

## **SOUTH WEST GETS INTO TRAINING FOR APPRENTICESHIP WEEK**

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A week devoted to celebrating Apprenticeships and the benefits they bring to the South West economy has been launched today by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

With Gordon Brown wanting to see one in five young people on Apprenticeships within 10 years compared to the current one in 15, *Apprenticeship Week* (25 - 29 February) will aim to encourage more employers to take on apprentices by highlighting their importance to businesses, both through building careers for young people and increasing skills levels in the economy.

The Government's recent commitment to invest more than £11 billion a year into education, employment and training initiatives over the next three years includes a 2013 target to increase the number of Apprenticeship places on offer to 16 to 18-year-olds by 90,000.

Under new proposals, funding will also be specifically targeted at expanding Apprenticeships available to adults over 25, which will mean 30,000 additional places costing £90 million over the next three years.

Over the last decade, Apprenticeship places in the UK have risen by 220 per cent from 75,000 to nearly 240,000. The Prime Minister recently announced plans to increase this number to 500,000 by 2020 to help ensure Britain is equipped to

compete in the global skills race with the burgeoning economies of China and India.

In the South West, more than 42,000 young people are currently on programmes at 13,000 companies. Customer service and hairdressing sit just behind construction in the top three industries for Apprenticeships.

Malcolm Gillespie, South West Regional Director at the LSC, which funds the Apprenticeships programme in the region, said: “An Apprenticeship allows a young person to learn, work, earn and get qualified at the same time. Through relevant tailored training, it gives individuals a great start to their career by providing the opportunity to progress through Further Education.

“For employers, who are at the heart of the Apprenticeship programme, it helps to build a professional workforce. Young employees, equipped with the appropriate skills and qualifications, can make a positive impact on productivity, profitability and future competitiveness.”

Malcolm Gillespie added: “The Apprenticeship programme is a cost-effective way of introducing new talent to the business as well as transferring knowledge and experience. Furthermore, it has a positive impact on staff retention, with more than 60 per cent of employees who complete an Apprenticeship staying with their employers for five years or more.

“Apprenticeships are now more popular than ever, and completion rates are at an all-time. In continuing to work closely with training providers and colleges to encourage more companies to come on board, we will ensure the South West has a workforce of world-class standard.”

For more information about apprenticeships and Apprenticeship Week, visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk). Alternatively call the Skills Campaign helpline on 020 7413 3400 or email [skillscampaign@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:skillscampaign@lsc.gov.uk).

## ENDS

### Did you know?

- In the last 10 years, Apprenticeship places have risen from 75,000 to more than 250,000
- 100,000 young people completing their Apprenticeships each year
- There are more than 42,000 apprentices and over 13,000 companies offering Apprenticeship programmes in the South West
- The aviation industry has experienced the largest growth in Apprenticeships in the South West in the last year followed by vehicle maintenance and repair
- The achievement rate among apprentices is 63 per cent – more than double that of five years ago
- In the UK, there are more than 200 different Apprenticeships across 80 different industry sectors
- A young person who completes an Apprenticeship at Level 3 will earn £100,000 more during their working life than someone with a Level 2 qualification who does not do an Apprenticeship
- 28 per cent of people who complete Apprenticeships now hold management positions and a further 15 per cent are in supervisory roles. By comparison, only 25 per cent of people who didn't do an Apprenticeship are managers and 11 per cent are supervisors.

### Note to Editors

#### LSC

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for planning and funding high-quality vocational education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world-class

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standards. Our vision is that by 2010, young people and adults in England have the knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. Established in 2001, we work nationally, regionally and locally from a network of offices across the country. For more information visit: <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/westofengland>

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