

# GTA England *news*

## August / Summer

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## The Skills Landscape - All Change?

**GTA England Positioning Statement; Tom Wilson, Chair, GTA England**

As we approach the main summer holiday period and a welcome break in the midst of all the current changes, we do have at least one firm marker in place in the appointment of the Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP as Minister for State. DfE have not as yet confirmed that his portfolio will include apprenticeships and skills, but we hope that this announcement is made soon. He is well regarded and has a strong interest and a background in apprenticeships so his appointment is very welcome.

As with all changes there are benefits for some on leaving the EU as the weaker pound may bring export benefits for some sectors. The impact on the home market may be a slowdown in investment, including investment in skills and we will need to wait for the autumn spending review to assess government's response.

In the mean-time, preparations are continuing for the introduction of the levy, though we are still waiting for publication of the additional employer and provider information and guidance, originally scheduled for the end of June. The economic case for investment in skills to drive productivity is all the more essential in times of economic uncertainty, and whether or not the levy goes ahead, the assumption must be that it will. GTAs will need to show they are ready and able to make it work.

Finally, the recently announced Sainsbury review and accompanying Skills Plan have been broadly, if not universally, well received. The Sainsbury review calls for:

- Skills to be grouped into 15 clusters and a single Awarding Body to be chosen, via competition, for each qualification or group of similar qualifications in each cluster.
- Vocational (or rather professional/technical) training to be given higher status
- Schools and colleges to encourage young people to make an equal choice between academic and professional/technical routes at 16 or 17 (either an apprenticeship or a college based course which must involve a substantial element of real work experience).
- An expansion of the Institute for Apprenticeships remit to include oversight of technical education

The call for professional and technical skills to have higher standing has been widely welcomed, including by the Board of GTA England. There are however, as discussions at the July GTA England Board meeting evidenced, some significant implications from implementing the plan as currently drafted, not least because of the lack of additional funding to implement these changes. We will also need to work hard to ensure that the current focus on colleges is replaced with a balanced view about who delivers apprenticeships; given that that 80% of apprenticeship are delivered by other providers, including the GTA network.

**You can view the Sainsbury report and the skills plan [here](#)**

## Welcome to new members

We are delighted to welcome Siemens UK to our network. Martin Hottass, UK Skills Partner, Siemens, said:

*'Siemens value the GTA model, being high quality and employer led, and wish to work with members in order to extend our own reach with supply chain companies and to extend capacity particularly regarding NVQ assessment through the network. Siemens is also keen to engage in members' services such as quality improvement activities including peer review and plans to play a full part in the network.'*

*We are also happy to impart sector knowledge and experience to members, particularly in the area of renewals technology.'*



## Strategic Investment in Skills – Wind Power & Mobility

### Composites Training Centre in Hull

- Provision of turn key training for start up of blade factory 800 colleagues to be trained over 2 years
- Training centre will move to provision of composites training for apprentices and WP employees post start up



### National Training Academy for Rail

- Joint venture between Siemens and National Skills Academy for Rail to deliver technical training for rail industry as well as apprenticeship training
- Located in Northampton, Siemens has capability to train on entire UK fleet

### Energy Service Training Centre

- Provision of technical training for Service Technicians for WP and PG (135,000 hours delivered in 2015)
- Apprenticeship delivery for PG PS, WP and customers



## Network Development Manager

I am pleased to announce that we have appointed Rebecca Rhodes to the Network Development Manager post.

Rebecca has joined us from her former role in the Skills Funding Agency as the Head of Apprenticeship Funding Policy, where she worked with BIS on the development of the apprenticeship trailblazer and levy funding model, led on the allocation of funding caps to the new apprenticeship standards and was responsible for apprenticeship and levy eligibility and funding rules.

Before joining the public sector, after working in business advice roles and setting up local partnerships of employers and providers, Rebecca spent the first half of her career as a training and development professional in the private sector including banking, service sector, and 5 years in manufacturing within GKN.

### Rebecca said

*'I am really pleased to be joining the GTA network with its strong reputation for quality at such a key time for apprenticeships. I hope to use my knowledge and skills to help the network prepare for the implementation of the levy, but also meet its wider objectives and I look forward to meeting members over the next few months!'*

## Timetable of future activities

If you would like to book onto any of the planned events please contact [kelly.white@gtaengland.co.uk](mailto:kelly.white@gtaengland.co.uk)

	August 2016	September 2016	October 2016	November 2016	December 2016	January 2017
<b>CEO Mentor Programme Session 1</b>	23/8/16					
<b>Levy Workshop</b>	10/8/16	29/9/16				
<b>Mentor Training Pilot</b>		6/9/16				
<b>Peer Review Training (2 day programme)</b>				<b>Day 1</b> 8/9/16  <b>Day 2</b> 9/9/16		
<b>Training Officer Training (2 day programme)</b>					<b>Day 1</b> 16/12/16	<b>Day 2</b> 17/1/17

## EVENT UPDATE

### Apprenticeships 4 England Silver award for Support to the Sector

In February we attended the Apprenticeship 4 England Awards event in London. The awards recognise training providers, apprentice employers and other organisations who have excelled in contributing to the development of apprenticeship programmes in England, and have shown commitment to the improvement of quality & skills development in the delivery of Apprenticeships. We were therefore delighted to receive a Silver award.

This was the last event that Craig Crowther attended prior to new role at UKTI – we thank Craig for all his help and wish him the very best for the future.



## EVENT UPDATE continued...

### House of Commons Education Select Committee Event 20 July

We arranged for our Apprentice of the Year finalists to give evidence on their experiences on applying for an Apprenticeship and also from their training programme' to the apprenticeship inquiry Sub Committee. The Sub-committee was set up in 2015 to look at the link between schools and education, and business and the economy. They are seeking evidence on apprenticeships, including the 3 million target and how government proposes to achieve this, the apprenticeship levy and other aspects of the programme. The information we shared in particular was to contribute to three themes:



- How apprenticeships are promoted and whether the apprenticeship process can be improved
- The quality of apprenticeship and how standards can be enforced
- Routes for progression for higher level qualifications for apprentices

In general, the evidence offered was a clear call for more IAG at schools and other points of transition. Although good experiences were reported, there was a theme of workplace mentors being better prepared to help in linking training to work, and not to forget levels 2 and 3 in the race for more higher apprenticeships. We took the opportunity to provide information about GTAs, and underline our desire to give evidence to the next stage of the process concerning infrastructure and funding.

Our apprentices, pictured with Neil Carmichael MP Chair of Education Committee (second from right) are:

- Henry Clark Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council achieved level 3 business admin through Training 2000;
- Ryan Cox from Majorlift Hydraulic Equipment Limited working towards level 3 engineering through Gloucestershire Engineering training;
- Ruby Udin from Rochdale Borough Council achieved level 3 business admin through Rochdale Training.

### Skills Fest

GTA England joined the panel of major employers on the second day of the festival to share thoughts with providers on how to work together and move forward with apprenticeship reforms. The chair, Kirstie Donnelly, managing director of City & Guilds, introduced representatives from Microsoft, TUI, Optimity, Nationwide and Hilton Group to discuss what is most important in putting apprenticeship reforms into practice.

Inevitably, discussions turned to Brexit and employers felt that this would be a trigger to addressing productivity in the UK and encouraged providers to see employers as part of the FE sector. Focusing on the apprenticeship levy, concerns were expressed about national employers coping with multiple supplier relationships, and preventing the process from becoming a bureaucracy. However, the employers highlighted that often, it is local providers who know the local markets and communities who are best placed to support employer needs. Wrapping up the debate, Mark advised providers to "listen, hear, respond and look to the long term".



**[Photo info From left: Kathryn Porter, director of youth strategy for Europe, the Middle East and Africa for Hilton Worldwide; Ann Brown, HR director at Nationwide; Mark Maudsley, chief executive of GTA England; Dominic Gill, apprenticeship lead at Microsoft; Anthony Impey, founder and chief executive officer of Optimity; Andy Smyth, development manager vocational learning at TUI Group; Kirstie Donnelly, managing director of City and Guilds.]**

## Members' Quality Days

### Review of quality improvement activities 2015-16

It is difficult to believe that another year has come and gone!

September 2015 saw the commencement of the new common inspection framework, which introduced short, 2 day inspections for those organisations who were previously rated as good".

This was the focus of the autumn improvement days.

Sessions on Prevent and channel, personal development, behaviour and welfare and British Values were discussed. We also looked at the first inspection reports to establish early trends. We observed that the shorter inspections certainly did not mean that inspection was less rigorous and the results from these inspections has meant that many providers have been judged as less than good - either because the short inspections were converted to the longer format, or because risk assessment prior to inspection led to full inspections being planned at the outset. Where providers deliver study programmes, the issues were attendance, behaviour and the lack of meaningful work experience.

Key findings for apprenticeship delivery were untimely achievements - often due to the lack of progress tracking mechanisms; failure to reinforce equality and diversity; Prevent and Channel, etc., embedding of English and maths and the quality of feedback given. As expected, however, GTA members fared rather better, with all providers who have been inspected this year receiving good or outstanding outcomes. Congratulations go to Rochdale training, STEGTA, for their very good outcomes, and especially to Hereford and Worcester for their outstanding judgement.

The summer improvement activities took advantage of the experiences of those providers, with excellent inputs provided on their experiences- thanks to Emma, Jill and John for those! Further inputs were given by AMRC at Sheffield University, Fairtrain, Gavin Smith (ILT project), Paul Mitchell (employer mentoring). Mark also provided an input on the CEO mentoring initiative planned for 2016 -17. Feedback from these has been excellent - Thanks for that. For me, these events are most successful when contributions are made by you, the members, on subjects of your choice. Please continue to provide feedback to us on what you wish to be on the agenda, and on what you are prepared to contribute.

### Peer Review activities 2015-16

This year, peer reviews have been tailored to meet your needs. On this basis, we delivered a review for NLT training, with a half day update training session for their observers, followed by around two and a half days of teaching and learning observations, including joint observation with the newly trained observers. We also delivered training sessions to senior managers and to the board of governors on the new framework and the increased expectation of the part played by the governing body. Feedback from this event was extremely positive.

### JTL national peer review

In June this year a team of four peer reviewers (Paul Duerden - Training 2000, Ian Burns- Stockport training, Adrian Lawrence - MGTS and myself) carried out a national thematic review on apprenticeship and study programme training across the country. Although this was fairly challenging, as it was necessary to catch up on a daily basis by phone and email, the event was extremely successful and the reports that were produced were well received by the JTL senior management team, who felt that it was a valuable and worthwhile activity. Thanks especially to David Consterdine for the numerous organisational meetings prior to and during the review. Thanks also, for the great work done by Paul, Adrian and Ian who provided comprehensive and timely feedback (despite having "day jobs")!

### Activities planned for 2016/2017

So far, we are planning a peer review in the autumn term at MGTS - We will be looking for reviewers for this shortly - please contact Mark or myself if you would like to participate.

Please contact us if you would like to discuss how we could help you to review elements of your provision- or if you have training needs that we could assist with.

Finally, thanks to you all for your continued support. Have a wonderful summer and here's to a successful new year!



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