

London's employers urged to take on an apprentice Call to action made at start of LSC Apprenticeship Week 25- 29 February

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) is urging employers across London to heed the results of new research into the business benefits of Apprenticeships. Timed to coincide with the start of Apprenticeships Week, 25-29 February, the research finds that 83 per cent of employers can rely on Apprenticeships to provide the skilled workers they need for the future. All of this week, the LSC will be showcasing the benefits that Apprenticeships bring to business in a series of events held across the Capital.

In an independent survey of organisations that employ apprentices, over three-quarters of respondents felt their Apprenticeship programme made them more competitive (77 per cent), while the same number believed Apprenticeships led to higher productivity. Eighty per cent felt that Apprenticeships increased the loyalty of their staff and reduced turnover.

David Hughes, Regional Director for London at the LSC commented:

“These survey results confirm the significant benefits that employers achieve from Apprenticeships, from increased competitiveness and overall productivity to improved staff retention and motivation. The impressive return on employers' investment shows that Apprenticeships are an excellent way to improve the bottom line; helping build the workforce employers need for future success. There are currently 130,000 companies reaping the benefits of Apprenticeships, and we are calling for even more employers to open their doors to apprentices.”

Skills Minister David Lammy MP said:

“The global economy is evolving rapidly and the jobs of yesterday will not be the jobs of tomorrow. Apprenticeships have a vital part to play in ensuring our nation’s competitiveness, which is why the government is committing more than £1 billion to increase the number of apprentice places by 2010/11.”

Megan Parry, LSC Apprentice of the Year in 2007 said:

“I think my apprenticeship will help me with my future career as it shows people that I am qualified, not just from a College perspective but from a work point of view too. I am attending College one day a week and earning money for the rest of the week, which is providing me with choices I never had before the course.”

Liza Okafor, Apprentice co-ordinator at Tube Lines, winner of the LSC Apprenticeship Award for Large Employer of the Year, said:

"Apprentices have become such an integral part of Tube Lines and our apprenticeships help keep us competitive in a tough recruitment market. Our programme has grown and become a vital part of delivering an outstanding Tube for London. We carefully look after our apprentices, nurturing this home grown talent, and in return, they come up with new, innovative ways of working to smooth the journeys of millions of passengers."

Events are being held across the Capital this week to celebrate the success of apprentices including:

- 25-29 February – Apprenticeships Week on LBC 97.3FM Drive-time show 4-7pm
- 26 February – Apprenticeships Summit at the Congress Centre
- 27 February – SkillsActive celebration of Sporting Apprenticeships at Twickenham
- 28 February – Apprenticeships Ambassadors Network/ BT event

To find out more visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk or Freephone 08000 150 400.

- ENDS -

Notes to Editors

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.

www.lsc.gov.uk/london

Independent research conducted by Populus on behalf of the LSC, of 204 respondents based in England who were responsible for Apprenticeship recruitment in their companies. Telephone interviews were conducted between 7 January and 6 February 2008.

Other findings include:

- 59 per cent report that training apprentices is more cost effective than hiring skilled staff, with 59 per cent believing Apprenticeships lead to lower overall training costs and 53 per cent feeling they reduce recruitment costs;
- In terms of the return on investment linked to Apprenticeships, 41 per cent say their apprentices make a valuable contribution to the business during their training period, while a further third (33 per cent) report apprentices add value within their first few weeks or even from day one;
- 57 per cent report a high proportion of their apprentices going on to management positions within the company;
- Over three-quarters of respondents expect Apprenticeships to play a bigger part in their recruitment policy in the future.

There are currently 240,000 apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England alone, across 80 different sectors of industry.

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