

## APPRENTICESHIPS BOOST PREVENTS BUST

*Extended Apprenticeship programme helps businesses beat the recession*

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Apprenticeships have been identified as a key weapon to help combat the downturn and a cornerstone of the Government's skills strategy to boost the economy and increase UK competitiveness.

This week (**23 February – 27 February**) marks Apprenticeship Week, a national campaign to celebrate and recognise the essential role that Apprenticeships play in today's business world and to encourage more employers to enjoy the major benefits offered by Apprenticeships.

John Chudley, Regional Director of the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), commented: "For many firms finding the right employees with the right skills can be a challenge. Apprenticeships are designed by business for business, which means the training is always relevant and tailored to the needs of the industry. The fact that so many businesses are taking part in the Apprenticeship programme is testament to how successfully it is meeting employers' exacting demands and creating a valuable, skilled and willing workforce."

Just last month Gordon Brown announced an extra £140 million of funding to create an additional 35,000 new Apprenticeship places in response to concerns that the recession will make it harder for young people to get on to the jobs ladder.

Over the next decade, more employers will be encouraged to offer Apprenticeships with the aim of supporting one in five young people. By 2013 the number of places on offer to 16 to 18-year-olds will be increased by 90,000.

The Government has also committed investment of more than £11 billion per year into education, employment and training initiatives as well as expanding the Apprenticeship programme to include adults aged over 25.

To promote the benefits of Apprenticeships for business, the LSC South West is organising a series of business breakfast events in the South West for firms. Taking place in Taunton on 23 February, Plymouth on 24 February, Swindon on 2 March and Gloucester on 3 March, local employers currently involved in the Apprenticeships programme will talk about how Apprenticeships benefit their businesses, how the scheme works and the support they receive.

***For more information about apprenticeships and Apprenticeship Week, visit [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) or call 08000 150 600.***

**ENDS**

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**Did you know?<sup>1</sup>**

- In the last 10 years, Apprenticeship places have risen from 75,000 to more than 240,000
- 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

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<sup>1</sup> LSC figures, 2007

- 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

### **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 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>