



# Train to Gain is boosting Hertfordshire businesses

## INSIDE

### The Hertfordshire Consortium

The Hertfordshire Train to Gain Consortium is made up of experienced training providers who offer a flexible, dynamic and responsive approach to employer needs.

### Apprenticeships that work

Apprenticeships give you the chance to develop the skilled staff you need, with training in 80 different sectors. No matter whether your business is large or small, your company could be one of thousands across England that have benefited from training an apprentice.

### Training in the workplace

Businesses no longer need to worry that training involves too much time out of the workplace. Train to Gain allows the training to be delivered flexibly and at a time and place to suit your needs.

### How training can benefit your business

Find out how training and developing your workforce not only helps with staff retention, motivation and morale, but also how it can increase customer satisfaction, reduce costs and boost productivity.

### Train to Gain – a huge opportunity for Hertfordshire businesses

Take advantage of everything Train to Gain has to offer – and be involved in one of the best initiatives for businesses in Hertfordshire.

>Businesses in Hertfordshire are benefiting from a brand new service that makes sure their staff have the right skills to do the best job.

Train to Gain, an exciting new service led by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), has been helping local businesses to get the training they need to succeed. This innovative service enables employers to train their staff and improve business performance against a back

drop of the significant skills shortages that continue in the East of England and affect an organisation’s competitive edge.

LSC research shows that, here in Hertfordshire, 201,000 adults are qualified to below Level 2, equivalent to five good GCSEs and the benchmark of a minimum standard of education needed to get on in working life.

Train to Gain helps businesses identify and undertake the training they and their employees need. Skills and training advice is FREE and impartial.

A skills advisor works closely with the employer, training provider and staff to make sure everything goes smoothly. Specially selected training providers are sourced for each employer – and some organisations are finding that they are eligible for subsidised training courses. All training is tailored to suit the needs of the business and offered at a convenient time and place.



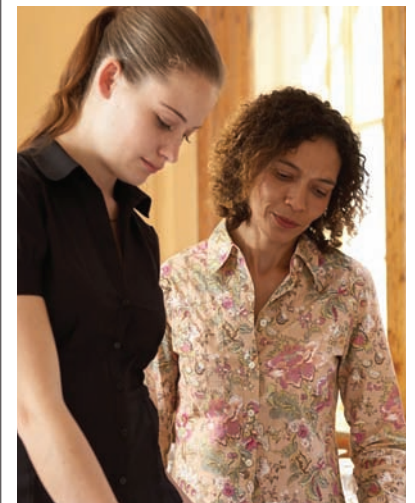
## Skilled staff equals successful business

As part of Train to Gain, business solutions @hrc has helped Broxbourne Borough Council develop the skills of their staff by getting them to complete an NVQ qualification in areas such as IT, customer service and business administration alongside their normal job role.

Jayne Elmes, Benefits Officer, started the IT NVQ with limited computer skills. Once mastering the basics of the standard computer packages, Jayne was able to produce documents to a high standard, excelling to a higher level of competence compared to when she started the training.

Kim Charles, Personnel Officer, comments “We have been working with business solutions @hrc to deliver Train to Gain vocational skills in our workplace since April 2007. It has benefited the organisation by enhancing skill levels and giving recognition to staff for the work they do; improving their skills, confidence and motivation. It has been easily delivered alongside work preventing the need for travel and with very little disruption to staff productivity.”

**“The scheme provided us with the perfect training solution.”**



## HELPING YOUR BUSINESS TO SUCCEED

For a free Organisational Needs Analysis to identify what skills your business needs now and in the future or for more information contact the Hertfordshire Consortium on 01462 650260, or email [ttg@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:ttg@nhc.ac.uk).

# Benefitting from government funding for training

> Johnson Matthey, an international speciality chemicals company based in Royston, is delighted to have been able to take advantage of the government's Train to Gain programme

Johnson Matthey has operations in over 30 countries and employs around 7,800 people. Its products are sold across the world to a wide range of advanced technology industries

The company has continued to develop its technology for almost 200 years, demonstrating the company's ability to maintain world leadership by adapting constantly to rapidly changing customer needs.

In Royston, Johnson Matthey has taken advantage of the government's Train to Gain programme and elected Oaklands College to refine the skills of its workforce and give them the chance to gain a Level 2 qualification.

The company runs a successful internal training programme and fully realises the benefits of ensuring staff are properly trained.

Alastair Shulver, a Training Supervisor at Johnson Matthey, explained: "We have a very highly skilled workforce and undertake regular

internal training. Through the Train to Gain programme and Oaklands we were able to take advantage of government funded training in order to provide staff with nationally recognised Level 2 qualifications."

Twenty two of Johnson Matthey's staff began the NVQ Level 2 in Manufacturing Operations in April. Employees were supported through their studies by a tutor from Oaklands College who visited the company's offices once a week.

Now that the first group has undergone the training, Alastair is finding that more employees are expressing an interest.

He said: "Overall I have found that everyone is really enthusiastic and motivated about the training."

The second round of Johnson Matthey staff is scheduled to commence training in the coming weeks.



**Train to Gain can improve business productivity and competitiveness by ensuring staff have got the right skills to do the best job. The service ensures that businesses get the best return for their investment in training.**

## How training can benefit your business

> Workforce development is all about improving your bottom line by giving your employees training and development opportunities. Training and developing your workforce will benefit your business by:

### Retaining your staff and encouraging flexibility

Giving your employees access to new skills improves morale and leads to greater commitment from your workforce and more effective performance all round.

### Increasing your profits

Improved performance means improved levels of customer satisfaction, giving your business a competitive advantage.

### Reducing your costs

Employees who are skilled and motivated will work more effectively and in a more customer-focused way, saving you money.

### Improving your productivity

Increasing employee motivation will improve organisational performance.

## Have you considered Apprenticeships ?

> No matter how large or small your organisation, Apprenticeships give you the chance to develop the skilled staff you need. Your business could be one of thousands across England that have benefited from training an apprentice.



### Finding the right Apprenticeship

You need to look forward to keep your business ahead of the competition. Apprenticeships can help you do just that by developing the kind of people your business needs for the future.

Unlike many other training programmes, Apprenticeships ensure that young people have the practical skills to do the job. Apprentices learn through a combination of on and off the job education and training so you can ensure that they learn the skills that work best for your business.

Apprenticeships offer a fantastic range of training in 80 different sectors covering a huge range of subjects from health and social care to business administration.

They are designed by industry to ensure that the training is always relevant and is tailored to meet the needs of your sector, by people who genuinely understand what you do.

Apprenticeships focus on the whole job, not just individual skills and are available for young people aged 16-24 years.

### Apprenticeships are established qualifications you can trust

Keep your competitive advantage by training your people now and equipping them with the skills you need for the future.

**"Having been involved with the scheme since 1966, we know the benefits of employing apprentices. Not only does it bring enthusiastic 'can do' people into our workforce, it also allows us to contribute to our social responsibility towards youth employment."**

BT

### How to choose

There are two levels of Apprenticeship, the **Apprenticeship** and the **Advanced Apprenticeship**:

- **Apprenticeships.** These usually last at least a year and apprentices work towards a National Vocational Qualification at Level 2, Key Skills and in most cases a technical certificate.
- **Advanced Apprenticeships.** These usually last at least two years and apprentices work towards a National Vocational Qualification at Level 3, Key Skills and a technical certificate.

Your business can discuss Apprenticeship opportunities with the skills brokerage service or with a local training provider or college.

Why not look into Apprenticeships for your business? For more information, call **0800 387 326**.

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

# The Hertfordshire Consortium – best for business

> The Hertfordshire Train to Gain Consortium was created in June 2006 with the aim of bringing together experienced training providers who could offer a flexible, dynamic and responsive approach to the needs of employers.

## Who's in it?

The Hertfordshire Consortium is made up of 11 high-profile training providers and a number of sub-contractors who together can meet the exact training needs of Hertfordshire and the surrounding counties of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Essex.



**HERTFORDSHIRE CONSORTIUM**

## The Hertfordshire Consortium consists of over 11 Training Providers including:

- North Hertfordshire College
- Hertford Regional College
- Ridgmond Training
- West Herts College
- Industrial Training Services
- JemCare Training
- JHP Training
- M2 Training
- Oaklands College
- Opps Development
- Protech

**The consortium aims to be the provider of first choice for all employer training.**

*“The training is proving a tremendous success. The staff think it’s great and the benefits to the business are huge.”*

## Meet the Skills Brokers

> If you are frustrated by low productivity, demotivated staff, managers who don't have the skills to manage or you need some help in identifying the training needs of your business, the Train to Gain Skills Brokers are here to guide you.

Train to Gain Skills Brokers are independent organisations – The Consultancy Home Counties and East of England Brokerage Consortium. They provide a FREE and impartial service and will work with you to carry out a free business review and analysis to assess what skills your business needs now, and what it might need in the future, based on a clear understanding of your business goals.

In order to better understand your business, the Skills Broker will talk to you about your company's activities to date, the goals you

have for the future and the issues you are currently facing. They will also ask you about any training that you currently do, whether external or internal, and what processes you have in place to support this.

Once the Skills Broker has gained a good understanding of the business, they will identify with you the training or development needed to deliver the results you expect.

One of the aims of the Train to Gain service is to help you stretch your budget for training.

Your Skills Broker can recommend the best ways of funding your training, explaining all the funding options available to you. They can compare prices and benefits of training or tell you about available funding.

The role of the Skills Broker does not end once you have chosen a training provider. By involving the Hertfordshire Consortium or independent Skills Brokers in the planning of your business training, you will be saving valuable time which is often wasted ringing around training providers to see what they can offer.

Your Skills Broker may identify areas of development that you may not have identified yourself, as well as ways to make your money go further and ensuring that the training and development identified fits in with your business plan for the future.



Royde & Tucker is the leading UK manufacturer of door hinges, high security bolts, sash window fittings and double action pivots & emergency releases as well as sliding door gear, pocket door systems and Raven fire/smoke and acoustic seals.

Throughout its 75 year history the company has been recognised as being at the forefront of architectural ironmongery technology with a long-established reputation for high quality engineering, product design and innovation.

Shortly after relocating from Tottenham in January 2006, the company was contacted by Train to Gain with regard to a number of NVQ's being offered at Level 2. The opportunity to offer staff training resulting in a qualification delivered by a local provider on-site for free seemed something not to be missed, especially as the level being offered was ideal for their staff.

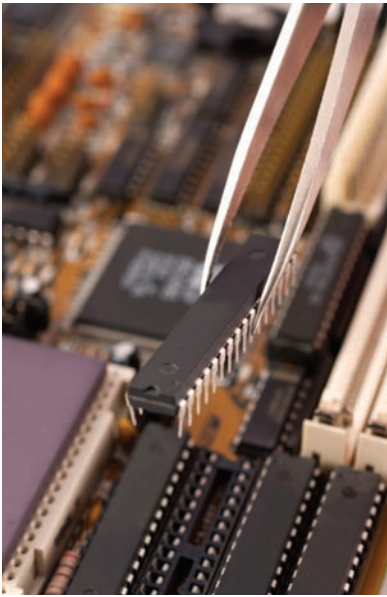
**“I now feel confident that those with supervisory responsibilities have the tools, understanding and confidence to tackle day-to-day issues in a professional and informed manner”**  
Ruth Hughes ,HR Manager

From the initial contact onwards it's been a rewarding and positive experience both for the company and the individuals involved. There are currently 4 members of staff undertaking either an NVQ in IT or Team Leading through North Hertfordshire College, and the support given throughout has been exceptional.

All of those undertaking the Team Leading NVQ were from the shop floor and many had no experience of undertaking formal qualifications before so, for many of them, it was a scary prospect. The tutors and support staff have transformed those involved into individuals who are now not only confident in their ability to gain qualifications but who are enthusiastic and motivated not only to develop themselves but also others within their teams.

The company now has supervisors and team leaders who are more confident and proactive and the added bonus of the training resulting in a formal qualification means customers can see that that Royde & Tucker is committed to employing and developing staff who are competent. This helps to raise the professional standing of the company in a highly competitive market and to reinforce its commitment to quality, not only in relation to its products but also to its staff.

**“The opportunity to undertake a qualification late on in my working life is great and has shown me I still have something to contribute”**  
Fernandes, Supervisor



Stevenage Circuits (SCL) manufactures high performance circuit board and delivers to over 20 countries worldwide.

With the help of Opps Training, ten of SCL's 100 staff have recently completed an NVQ Level 2 in Performing Manufacturing Operations. Using Opps' popular fast track model of delivery, the participants achieved their qualification within three months.

An initial half day workshop was delivered in-house to small groups of five.

Getting to grips with how the learning would take place and how the qualification would be achieved was the main aim of the workshop, but Opps' assessor Rubi Hall maximised the time by covering manual handling within health and safety.

Each participant built portfolios reflecting the importance of their roles within the organisation. Photographs and videos were used to shortcut written work while ensuring that both SCL's operational standards and the standards of the qualification were fully met. A Polish participant who was initially reluctant to complete the course was provided with extra help and was one of the first to achieve the qualification.

SCL will be looking closely at the overall impact of the training over the next few months. The impact on the individuals is already noticeable. Beverley Cording, Quality Manager has reported that participants are more assertive and responsive to new ideas for themselves and activities within the organisation. They have improved their understanding of the technology used to produce the circuit boards as well as how their products are used by customers.

Although the initial numbers of participants were small, Beverley believes that the training acted as a catalyst for change within the company as a whole.

Opps assessor Rubi has been dubbed a 'star' by SCL for the brilliance of delivery. She is now looking forward to proving that Opps can do it all over again for the next SCL participants.

# Training – can you afford not to?

> One of the main goals of the Hertfordshire Consortium is to engage employers in improving skills for employability and national competitiveness.

Thousands of employers - of all sizes - admit that their staff don't have the right skills needed for the future. Your staff need better skills than ever before for your business to succeed.

This is where Train to Gain and the Hertfordshire Consortium can help. The Consortium aims to be the provider of first choice for all employer training by :

- Delivering high quality, employer-led, learner centred training across all sectors to meet the specific training needs of organisations across Hertfordshire and the surrounding counties.
- Deploying the extensive resources of the Consortium to address the training needs of whole organisations through partnership and access to multiple funding sources.
- Delivering flexible training at a time and place to meet employer requirements and specific organisational objectives.
- Being flexible and responsive to different people's needs

Train to Gain can play a major part in addressing the significant skills shortages that continue to have a negative impact

on productivity and competitiveness. The range of government subsidised training and qualifications available through Train to Gain include Skills for Life qualifications, first full Level 2 qualifications, Apprenticeships and Advanced Apprenticeships.

**David Greer,**  
Director of Skills for Employers at the Learning and Skills Council says:

**"Skills training has never been more important for businesses with skills gaps costing a typical 50 employee business an estimated £165,000 in lost revenue each year."**

**To book an appointment with a Skills Broker, call the Hertfordshire Consortium on 01462 650260 now or email [ttg@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:ttg@nhc.ac.uk)**

## Industry leaders back Train to Gain

Bill Rammel MP, Minister of State for Higher and Further Education and Lifelong Learning was one of three guest speakers at a breakfast meeting held by Barbara Follett, MP for Stevenage at North Hertfordshire College's Stevenage Centre on Friday 25th January.

Over 60 local companies from a range of sectors attended the event, which focussed on adult skills and Train to Gain. Fintan Donohue, Principal of North Hertfordshire College spoke about the redevelopment of the Hitchin site in response to the skills needs of the county. He also spoke of the college's role as the lead college in the Hertfordshire Train to Gain consortium whose aim is to delivery high quality, employer-led, learner centred training across all sectors to meet specific training needs of organisations in Hertfordshire and surrounding counties.

Tim Hutchins, Chief Executive of the Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce also addressed the audience and spoke with enthusiasm about the successful employment of two apprenticeships at the Chamber of Commerce, highlighting the difference employers can make in improving skills in adults.



## Train to Gain – a huge opportunity for Hertfordshire businesses



Even without the benefit of research, I think we all instinctively know that the skills of the workforce is a major factor in determining whether businesses are competitive, productive and profitable.

In a rapidly changing world of globalisation, technological change and market turbulence, the need for higher and broader skills is all the greater if businesses are to continue to thrive as opposed to survive these changes.

This is why Train to Gain presents such an opportunity for Hertfordshire businesses; giving them the chance to prepare now for the growing pressures to change, rather than later when it might be too late. Just talking to the Hertfordshire Consortium or an independent Skills Broker, who can give you free impartial skills and training advice, will be the first step in the right direction. Any training will be tailored to the needs of your business and the training will be sourced from a provider of your choice.

Over 1,107 Hertfordshire businesses have benefited from Train to Gain and nationally over 85% of business are happy with the service they receive. I do hope you will take advantage of everything Train to Gain has to offer – and feel secure and confident that you are involved in one of the best initiatives for businesses in Hertfordshire.

**Liam Sammon**  
LSC Hertfordshire Area Director

## Training when and where it suits you

One of the great things about Train to Gain is that it allows the training to be delivered flexibly to suit individual businesses and the work patterns of their employees. All training can be tailored and customised to meet specific organisational objectives and includes:

Training in the workplace  
Distance learning  
Tutor-led learning  
Tutorials  
Assessment  
On-line training  
Book-based learning

This flexibility makes it so much easier for businesses to take advantage of the training now available to them.

**"Our experience of Train to Gain is very positive. We will certainly continue to use the scheme in the future."**

Train to Gain can improve productivity and competitiveness by making sure staff have the right skills to do their best job. Train to Gain also makes sure that businesses get the best return for their investment in training, with financial and practical support.



For more information or to book a free Organisational Needs Analysis to identify the skills your business needs now and for the future, **contact the Hertfordshire Consortium on 01462 650260 or email [ttg@nhc.ac.uk](mailto:ttg@nhc.ac.uk).**