

Press Release

New initiative gives apprentices advice straight from the horse's mouth

Issue number NAS004
Date of issue 1 September 2009

The National Apprenticeship Service is today launching a partnership with horsesmouth.co.uk to provide an informal online mentoring service for apprentices.

The new partnership will allow apprentices, and those interested in Apprenticeships, to receive informal one-to-one advice and support from existing and former apprentices in a safe, moderated online environment. It has been developed to provide an alternative support service for people who may lack role models or mentors, or feel less confident about accessing formal information sites.

Simon Waugh, Chief Executive at the National Apprenticeship Service, said the new service was a win win for people seeking advice on Apprenticeships and those who wanted to share their expertise.

"We are delighted to be able to offer this online mentoring and coaching facility - for apprentices, by apprentices. It provides a safe and secure platform for people who want to learn more about Apprenticeships and talk to someone who has 'been there and done that'."

"So far we have signed up 27 mentors, with many more to come."

Horsesmouth is a free to use social networking site for informal mentoring. It connects people seeking support and guidance on a wide range of issues - education, career, work, family and health - with others who are willing to give and share from the benefit of their own experiences. It is open to anyone over 16 and users of the site are anonymous.

This unique partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service will mean that people can get tailored advice and support. Used in conjunction with the range of careers information and guidance services available, the initiative will help people make better informed career decisions by tapping into the knowledge of those that understand their situation.

MT Rainey, founder of horsesmouth, said:

"Our partnership with the National Apprenticeship Service is an exciting opportunity to demonstrate how organisations can outreach to the growing community of horsesmouth users and provide specialist support. It allows us to highlight Apprenticeships to many thousands of people who may not otherwise engage with this option or with formal sources of information."

"It also allows the National Apprenticeship Service to use the goodwill and enthusiasm of successful apprentices as online mentors."

For further information visit the National Apprenticeship Service horsesmouth homepage at http://www.horsesmouth.co.uk/publisha.content/partners/partner_details.publisha?partnerid=33 or visit the website at www.apprenticeships.org.uk.

To find out more about Apprenticeships, visit apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600

Ends

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National Apprenticeship Service

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was launched in April 2009. Reporting to the Departments for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the service drives forward the Government's ambition for Apprenticeships, aiming to bring about significant growth in the number of employers offering Apprenticeships.

The NAS has total responsibility for the delivery of Apprenticeships including Employer Services, Learner Services, and Apprenticeship vacancies online. This online system enables individuals to search and apply for apprenticeship vacancies and allows employers, and their training providers, to advertise their vacancies to a wide range of interested applicants.

Horsemouth.co.uk

Horsemouth.co.uk is a social enterprise which aims to harness the power of Web 2.0 technology and the growth of user-generated content for 'pro-social' aims. Horsemouth uses these exciting technologies within a safe, hosted and moderated environment which is purpose built as a venue for informal online mentoring.

The site is created on the principle that everyone in life has something to give and gain. Horsemouth has a growing community of mentors willing and waiting to offer advice on virtually any topic and a site that allows users to view and contact mentors in a safe environment.

Safety is built-in to the horsemouth platform ensuring an environment where people can feel safe and comfortable. All mentoring conversations and relationships occur on a secure hosted platform and are professionally moderated by a leading internet moderation company. Contact details can only be exchanged with the approval of a moderator and the National Apprenticeship Service also requires secure mobile phone registration for mentors.