents and young people, proving a barrier to recruitment and a tendency to view hospitality as a source of casual jobs rather than as a career. Whitbread, which has more than 1,000 hotels and restaurants across the UK, has noted significant skills gaps and a lack of hospitality qualifications amongst key groups of employees. They and other employers in the sector face increasing shortages of potential recruits of the right calibre, a problem which is even more acute for SMEs.

The solution

Whitbread and its partners will deliver a programme to help young people to understand the huge range of career opportunities available and offer the chance to experience careers in the sector first-hand. It will also improve career progression routes within the sector. It consists of five innovative projects:

- Engagement with schools to promote the sector and careers at Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants, offering information, advice and guidance (IAG), work related curriculum materials, work placements and tasters to young people in schools and colleges
- Jobs with training and work placements for the unemployed, especially NEETs, and outreach into local communities to offer work placements
• A ladder of apprenticeship progression from intermediate to higher levels and into management development, allowing much improved career progression opportunities
• Innovative projects to offer better evidence of the return on investment of training, creating simpler methods for funding and tracking learners, and developing a new system of quality assurance
• Reinvention of Whitbread’s Academy network as a training resource for its supply chain and local communities.

Impact

The programme will provide:

• 540 training places for SMEs in Whitbread’s supply chain
• 2,240 work experience places
• 475 apprenticeships, including 115 at advanced and higher levels and 150 for 16-18 - all in addition to existing commitments
• 6,000 new jobs in the next three years.

Whitbread see this opportunity as a chance to work collaboratively with its partners to help shape a future-facing hospitality sector, and to pilot new ways to demonstrate how accountability for public funds can be made both more robust and simpler. It offers young people the potential for a meaningful career in hospitality, with real opportunity for structured, quality development and progression. The employers involved all want to see hospitality better recognised as a professional sector.

“Whitbread is proud to support the Government’s priorities for skills and economic growth. I passionately believe that by working together we in business can make a real difference to the lives of young people in this country and be a force for good. We are creating 6,000 new jobs over the next three years and we want all young people, their parents and teachers, in our local communities to know about the career opportunities, apprenticeships and development we offer. We are delighted that the government’s investment will enable us to speed up and scale up this work.”

Patrick Dempsey, Managing Director, Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants

Who’s involved?

Whitbread Hotels and Restaurants leads the programme, working with employers Compass, Hilton Group, Mitchells and Butlers, Spirit Group, People 1st and The b-live Foundation CIC who bring the organisations together through an integrated schools programme. Whitbread also proposes an entirely new collaboration with the SMEs in its supply chain.

Whitbread will contribute over £7 million to the project, in addition to its regular training activity, and public funding of £4.3m will be provided from the Employer Ownership Pilot.
Investment

Employer investment: £7,194,490
Employer Ownership Pilot Funding: £4,393,129
Total: £11,587,619

20. WT Johnson

W.T. Johnson & Sons is leading a skills project involving 40 organisations from across the sector to create a new pre-Apprenticeship programme, to assess and match young people with companies for an initial trial period before taking up employment and their Apprenticeship.

The skills challenge

The apparel and textiles sector has major skills challenges which have held back its progress. A negative image and the long-term decline of Apprenticeships have contributed to this situation. Challenges the sector face include:

- A high average workforce age (20 per cent are aged 55+)
- A shortage of skilled people to fill technical roles at operative and craft level
- The need for leadership, management and business skills to promote growth
- A need to up-skill the workforce to take advantage of new technologies
- Little awareness of and appetite for Apprenticeships
- A lack of information throughout education about the range of high level career opportunities available

The solution

W.T. Johnson & Sons, one of the world’s leading textile dyeing and finishing companies, is leading a skills project involving 40 organisations from across the sector, including manufacturers from textiles, technical textiles, apparel and textile services sectors, their trade associations and Creative Skillset, the Sector Skills Council.

The sector understands that some employers are reluctant to take school leavers and graduates into Apprenticeships due to their lack of industry knowledge and basic ‘employability skills’. To address these concerns a new pre-Apprenticeship programme is being created to assess and match young people with companies for an initial trial period before taking up employment and their Apprenticeship. This activity includes a week-long introductory programme of industry orientation, visits to companies and supply chain partners, functional skills assessments and interview preparation and presentation skills training.
Further actions to improve awareness of the sector as a viable career choice will include co-ordinated activity covering school visits to provide information, company visits, localised Apprenticeship information materials, company internships and work placements.

To replace the large proportion of skilled workers nearing retirement age, partners will scale-up Apprenticeships. A new model for Apprenticeships will be organised regionally, with three intakes a year. It will include content developed by businesses and will be delivered mainly in-company.

To address a major need for increased levels of technical skills, partners will drive the implementation and delivery of new knowledge content in business-critical areas, scaling up, extending and building on Creative Skillset’s Higher Level Apprenticeship development activity.

A programme of activity will also address the lack of managerial skills, which is cited by many high-growth companies as a significant obstacle to their success. Specific skills and knowledge in key business areas including leadership and management, ‘train the trainer’, change management, product and process innovation will be developed.

**Impact**

This industry-driven skills development project will create nearly 700 Apprenticeship opportunities, as well as over 2,000 other training opportunities.

PLanned activity will increase recruitment of talent into the industry, open new opportunities for young people, encourage more employers to be engaged with Apprenticeships, increase skill levels and improve company performance.

**Investment**

**Employer investment:** £1,652,368  
**Employer Ownership Pilot Funding:** £2,279,539  
**Total:** £3,931,906
Appendix 3 – Case Studies, Apprenticeship Training Agency

**IMPACT Apprenticeships Case Study**

**Organisation:** Impact Apprenticeships (Founded by: MEGT and Loughborough College)

**Contact:** Laura Parker – Business Manager

**Address:** Loughborough College, Loughborough

**Date of visit:** 8th April 2013

**Nature of business:** Apprenticeship employment, they work with training providers best suited to the business and apprentice. They do not provide training directly.

**Number of employees:** 6 full time employed directly by IMPACT.

**Main purpose of the business:** To remove the stress and hassle for employers taking apprentices into their business, either due to poor previous experience or for businesses which do not have the resource to manage apprenticeship intake.

**About IMPACT:** IMPACT provide a full service from finding and selecting candidates to suit the employers requirements, engaging with the training provider and managing the apprentice throughout the life and beyond of the apprenticeship. They offer a full pastoral service, personal development and employment service. They use the MEGT model for apprenticeship employment. MEGT are an Australian formed company who started over 30 years ago with 4 members of staff and 1 apprentice. They now employ over 1800 members of staff based in offices in every major city across Australia and have placed over 10,500 apprentices.

MEGT approached colleges across the Midlands area to form a partnership in May 2011 to develop and implement their already successful business model into the UK. IMPACT work on a purely commercial model and did not gain any funding from the SFA or other funding bodies to set the business up. They chose the Midlands in the UK as being a central point to establish and build the business. They partnered with Loughborough College with the agreement that the training would not be solely through the college but based on the best training fit and requirement for the employer and apprentice. The plan for growth matches the Australian model and has aspirations to also have bases in every major city across the UK.

Currently IMPACT work closely with 8 other training providers across the Midlands and are expanding as and when new opportunities arise for new providers. With some of the providers they work on a direct contract with IMPACT and other on a basis of a referral system and share knowledge and information.

Impact received NAS (National Apprenticeship Service) recognition last year (2012) and were the 3rd in the country to receive accreditation, this enables them to grants and funding for apprentices.
IMPACT seeks to understand the business need and requirement to ensure they provide a full cradle to grave service. They use 13 different channels to find apprentices using methods like normal media with adverts, JCP and work fairs through to social media with twitter and Facebook. As a business they are very proactive and target employers, word of mouth and a telesales team. They provide work readiness programmes for the job seekers before interviewing and down selecting for the employer. Each available position the employer has IMPACT will select the best 4 suited for the role and fit for the employer, meaning the employer only see’s the best 4 candidates for the job opening, with written up interview packs and a full support and guidance service. ON average there are 30 people per vacancy. Once the candidate has been chosen IMPACT will work with them throughout the term of the apprenticeship by supporting them in regular one to one meetings, appraisals and disciplinary, personal development and even personal issues if and when required. The end goal is to enable the apprentice a job either with the current employer or another if there is no job at the end. The employers see the advantages and benefits of using IMPACT and having apprentices within the business so they have stepped progression pay increases throughout the apprenticeship to incentivise and show the apprentices the value of working well and developing. This has led to graduates also applying for apprenticeship by seeing the opportunity and development value being placed on using IMPACT and working closely with the selected companies to provide the host business.

As an example, IMPACT is working with an apprentice who wanted to study teaching in sports. IMPACT was not able to find one school that were able to take an apprentice on full time. By identifying and working with 4 schools IMPACT were able to secure the apprentice with all 4 schools by taking him on 1 day each and 1 day at day release. This meant the apprentice was able to study his chosen subject and the 4 schools all benefited. At the end of the apprenticeship due to the success all 4 schools wanted to keep him on the same agreement of job sharing, although not one school could afford to take him on full time. By working closely with the schools IMPACT provided the schools with a working contract so that he can continue to work for all 4 schools though IMPACT.

**Barriers and challenges:**

- Finding the right employers who are looking for the opportunity to develop talent within their business by bringing in apprentices and not looking for cheap labour.
- Getting the message across that apprenticeships can provide a talented workforce and are valuable to the business for growth.
- Apprenticeships being seen as the first step on development and as a progression route for learners for further and higher education but vocationally based.
- Attracting the right candidates who see this as learning and work opportunity.
Finding and working with the right training provider to link and connect with the employer and IMPACT to provide the best level of training provision.

Responsiveness of training provider to understand the urgency of developing a programme, in many cases it takes over 4 months for a training provider to develop a programme.

Opportunities:

- Working with the right employer and training provider can lead to fantastic learning environment for the learner.
- IMPACT providing the support, guidance and removal of hassle for the employer to see the value and benefits of continuing and taking on more apprentices.
- Right employer offering the pay increases means higher retention rate of apprentices and long term work commitment.

What has helped most to getting to where you are today?

- Working with schools, job fairs, Chamber of Commerce and businesses to share experiences of what apprenticeships are about and how they can add value to a business and career opportunity for a learner.
- Independence which allows IMPACT to work with any training provider to ensure best fit for employer giving a quality and transparency.
- Being self-funded and not reliant on government funding which enables them to be commercially focussed and not educationally led.

What has hindered you the most to getting to where you are today?

- Employers lack of understanding about apprenticeships, seen as cheap labour and undereducated people, meaning added time, resource and management in the business.
- Government agency NAS is very hit and miss with support and guidance, in some areas of the business and geographical very helpful and proactive in others not so much.

More about IMPACT:

Services:

- Offer full recruitment service
- Legally employs the Apprentices
- Issues contract of employment and manages all correspondence
- Performance management of Apprentice
- Pays the Apprentice on a weekly basis
- Manages the short or long term placement of Apprentices
- Provides you with the ability to return the Apprentices, giving two weeks notice if not suitable
- Shares Apprentices across multiple companies
Training provider identification and performance management

Quality framework:

IMPACT Apprenticeships operates in line with the Australian Group Training Company quality standards and includes the minimum National Apprenticeship Services (NAS) ATA operating framework.

To ensure that we provide the highest quality service IMPACT Apprenticeships have combined both the Australian Apprenticeship Agency standards with the United Kingdom National Apprenticeship Service Framework for Apprenticeship agencies. IMPACT Apprenticeship standards cover the following:

Standard 1: Systems for ATA include management of hosting

Standard 2: Compliance with regulatory requirements

Standard 3: Effective financial management procedures

Standard 4: Effective administration and record management procedures

Standard 5: Effective corporate governance

Standard 6: Access and equity

Standard 7: The skills of ATA staff

Standard 8: Ethical practice

Standard 9: Quality

Added Value:

- HR and mentoring support
- Training provider management
- Quality
- Independent
- Partnerships
- Professionalism and expertise
- Graduate recruitment
- End to end solution

Stats and figures:

- overall employer satisfaction 2011/2012 98%
- repeat business rate 2011/2012 65%
- success rate 2011/2012 95%
- apprentices going into higher education 14%
- rotations 8% returns 5%
- apprentices going into full time employment 81%
Current apprenticeship vacancies – Midlands 46

Testimonials:

“I would recommend and advise all our clients to work with IMPACT, as the support provided is vital to the success of our apprentices” Loughborough College Sports Department – Rob Jarram

“We have always directly employed apprentices, but the recruitment and employment service provided by IMPACT allows me the time to focus on running my business, knowing that I will receive quality apprentices and superb HR support” Mulberry Square – Craig Johnstone, MD

“We were very impressed with how quickly IMPACT set up our apprenticeship scheme” 3M – Ammer Ishoque, E-business Manager

“I would highly recommend IMPACT Apprenticeships to all employers, their support has been highly beneficial to Broom Leys and we are looking to build on this in the future” Robert Prior – Head of Broom Leys school, Coalville

“If I had to choose an employer for apprentices, I would choose IMPACT every time” Central College Nottingham – Operations Manager Katrina Woodward

“When I employ an apprentice it will be an IMPACT Apprentice” Loughborough MP, Nicky Morgan

“IMPACT Apprenticeships have provided relevant support to me when I needed it. They responded very fast to any requests I made or any queries I’ve had, with efficiency and professionalism.” eMarketing Apprentice – Jared Pickering

SEAC Apprenticeships Case Study

Organisation: SEAC Ltd (South East Apprenticeship Company part of KEITS Training Services Ltd)

Contact: Irene Hoare – Business Manager

Address: Unit C, Houndswood Gate, Harper Lane, Radlett, Hertfordshire WD7 7HU

Date of visit: 7th March 2013

Nature of business: Not for profit apprenticeship training agency

Number of employees: 5 full time and one part time employed directly by SEAC, can increase capacity by utilising KEITS Training Services Ltd.

Main purpose of the business: To engage companies around the value and benefits that apprenticeships can offer a business, either to develop growth and talent or build on the current workforce. Identify areas in an organisation where
apprenticeships can be utilised and to offer a full recruitment and employment service of apprentices.

About SEAC: SEAC have been going since April 2010 and were one of the initial companies funded by the Skills Funding Agency, they see themselves as an innovative service for employers and apprentices and is one of several Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) throughout England. They operate across the South East and aim to create 1,600 apprenticeships in the region by 2013, benefiting businesses and young people, aged 16 - 24, alike. "SEAC allows employers of all shapes and sizes to engage with Apprenticeships without employing them directly. SEAC removes all of the bureaucracy and red tape from the employer, allowing them to concentrate on their business whilst up-skilling their workforce."

Apprenticeships:
- help harness new talent and fill skills gaps e.g. where there is an ageing workforce, new technology
- provide you with a flexible workforce
- motivate your workforce - eager, flexible and loyal young people who bring in fresh/new ideas
- provide a cost effective staffing solution

SEAC:
- employ the apprentice - you enjoy the benefit, we take the risk
- carry out the recruitment process at no cost to you
- provide you with work ready apprentices interested in your sector

As well as offering the full service from recruitment to employment and support and management through the life of the apprenticeship they are happy to work as a recruit and introduction service for businesses too. They currently work closely with over 40 colleges across their region to ensure the delivery of the apprenticeship is right for the apprentice and the business. They seek out the best solution by identifying the location of both the apprentice and business with the right training provider and they cover all occupations and will search the whole of the UK if a local or existing training provider is not currently delivering the apprenticeship identified.

There are 4 key players in providing and delivering SEAC apprenticeships.

1) Host Company – Connecting and working with the employer to identify the right apprenticeship requirements across the business.
2) Apprentice – Selecting and recruiting the best candidate that fits for the business and apprenticeship.
3) Training Provider – Either through existing relationship or identifying excellence in their area working with the right training provider to deliver the apprenticeship and work with the host company to deliver a smooth and professional programme is critical.
4) SEAC – The management, linking and connecting all the parts together to provide a seamless service and support to the apprentice and host company throughout the life of the apprenticeship.

How SEAC works:

They are a one-stop shop covering all aspects of Apprenticeships. They remove all the risk and hassle of taking on new recruits - from initial advice to actual placements

SEAC’s services include:

- A consultation with your company to agree the role of an apprentice or apprentices
- Screening and interviewing of potential candidates
- A shortlist of the most suitable applicants for your job role
- Setting up government-funded training for the apprentice
- Employing the apprentice direct - you don't need to worry about payroll, tax, National Insurance, administration and performance management
- Flexibility - if things change, you can choose not to continue with the apprenticeship
- Full support of a dedicated Apprenticeship Support Consultant for the duration of the placement
- Training and support provided by a local, quality assured training provider

Barriers and challenges:

- Employer engagement - Lack of understanding and knowledge with employers
- Larger organisations – if not part of HR initiative then educating other areas of a business can be challenging
- The willingness of employers to take on apprentices, either due to bad experience, lack of faith in current day apprenticeships or don’t see value to their business

Opportunities:

- Marketing – by providing a service which enables businesses to gain a better understanding of apprenticeships – telemarketing, networking events, Chamber of Commerce, through local authorities and success stories
- Increase the retention rate of apprentices by working closer and supporting the apprentices and businesses to overcome issues
- Sustain and grow current offering and engaging with more businesses to develop existing and new programmes
- Develop a closer link with schools for students to understand all options and future career opportunities
Increase the profile of SEAC across the whole of its geographical area – currently very good in Kent

Opportunities of working/partnering with other ATA’s (accredited only or going through accreditation) and sectors or training providers to provide a stronger offering.

What has helped most to getting to where you are today?

- KEITS Training Services Ltd in April 2012 providing financial commitment, additional admin, resource and office space to enable SEAC to keep trading. The KEITS CEO support and belief that SEAC’s offering is worth committing to.
- Not targeting specific areas and becoming a specialist provider for a sector, by working across sectors it means the offering is due to understanding and identifying the businesses needs and supporting their requirement going forward
- Working in partnership with training providers – started with 9 providers in Kent and now have a broad enough range of apprenticeships and providers to support all areas of business.
- High and consistent conversion rate to full time employment in excess of 90%, this is believed to be heavily down to the support and service provided by SEAC
- Placing 26 Learning Support Assistants in Education sector, over 30 in Bucks Local Authority and working with the Northampton based Mercedes Petronas Team to provide their apprentices.
- £1500 age grant is now accessible
- SEAC’s staff responsiveness to the learning curve in covering a broad and diverse area.

What has hindered you the most to getting to where you are today?

- Lack of promotion and marketing of ATA’s as a viable support to business for apprenticeships by NAS, national and local government and education
- Businesses lack of knowledge and willingness to learn how an ATA can support the growth of talent within their business
- Parents mind set around apprenticeships being a viable option for their kids further education and career.
The Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) model is intended to promote and support the delivery of a high quality Apprenticeship Programme involving employers who wish to use the services of an ATA to source, arrange and host their Apprenticeships. This could be for a number of reasons including them not being able to commit to employment for the period of the full framework, short term restrictions on employee numbers, or the uncertainty about the value of an Apprenticeship.

NAS/Skills Funding Agency encourages all ATAs to work with and support smaller employers to help them hire and employ apprentices in their businesses.

The ATA will not replace the traditional model of Apprenticeship delivery based on direct employment of the apprentice, into a permanent job role, by an employer and linked to high quality training delivered by an accredited training provider.

The ATA is designed to create new Apprenticeship opportunities not to displace existing programmes.

As with traditional Apprenticeships a focus of the ATA will be progression into permanent employment, whilst there is not necessarily a guarantee of a permanent job at the end of the Apprenticeship, the offer to support on progression opportunities as the Apprenticeship nears the end should make this the most likely outcome.

**Purpose of the Framework**

The framework is intended to help all those involved in an Apprenticeship delivered through the ATA model make a judgement as to the extent to which their experience is reflecting the best practice available. For ATAs to be listed on the National Approved Register of ATAs they will need to demonstrate to NAS/SFA that they are able to operate in accordance with the framework.

It sets out the core features which underpin the ATA model and gives examples of the behaviour apprentices, employers, training providers and others should expect to see.

Aspects of the ATA delivery model will be regulated through the normal work of bodies such as the Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate, Ofsted and Awarding Bodies. The framework will set out standards against which other interested parties can make judgements. The National Apprenticeship Service will review the model as part of its wider responsibility for Apprenticeship development and quality.
Key Features

1. An ATA is a business whose core functions are the sourcing of employers and candidates interested in engaging with Apprenticeships, leading to the employment, training and development of apprentices. Under the model the apprentice will be hired out to host employers who provide the productive employment, key to the Apprenticeship. Training will be delivered by an SFA contracted training provider. ATAs may also impact on growth in traditional ‘directly’ employed Apprenticeships and/or offer ‘recruitment only’ or Access to Apprenticeship programmes that are designed to ease both candidates and employers into apprenticeship take-up.

2. An ATA will always aim to contribute to a high quality Apprenticeship experience. To ensure this they will make the quality of the apprentices’ working and learning experience central to all they do, working closely with training providers and host employers.

3. An ATA will focus on the creation of new Apprenticeship opportunities with employers who wish to benefit from using the ATA model to engage an apprentice(s). They should complement, not displace Apprenticeships directly employed by an individual employer.

4. An ATA will agree clear terms and standards with all the employers, providers and apprentices with which they work. These terms and standards should underpin the delivery of a high quality Apprenticeship.

5. ATAs must be aware of and comply with all relevant employment law and regulation including those appropriate to Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses where these apply.

Key behaviours associated with an ATA

1. An ATA is a business whose core function is the employment and development of apprentices. Under the model the apprentice will be hired out to host employers who provide employment key to the Apprenticeship. Training will be delivered by a Skills Funding Agency (the Agency) contracted training provider. This can be recognised by the ATA:
   - Being a separate legal entity established to recruit and employ apprentices with the intention of hiring them out to host employers to support the Apprenticeship. The ATA will have ultimate responsibility for the welfare, health and safety, learning and employment of the apprentice.
   - Operating a business model that offers sustainability over the longer term and is based on a commercial charge on the host employer and in some instances on the training provider. Income should not be dependent on SFA participation funding which must be used in adherence with the Agency terms and conditions and solely support the delivery of training.
Having clear and robust systems to support their role as an employer. The workforce will include 16-18 year old apprentices, an age group that requires greater support and structure. The systems should reflect this as well as the nature of the operating model.

Offering full time employment of the apprentice as the norm. Part time employment is only available in limited circumstances based on the individual apprentice’s personal circumstances. There will be a contract of employment giving clarity around all aspects of their employment. The contract length should ensure the individual has sufficient time to complete the Apprenticeship with scope for an extension to allow for any delay. An apprentice must not be employed under any form of self-employment.

Agreeing a wage in conjunction with the host employer which must be at least the legal minimum Apprenticeship wage currently set at £2.65 per hour (as of 1st Oct 2012). In line with the ATA delivering a high quality Apprenticeship they should not be promoted as a minimum pay model.

Ensuring clarity on responsibilities as an employee set out for the apprentice in some form of handbook or guidance document.

2. An ATA will always aim to contribute to a high quality Apprenticeship experience. To ensure this they will make the quality of apprentices’ working and learning experience central to all they do. This can be recognised by the ATA ensuring;

- Where appropriate there should be independent advice and guidance (IAG) for the apprentice before embarking on a framework.

- The host employer(s) will offer the apprentice productive employment which supports the Apprenticeship framework. The majority of the apprentice’s time should be spent in productive employment with a host employer not through simulated workplace activity.

- That the host employer’s vacancy should be clear from the outset and where possible offer productive employment for the length of the Apprenticeship. Given that a feature of the ATA is that it allows employers who cannot commit for the full period to engage with Apprenticeships there will be examples where the offer of productive employment is for part of the length of the Apprenticeship.

- Where it is clear from the outset that the vacancy cannot offer the range of productive tasks or the full period of the Apprenticeship then the ATA (working with the training provider) should agree a combination of host employers to offer a structured Apprenticeship programme.
• Where there is an interruption in employment with a host employer, there is an agreed period of continued employment with the ATA whilst suitable alternative arrangements are made with an appropriate host employer.

• An Apprenticeship Agreement is in place covering all aspects of the training and including all parties (apprentice, host employer, provider and ATA).

• Training provision supports the employment opportunity offered by the host employer (the Apprenticeship should be based on the job role not on the training available).

• The length of the programme should support the beneficial outcomes associated with Apprenticeships, including those gained from working in productive employment. ATAs will encourage the development of Apprenticeships driven by good Apprentice training practice.

3. An ATA will focus on the creation of the new Apprenticeship opportunities with employers who wish to benefit from using the ATA model to engage an apprentice(s). They should complement not displace directly employed Apprenticeships. This can be recognised by the ATA having;

• A clear rationale for the services offered that they are able to share with employers.

• A close working relationship with organisations currently engaged in the promotion of Apprenticeships to employers. This will include the National Apprenticeship Service, colleges and independent training providers, Sector Skills Councils, National Skills Academies and other organisations.

• A clear engagement strategy and engagement criteria to secure host employers. There will be a focus on ensuring employers both understand, and are committed to Apprenticeships and to supporting the apprentice for the period of the Apprenticeship.

• Clear systems to ensure that host employers can give necessary and appropriate support to the apprentice during their Apprenticeship.

• A focus on engagement with employers looking to recruit into future jobs rather than on employers who use the ATA as a source of temporary agency staffing or offering temporary work experience.

• Systems in place that allow the host employer to recruit the apprentice directly during the period of the Apprenticeship should the opportunity arise and subject to payment of a fee at least equal to the income expected from the hosting placement should it run to completion.
4. **An ATA will agree clear terms with all the employers, providers and apprentices that they work with. These terms should reflect best practice in the delivery of an Apprenticeship.** This will be recognised by the ATA having;

**Apprentice**

- An engagement strategy and criteria to attract suitable apprentices.
- A clear process to recruit suitable apprentices based on a link with real vacancies and training opportunities. The Apprenticeship Vacancies system should be a key feature of the recruitment process.
- A clear process to match suitable apprentices with vacancies and training opportunities. The Apprenticeship Vacancy system can support this process.
- Ensured that the apprentice fully understands the position of the ATA and is clearly aware of the nature of the employment.
- Ensure that the apprentice is clear on the role and responsibilities of the ATA, training provider and host employer and who they should contact for support.
- Ensured that the apprentice is clear about their responsibilities in relation to the Apprenticeship delivery.
- Systems in place so that should a hosting arrangement break down, the ATA should aim to find the apprentice a new host whose business activity compliments the training programme. During any such break the ATA is expected to maintain the employment and training programme for an agreed period. ATAs should have plans and provision to facilitate this.

**Host Employer**

- A formal agreement in place between the ATA and the host setting out the roles and responsibilities of both parties (there may be some variation depending on the sector and/or employer characteristics). The ATA should have systems in place to withdraw the apprentice where the host does not discharge their roles and responsibilities appropriately.
- Made clear the key role the employer plays in the delivery of the Apprenticeship. The host should understand their role in supporting the apprentice and where necessary be supported by the ATA and training provider to ensure work place activity is appropriately linked with training.

- Clear agreements in place with host employers to ensure that moves between host employers can be managed. This to include an agreed notice to be given by the host employer.

**Training Provider**

- A strategy and systems in place for selecting high quality training providers (providers must as a minimum be SFA accredited). Where ever possible associated providers should be named.

- Agreements in place with all associated providers to ensure on roles and responsibilities

**General**

- Systems in place to monitor the quality of the Apprenticeship experience from the perspective of the apprentice, host and training provider. The ATA should be able to evidence the success of the Apprenticeship programme measured in terms of successful completion and progression into a job.

5. **ATAs must make themselves aware of and comply with all relevant employment law and regulation including those included in the Employment Agency regulations. ATAs will show they have;**


- Governance structures that will include access to appropriate expert advice.

- Risk strategies that include the position of their apprentices and how they can be best protected.