

RACONTEUR

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ENABLING VARIED
CAREER PATHS



TRIBAL





Apprentices can be trained how employers want them to be – and this is a real positive right now

firms with a payroll greater than £3 million will, from next month, have to pay 0.5 per cent of it into a digital account. They'll only get it back (plus a £15,000 sweetener and a 10 per cent top-up on each £1 paid in) if they use it to buy accredited apprenticeship training. In essence – pay up, and the money is yours again so long as you take on an apprentice.

Why the Levy is appearing is easy. Government wants three million apprentices earning and learning by 2020, and with 2 per cent of employers (some 22,000 businesses) estimated to be affected, it's hoped the £3 billion they put in won't want to be wasted.

But it's a risky strategy too. Although there's been a charm offensive of late – most recently through the government's *Get In, Go Far* TV campaign – the apprentice pathway has become tarnished in recent years.

"There's still a perception that apprenticeships are low skilled and attract the less academically gifted," says Sean Allison, managing director at notgoingtouni.co.uk. "But on the other hand," he argues, "employers are also questioning the value of a degree – and I feel it's this that is beginning to change things and restore their faith in apprenticeships."

He adds: "It's good recruitment after all. Grads often have high expectations, and leave more quickly; apprentices can be trained how employers want them to

Ambitious targets need new mindsets

The Apprenticeship Levy will create opportunities for thousands of young people nationwide, though a change in attitudes is vital for meaningful change

THE MODERN APPRENTICESHIP

Peter Crush

There's no doubt about it; this coming April is a biggie when it comes to the next chapter of apprenticeships. First introduced in 1563 with the Statute of Artificers (which ended the control of guilds, and

required tradesmen to take seven years' training to reach proficiency), there's now a new piece of legislation aimed squarely at rebooting this ancient learning path.

It's called the Apprenticeship Levy – though the Confederation of British Industry labels it a tax – and it's unashamedly designed to push employers to take more of these learners on. All

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One of the biggest misconceptions is that apprenticeships are only suited to labour-intensive industries



Huy ProShoot/Pexels



Unsplash/Pexels



22K

UK businesses are expected to be affected by the Apprenticeship Levy

be – and this is a real positive right now.”

What’s helping to change employer perception are very significant input groups of employers, or “Trailblazers”, that have designed the new apprenticeship standards (quality targets each apprentice schemes must hit).

To answer criticism that apprenticeships weren’t academic enough, degree-level apprenticeships were launched in 2015, enabling learners to achieve a standard equivalent to a bachelor’s degree (Level 6) or master’s

degree (Level 7). To really ensure the three-million target will be met, earlier this year the government also confirmed that all public-sector bodies employ 2.3 per cent of their workforces as apprentices by 2020. This will add a further 200,000 into the pot.

But will all this be enough? Starting pay is one factor that could still impact total numbers, but what’s really being banked on is that it’s not just employers that believe apprentices work, but young people too. And the outlook here is looking better.

“The data is now clear that those who do a higher or degree-level apprenticeships can earn more money over their lifetime than someone going to a top, non-Russell Group university – £1.5 million compared to £1.4 million,” says Dr Lee Elliot Major, chief executive of social mobility think tank, The Sutton Trust.

“Although teachers are still surprised by this, and there is work to be done to ensure schools don’t just push the university route, this earnings headline is slowly changing people’s perceptions – especially when weighed up against the cost of going to university,” he says.

One young person who certainly is sold on the idea of apprenticeships (and is spreading the word widely) is Lucy Sargison, who is in her final year of a three-year technology apprenticeship with Accenture.

“I had the stereotypical view of apprenticeships – that they’re for low-skilled jobs like hairdressing and plumbing,” says Ms Sargison, who graduates this summer and plans to do a top-up qualification to convert her foundation degree into an honours degree.

It’s challenging for young people right now; apprenticeships give them a different route

“My school wanted everyone to go to university, but after deciding to go to college, Accenture visited, explained its offering, and I wanted to learn more. I had to discover about apprenticeships myself, but I’m glad I did.

“I’m now telling all my other friends about it. I’ve become more independent, I run my own car, and I’m planning to move into my own place later this year. I couldn’t have done this without going straight into a paying role,” she says.

Accenture’s scheme has run since 2012, and according to Candida Mottershead, human resources director for UK and Ireland, having apprenticeships means Accenture can find pockets of talent that might have been discouraged from university.

“We can also focus our training on the skills we actually want, so it’s win-win all round,” she says. “It’s challenging for young people right now; this gives them a different route.”

New Department for Education figures released in January indicate the magic three-million target is on track, with 780,000 starts since May 2015, and

quarterly figures exceeding the 150,000 needed to reach this milestone. These numbers will need to continue though.

The Levy will add to this, but while Ms Sargison is doing her bit to ensure she spreads the good news, Mr Major from The Sutton Trust does issue a word of warning. “We’d rather see a target for the number of higher-level apprenticeships,” he says, reflecting on last year’s Apprenticeship Statistics: England report from that showed more than half (58%) of apprentice starts for 2015/16 were at Level 2 (equivalent to five GCSE passes), while just 5 per cent were at higher levels (4 to 7).

Nevertheless, more enlightened firms are beginning to embrace higher-level apprenticeships. In September Dentons, the world’s largest law firm, will introduce its first solicitor apprenticeship programme – a six-year training course to Level 7, with learners starting on £18,000 per annum.

“We won’t change perceptions about apprenticeships just by ourselves,” says partner Gurbinder Grewal. “For us though, developing apprenticeships wasn’t even about the Levy – we decided we wanted to do this anyway. We’re all in a fight for talent, so apprenticeships are an investment in our future.”

Although it’s only a small start for Dentons, with just four spaces up for grabs, the government will hope lots of smaller schemes all add up. Ministers will also hope that as businesses actually engage in apprenticeship schemes, their old-fashioned perceptions will finally change.

The fact that 250 applied to Dentons indicates young people have already dropped any hang-ups they might have had about apprenticeships. Now’s the time for employers to do the same.

Lucy Sargison is in her final year of a three-year technology apprenticeship with Accenture



Are apprentices paid enough?



Yulia Grigoryeva/Shutterstock

Apprentices may eventually earn as much as university graduates, but not straight away: pay is complex and can seem unfair.

Apprentices are entitled to an hourly apprentice rate of £3.40 currently (rising to £3.50 from April) if they are under 19 or aged 19 and over in the first year of learning. They are only entitled to the minimum wage for their age – the relevant bands are 18 to 20, 21 to 24 and over 25 – if they are both 19 or over and have completed the first year of their apprenticeship.

This means a 22 year old can either earn £6.95 (the minimum hourly wage for a 21 to 24 year old) or £3.40 depending on whether they’ve completed their first year or are still on their first year of their apprentice. Both are below the National Living Wage of £7.20 per hour (rising to £7.50 from April) and well below the £9.45 earned in London and £8.45 elsewhere, recommended by the Living Wage Foundation.

While data by Success at School finds average apprentices earn £257 a week, in December 2014 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills revealed employers pay more for higher skills. It found average pay for higher-level apprentices (Level 4 and 5) was a much healthier £11.63 per hour.

Stefan Stern, visiting Professor in management practice at Cass Business School, says: “The target of three million apprenticeships is properly ambitious, and pay is part of the problem. But so too is management’s reluctance to invest in younger employees.”

More than just a business expense

While the payment basics of the Levy are pretty straightforward, businesses will only reap the rewards of apprenticeships with a robust strategy

APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

Peter Crush

The countdown is on – in just a few weeks the government's Apprenticeship Levy officially comes into force. From April 6 every business with a payroll greater than £3 million per annum will be required to pay 0.5 per cent of it into an apprenticeship service account. To get it back (with a 10 per cent top-up as an incentive), businesses will have to use the money to train up apprentices.

It's all part of a policy to get three million apprentices signed up by 2020. But while politicians are playing down the impact it will have on most businesses – official data suggests just 22,000 of the UK's largest employers will be affected – employers won't need a degree to work out that if they employ 100 people on an average annual salary of £30,000, that puts them, and lots of others, squarely into the territory of paying up.

If this isn't a jolt to the system, there's worrying news too. As recently as last autumn, the British Chambers of Commerce found 39 per cent of members either hadn't even heard of the Levy, or didn't understand it. So what do employers really need to know?



The good news is that the basics are fairly straightforward. Levy-paying businesses will have their contributions deducted from April with firms responsible for calculating, reporting and paying this alongside their normal PAYE payments. Those intending to use them for training apprentices need to set up their digital account (they can do so [here](#)). Firms making their first payments will do so from April, and vouchers for spending with approved apprentice training providers can be taken from as early as May. However, there's more businesses need to think about than just paying the levy.

Firms should decide where they're going to get the most bang for their buck

"Firms must decide whether they're going to treat the Levy as something they just want to claw back in the easiest way possible, or whether they see apprentices as an investment," says Jenny Catlin, head of projects at Capita Talent Partnerships. "It's the latter attitude the government



APRIL 6, 2017

is when the apprenticeship Levy will take effect



£3M+

Employers with a payroll of more than £3 million will be affected



0.5%

of an employer's annual wage bill will be paid into a digital account

wants, but it involves businesses doing a full skills audit – of current and future talent needs – which is something some SMEs might not have done before.”

Ms Catlin says there’s no point sprinkling some apprentices around without focus. “Firms should decide where they’re going to get the most bang for their buck,” she says. “This might involve having them all in one area, to develop capacity for a future need. The key is knowing which skills gaps they intend to use apprenticeships to fill.”

As part of their skills audit, firms will also need to review accredited apprentice training providers. A benefit of focusing apprenticeships into specific areas is that it cuts down the number of different providers businesses will need to deal with. “It’s often forgotten,” says Ms Catlin, “there are administration and oversight costs, so firms shouldn’t just choose the cheapest provider. They need to work with someone that will partner with them, for the whole journey.”



It’s often forgotten there are administration and oversight costs, so firms shouldn’t just choose the cheapest provider

For some firms, taking on a handful of apprentices may have been enough for corporate social responsibility or diversity purposes; but by paying the levy, and potentially boosting apprentice numbers, firms will need to understand how this will impact them culturally.

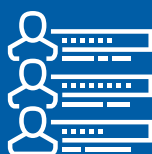
BT has just announced creating a mixture of 1,700 graduate and apprenticeship roles, on top of the 2,500 apprentices it has created in the last two years. Chief executive Gavin Patterson simply says this is “the right thing to do” and that both its “apprenticeship and graduate roles will offer people the hands-on experience they need to succeed”.

But if greater numbers of apprentices are rubbing shoulders with traditionally recruited graduates, line managers will need to be aware how different people will all be vying for the same promotions and career development.



10%

monthly top-up will be applied to companies’ funds for spending on apprenticeship training in England



£15K

allowance to be given to each employer to offset against their Levy payment

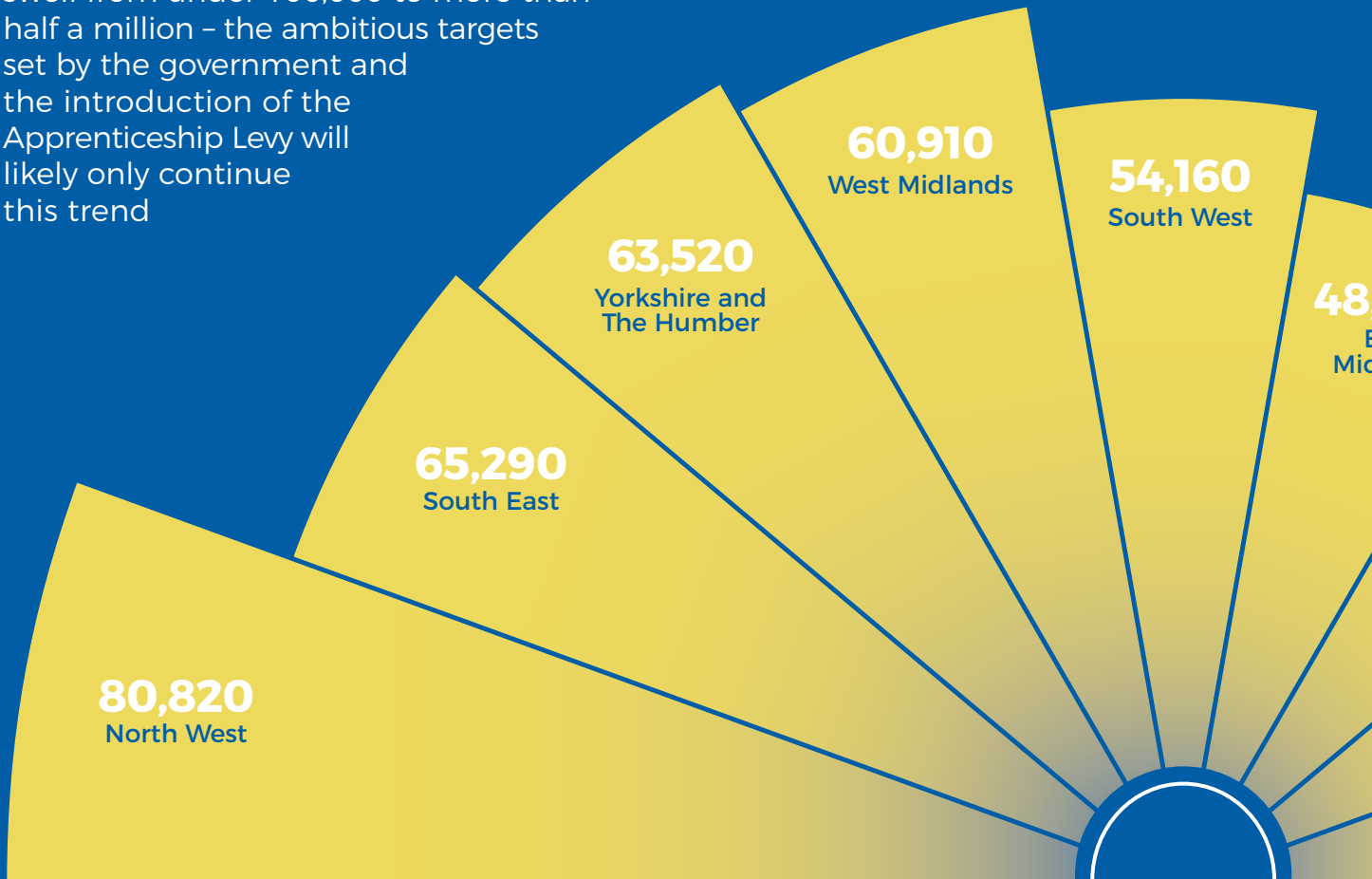


£3BN

is expected to be raised each year for apprenticeship training

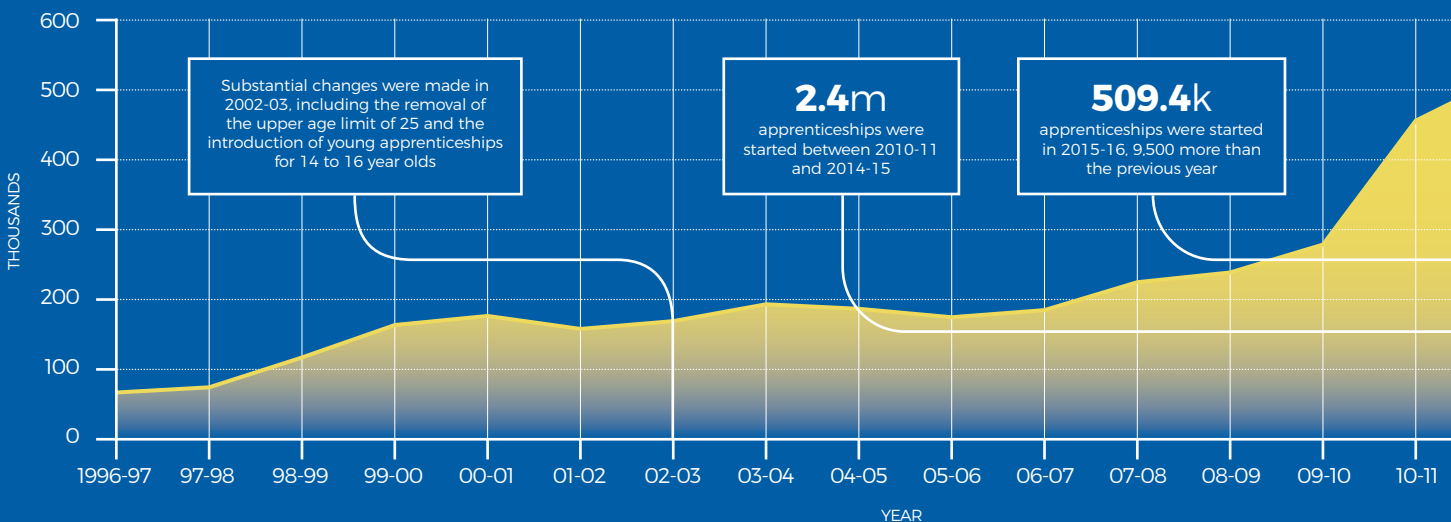
Apprenticeships in num

Apprenticeships are a growing career path in England, and the tide is finally turning as young people in the country begin to realise that university may not always be the best route to gaining qualifications following school. The last 20 years has seen the annual number of people entering apprenticeships swell from under 100,000 to more than half a million – the ambitious targets set by the government and the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy will likely only continue this trend



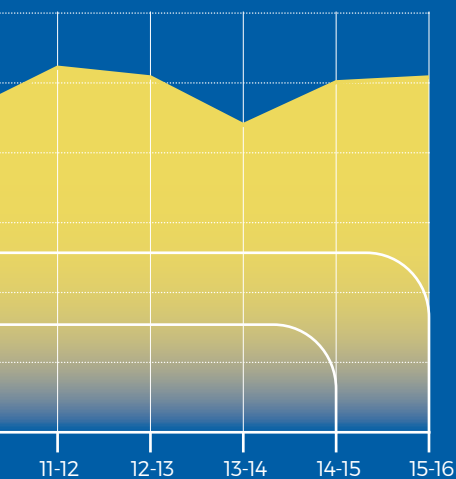
APPRENTICESHIP STARTS IN ENGLAND

1996-2016



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APPRENTICESHIP STARTS IN ENGLAND

BY SECTOR



143,190

Business, administration
and law



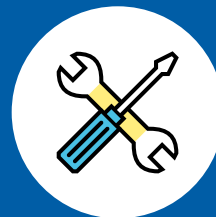
132,440

Health, public services
and care



84,680

Retail and
commercial enterprise



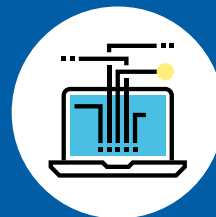
78,480

Engineering and
manufacturing technologies



21,460

Construction,
planning and the
built environment



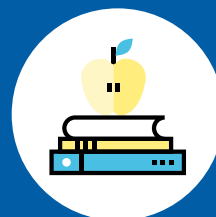
16,020

Information and
communication
technology



14,860

Leisure, travel
and tourism



8,300

Education
and training



8,190

Agriculture, horticulture
and animal care



1,250

Arts, media
and publishing

On-the-job training for career success

Apprentices want intense training, a clear career path, good pay, and to be inspired. Here are ten fantastic roles that tick all boxes

TOP 10

CHARLES ORTON-JONES

1

THEATRE

From Hollywood to the West End, the business called show is always looking for talented youngsters. The Royal Albert Hall recently took on its first apprentices. Hannah and Nathan are working full-time at the Hall, whilst working for their Level 3 in Technical Theatre with the National College for the Creative and Cultural Industries. Hannah says: "I've learnt about the political and social changes that have impacted the industry and I'm putting the theory learnings into practice. In comparison to my friends who have gone to university I'm miles ahead and have gained tangible skills that will continue to advance me in the future."



HEALTH AND SAFETY

There's a reason workers no longer lose limbs on construction sites. Health and safety officers are valued across industry and keep everyone accident-free. The National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health is the awarding body for practitioners. Lee joined Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC) at the age of 18 four years ago, after gaining three As and one B at A level. As an apprentice he completed his diploma in July 2016 and is currently applying for Grad IOSH status. Now 22 he's leading a stress management programme at Calderdale MBC. That's real career progress.

3

CLOUD COMPUTING

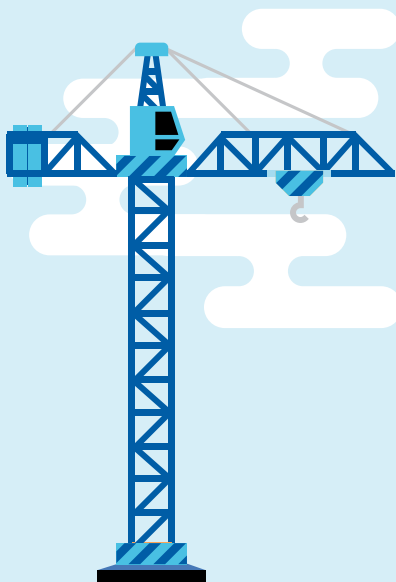
Retail giant Amazon has a cloud computing division called Amazon Web Services (AWS). It hosts data for the likes of Netflix, Airbnb, and Samsung. AWS re:Start is designed to train AWS workers at all levels of experience – even those with no previous technical knowledge. Organisations that have pledged job placements to AWS re:Start include ARM, Claranet, Cloudreach, Direct Line Group, EDF Energy, Funding Circle, KCOM, Sage, Tesco Bank, and Zopa.



NHS

The NHS is Britain's biggest employer. Naturally it has some incredible schemes, which span the entire organisation. These include student paramedic, digital marketing with Gov.uk, and a variety of technical fields. Charlie Brown, 19, switched from A levels to a four-year Advanced Medical Engineering Apprenticeship in partnership with Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and its training partner JTL. He is learning how to maintain and service hospital equipment such as X-ray machines and linear accelerators used for radiotherapy treatment.

4



2

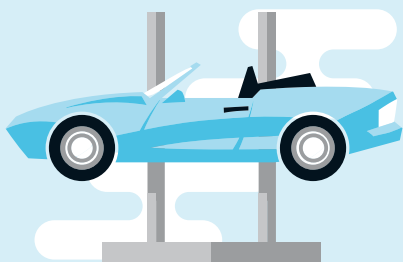
5

SOLICITOR

Need a law degree to be a lawyer? Not necessarily. For example, the Fletchers Solicitors Trailblazer Apprenticeship scheme is a fully funded Trailblazer six-year apprenticeship scheme, which offers aspiring lawyers an alternative route into the profession. It means that there is no cost to the apprentice at all. The scheme allows students to learn on the job, whilst completing an



undergraduate degree (LLB), a master's degree (LLM), and a Legal Practice Course (LPC) at the University of Law, as well as a period of recognised training along the way.

**PORSCHE MECHANIC**

Autofarm is an independent Porsche specialist based in Oxfordshire with a long heritage of taking on apprentices.

In fact, its current owner Mikey Wastie started as an apprentice there 15 years ago.

Mikey says from his side an apprenticeship showed him the real world and gave him relevant experience of working with people in the trade. "Here, apprentices get to solve problems that are often unique to each car and gain experience to build their skills," he says.

6

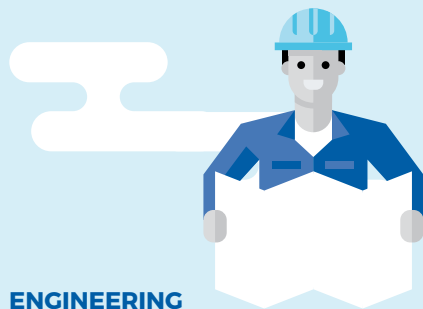
7

IT SALES

IT sales is a great choice of career for anyone with drive, personality, and a knowledge of tech. Computacenter runs one of the very best apprenticeships. In three years 102 young people have been put through the course, which takes candidates to Level 3 diploma in IT fundamentals, plus the ability to work towards CompTIA A+



or Microsoft exams. The apprenticeship is 12 weeks on a course, then 40 weeks on the job.

**ENGINEERING**

Global engineering and scientific technologies company Renishaw is recruiting 45 apprentices across its four engineering schemes; technical engineering,

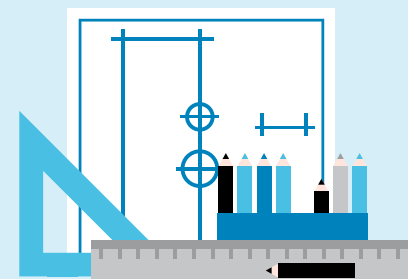
manufacturing engineering, software and embedded electronic systems design/development engineering. During this time they will also study for a Higher National Certificate and Higher National Diploma on a day-release basis. After completing the apprenticeship there is also the possibility of working towards an honours degree in engineering.

8

9

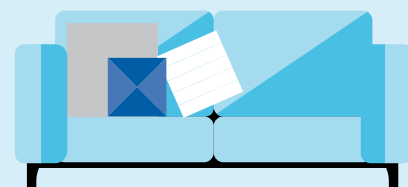
CHARTERED SURVEYOR

The chartered surveyor degree-level apprenticeship offers a practical alternative to going to university. There are two apprenticeship models, both backed by Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS). The Surveying Technician Apprenticeship earns you a Level 3 diploma and takes two years to complete to become an associate surveyor of RICS (AssocRICS), while the Level 6 degree-level Chartered Surveyor Apprenticeship (MRICS) takes five years. Entry level is five GCSEs for the technician course, and three A levels for the chartered surveyor.

**CRAFTSMAN**

Want to work with your hands? Sofas by Saxon is

a bespoke furniture makers with a 35-year history in the industry. Joe Gill, apprentice upholsterer at Sofas by Saxon, says: "My role requires quite a bit of skill that I had on-the-job training for, particularly when you have to apply the foam to the frame accurately then add the material. I found the apprenticeship through North Lancs Training Group. Apprenticeships are really important because they give young people a chance to learn something and earn money at the same time. I've got mates who go to university and always complain about having none!"



10

Opportunities and challenges of running an apprenticeship

There are many aspects to master when creating a successful apprenticeship. Software provider Tribal looks at how to make it easy

We are on the brink of a golden era for apprenticeships. The new Apprenticeship Levy makes it almost compulsory for employers to offer apprenticeship training and it's triggering a national rethink about how apprenticeships are delivered.

Whilst some employers will turn to training providers to deliver the education, others are creating their own internal apprenticeships so they can shape and create the workforce they need for the future. Germany has long benefited from industrial apprenticeships, and it's wonderful to see the UK embarking on the same track.

However, the Levy is more than a financial requirement to invest. It

brings with it a long list of compliance rules and regulations. Companies seeking to maximise their involvement with apprenticeships need to think long and hard about how to get organised.

There are three main challenges. The first is to engage the apprentices. They need to be motivated and kept informed of their progress. In the online age they need information at the touch of a button.

The goal is to give employers the tools they need to deliver world-class apprenticeships

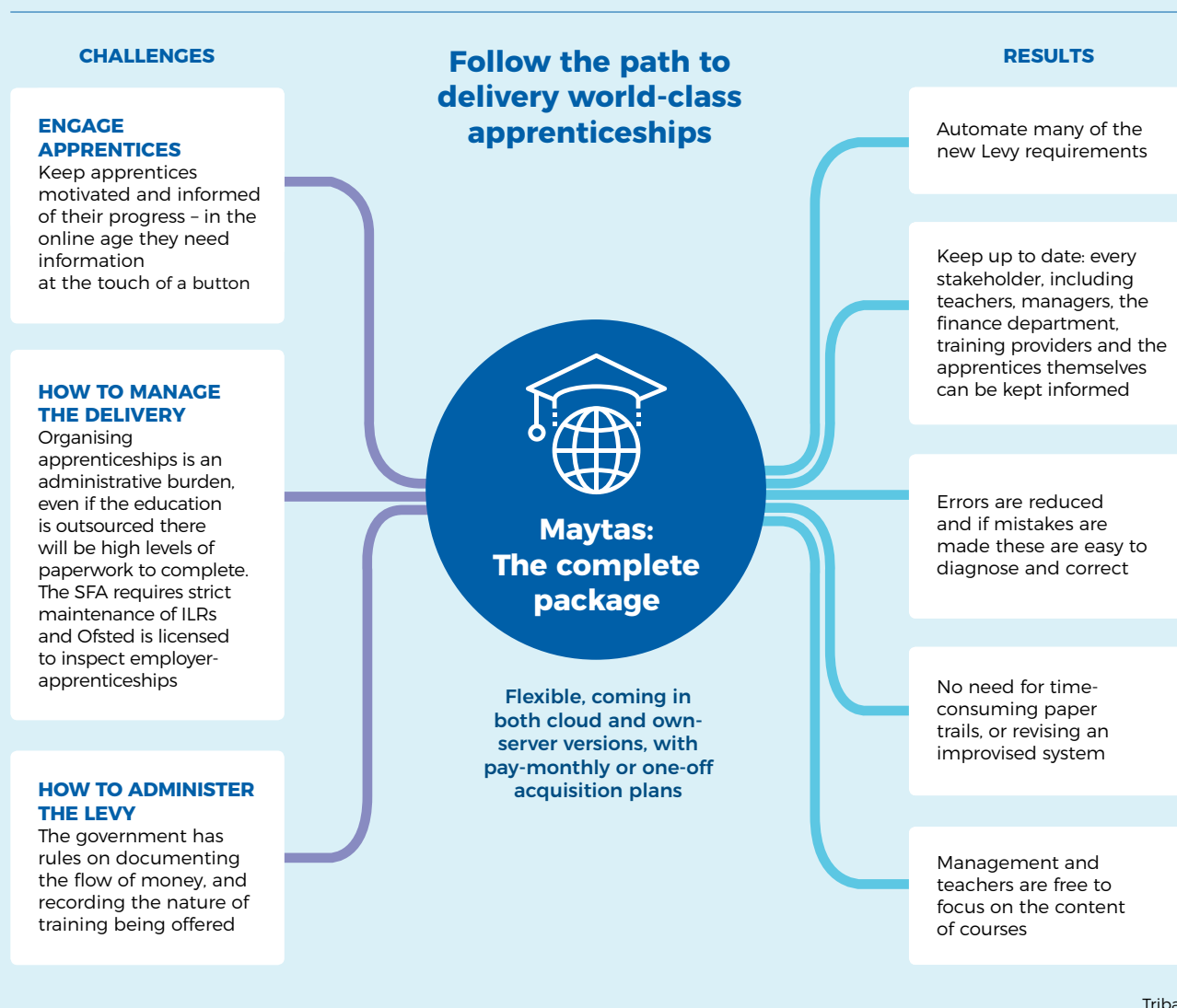
The second is how to manage the apprenticeships. Organising apprenticeships is an administrative burden. The Skills Funding Agency requires strict maintenance of Learner Records. The government also has rules on documenting the flow of money and recording the nature of training being offered. Even if the education is outsourced, there is still a lot of paperwork to complete.

The third is ensuring quality and being able to demonstrate this under inspection. Ofsted is licensed to inspect employer-apprenticeships, so companies need to be ready. A poor inspection outcome will not just be a black mark on their training provision, it risks damage to an employer's overall company brand.

As a result of these duties many employers are feeling worried by the new Levy. They needn't be. With the right software it is possible to automate many of the new requirements and every stakeholder, including teachers, managers, the finance department, training providers, and the apprentices themselves can be kept up to date. It is far preferable than the alternative: doing it by paper, or by an improvised system.

Take an employer like Leonardo, the multinational aerospace group. It is already an evangelist for apprenticeships, which act as a talent pipeline for its 8,500 workforce. Leonardo's apprenticeships were rated Grade 1 (outstanding) by Ofsted at the last inspection. The company offers around 200 apprenticeships and wanted to do this without employing a large team of MI managers, quality and compliance





managers, and data administrators. It also holds grants from the Skills Funding Agency and Skills Development Scotland, who need proof of how their money is spent.

To run apprenticeships efficiently Leonardo implemented a software solution from Tribal Group called Maytas – a complete package designed for the administration of apprenticeships.

Maytas offers an intuitive interface for the entry of all relevant information. It automatically prepares data for submissions to oversight bodies, such as the Skills Funding Agency and Ofsted. Apprentices can log on remotely to track their progress, look at calendars and see who to talk to. There are in-built feedback functions, so courses can be refined and improved. The system also manages the new Levy, creating an audit trail. By using a tailor-made system errors

are reduced and it is clear where data needs to be added. If there are mistakes it is simple to diagnose the fault and make corrections.

The management at Leonardo is left free to concentrate on what it does best, deliver world-class training to its learners, rather than bureaucracy.

Southampton Football Club uses Maytas to administer its unique apprenticeship scheme. With potentially tens of millions of pounds-worth of talent in incubation the club needs the most transparent and clear oversight possible.

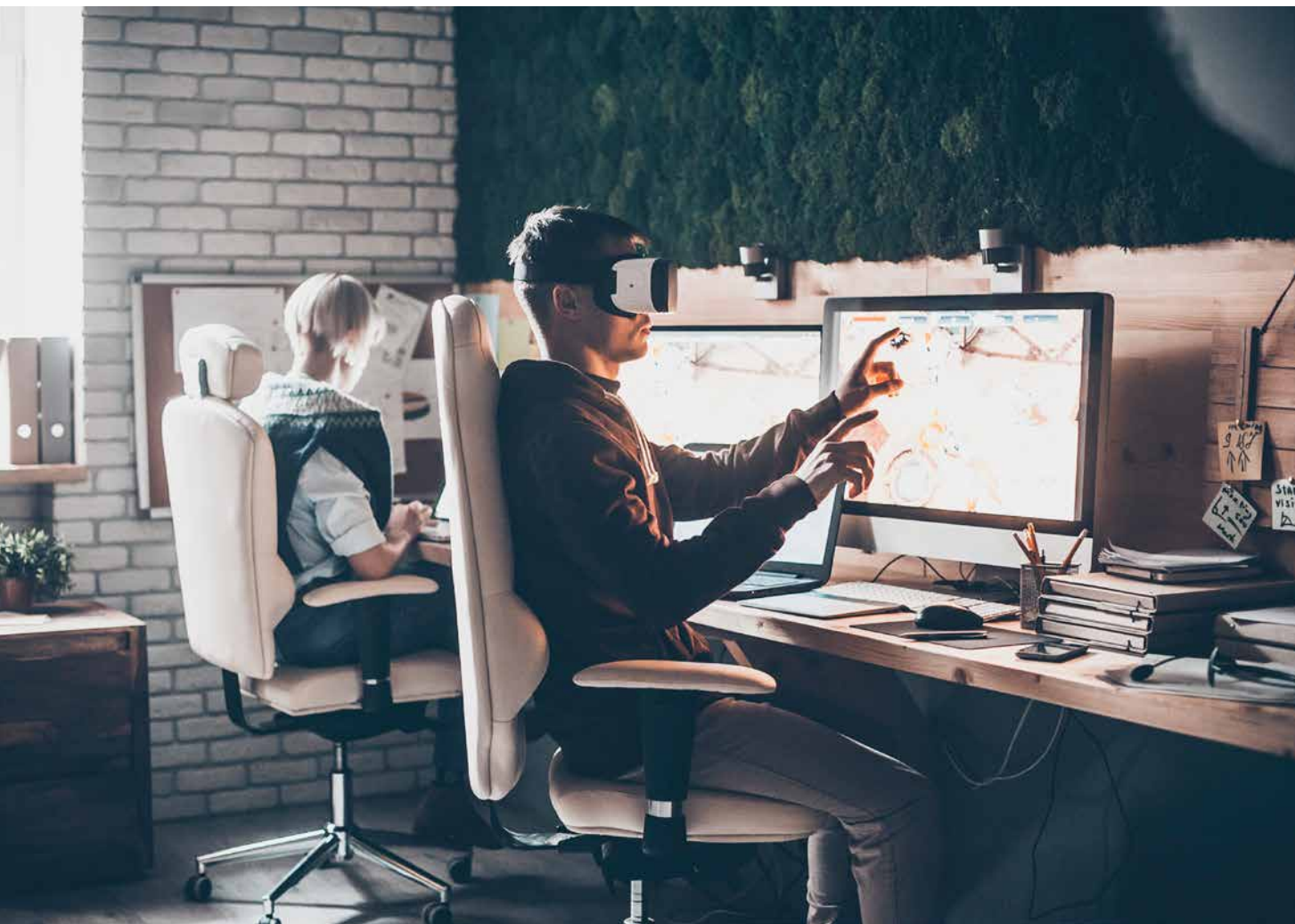
Employers can be reassured there is help on hand. Before implementing a software solution, Tribal Group begins with a consultancy session to determine the requirements of every client. There's tuition in whatever format is preferred: face to face, classroom based or via webinar. The

There's tuition in whatever format is preferred: face to face, classroom based or via webinar

Maytas package is flexible, coming in both cloud and own-server versions, with pay-monthly or one-off acquisition plans.

The goal is to give employers the tools they need to deliver world-class apprenticeships. With the right mindset and the right technology, the new Levy is a wonderful opportunity for British industry.

To find out more about apprenticeships and the Levy, why not download our handy guide at: info.tribalgroup.com/apprenticeship-reform



Learning outside the classroom

From cloud computing to virtual reality, technology is transforming the traditional learning path

EDTECH

Kim Thomas

New technologies such as cloud, tablets and virtual reality have the potential to transform education, putting students in charge of their own learning. Already some teachers have adopted the “flipped classroom”, in which students direct their own learning at home, while class time is used for answering questions. But could these technologies replace the traditional classroom altogether?

Free cloud offerings such as Google’s G Suite for Education have made it easy to share information. Teachers can store resources – newspaper articles, instructional videos, podcasts – on the cloud, enabling students to access that information from home, in a café or even on the bus, while students can file assignments that teachers can instantly access and mark.

As Matt Britland, director of ICT at the Lady Eleanor Holles School, says: “Just being able to work from anywhere with a web connection is really powerful.”

Mobile technology, particularly in the form of tablets, is also helping to displace the idea that learning has to take place in the classroom. A 2014 report on learning

The broader trend is away from traditional classroom-based teaching: online distance learning has mushroomed in recent years

technologies in further education from the Association of Colleges and the Association for Learning Technology found that tablets were “an excellent technology for enriched pedagogy”, citing their benefits in “interactive lectures, field trips and wet labs”.

Equipped with cameras and audio recorders, tablets are also ideal vehicles for the increasingly popular e-portfolio: a method of recording and showcasing a student's work, whether it's a video of the student carrying out a practical task, such as cutting hair, or observations from their placement employer.

Widespread adoption of mobile technology is hampered by cost, however. As John Traxler, Professor of digital learning at the University of Wolverhampton, points out: “Once you get past compulsory education you've got to address the question of equity: tablets are expensive, so either you ask students to bring their own, with the result that only the rich students do, or the institution buys them and it can't afford to.”

But the broader trend is away from traditional classroom-based teaching: online distance learning has mushroomed in recent years, enabling students to gain both work-based qualifications and full degrees without attending a physical institution. While that's harder to achieve in areas where students need to acquire practical skills, technology can still add value.

Prospects College of Advanced Technology in Essex, for example, has installed a virtual reality suite that will enable its construction students to practise new skills, such as carrying out electrical installation in a virtual setting before moving on to trying them in a real-world setting.

Although the classroom-based model has lasted for hundreds of years, web-based, mobile and virtual technologies are taking learning in a new direction. We could finally be about to see the end of classroom-based teaching, and the dawn of an era of independent learning.

Cutting-edge innovative technologies in use

01 Cloud computing

Free educational suites from Google and Microsoft enable schools to store other files on the web, so that students and teachers can collaborate inside the classroom and out.

02 Virtual reality

Students can immerse themselves in a learning experience, whether it's putting themselves in the place of an Apollo astronaut as he lands on the moon or walking round a virtual building site identifying safety issues.

03 Tablet computers

A tablet's versatility means students can learn anywhere at any time – whether it's taking photos on a field trip, videoing themselves practising a talk or using a language app to hone their speaking skills.

04 Augmented reality

AR software enables students to point their mobile camera at an object and see a video or animation superimposed on the screen, bringing alive everything from history to car maintenance.

05 Simulations

Game simulations enable students to learn practical skills by doing them, but without risk: particularly useful in higher education for students of medicine, dentistry or optometry.

06 3D printing

3D printers enable students to create prototypes for their design ideas, objects for use in science experiments, or solid geometric shapes to help them understand mathematical concepts.

07 Wearables

Wearable headsets work with virtual reality to immerse students in an experience, while wearable cameras can capture learning – and headbands that measure brain signals – let teachers know if students are distracted.

08 Video-conferencing

Tools such as Skype and FaceTime expand students' horizons by enabling them to talk to students and teachers in other countries – or have face-to-face consultations with an expert.

09 Virtual laboratories

These allow students to run experiments online, and repeat them if they get them wrong – useful for students who are home-taught or who want to revise what they've learnt in college.

10 Robots

The telepresence robot teacher, which has been piloted in the US, is a 1.2-metre stand with a screen and a camera: the remote teacher can see, hear and talk to their students.