

Plans announced to develop Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network in the East of England

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The Learning and Skills Council East of England has announced plans to develop a network of regional employers based on the successful national Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network model.

The challenge nationally is to grow from a base of 180,000 people starting an Apprenticeship across 80 different sectors to 250,000 or more a year by 2020. The LSC East of England is keen to work with the national network to identify and work with employers from across the region to meet this challenge, especially in priority sectors, and invite them to join the network. The regional network aims to be a catalyst to raise the awareness and profile of Apprenticeships and increase demand from employers which in turn will support the planned growth for the East of England and nationally.

Businessman, Martyn Price, Managing Director of Carpentry Management and Contracting based in Biggleswade, Bedfordshire, is a member of the national network and has agreed to chair the regional network. He said: "I am delighted to represent the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network in this regional effort. Increasing Apprenticeship take-up throughout the UK is of vital importance and the East of England presents real opportunities for joint LSC/employer work."

There are currently 16,337 young people on an Apprenticeship in the East of England with a choice of over 200 career paths in 80 different sectors of industry and commerce.

The regional network will support and compliment the national network and ensure the best use of resources and consistency of activity. Employers will need to be actively engaged in the Apprenticeship programme and be prepared to support any promotion of Apprenticeships.

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Note to Editors:

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Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network

The Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network (AAN) was launched in April 2006 to continue aspects of this work. The Network consists of high profile business people and is chaired by Sir Roy Gardner, Chairman of Compass Group plc.

The Network is responsible for promoting Apprenticeships to employers of all sizes with the aim of increasing the take-up and completions of Apprenticeships. It also aims to provide feedback to Government on issues which affect the quality and effectiveness of apprenticeships. Amongst its activities, the Network hosts an Annual Reception in the summer and awards Honorary Apprenticeships to vocational champions.

www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk

Apprenticeship Week

Apprenticeship Week commenced 25 February with a number of events celebrating the ongoing success of Apprenticeships and highlighting the benefits that Apprenticeships bring to the wider

economy, communities and to the individual. National research released this week in an independent survey of organisations that employ apprentices found that:

- 77% of employers believe Apprenticeships make them more competitive
- 76% say Apprenticeships provide higher overall productivity
- 80% feel that Apprenticeships reduce staff turnover
- 83% of employers rely on their Apprenticeship programme to provide the skilled workers they need for the future.

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands or call 0800 011 30 30 for more information.

Apprenticeships

- There are currently 250,000 apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England, with 16,337 young people on an Apprenticeship in the East of England at the moment. They can choose from over 200 career paths in 80 different sectors of industry and commerce.
Local LSC area breakdown:
Bedfordshire & Luton: 1,306
Cambridgeshire: 2,618
Essex: 4,306
Hertfordshire: 2,659
Norfolk: 2,562
Suffolk: 2,886
- Anyone aged 16 and above is eligible to complete an Apprenticeship.
- Apprenticeships provide individuals with a mixture of on and off-the-job training whilst being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their businesses bottom line through the tailored, relevant training of highly motivated individuals.
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
 - ⇒ 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
 - ⇒ 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate