



all party parliamentary group on
apprenticeships

REPORT

2024 | 2025

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ABOUT THE APPG

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Apprenticeships is a cross-party group of MPs and Peers which provides a forum for parliamentarians and employers to discuss how to promote the role of high-quality apprenticeships.

The APPG aims to create a positive, constructive platform that builds a strong relationship with the Government and collaborates with them in developing and scrutinising policies that support the uptake of apprenticeships.

The key objectives of the Group include: raising awareness among parliamentarians and policymakers of the vital role apprenticeships play in the economy; communicating the significance of apprenticeship delivery as a way of enhancing UK productivity and social mobility; and supporting MPs and Peers to champion high-quality apprenticeships in communities, the education system, and workplace. Over the last ten years, the Group has heard from a wide range of stakeholders, ministers and their opposition counterparts, senior civil servants, industry voices and, most importantly, from apprentices themselves.

FOREWORD

As in politics more widely, the last 12 months have ushered in significant change across the UK skills ecosystem. With the incoming Government came a wide package of reforms designed to support and strengthen the UK's skills offer. These reforms are vital steps to ensuring that our skills infrastructure is adaptable, works for employers and providers, and is well-suited to the rapidly-changing labour market.

Apprenticeships enjoy the rare distinction of being a point of consensus across the political divide. From right to left, all parties are committed to the mantra that we need more and better apprenticeships, of high quality in all sectors of industry and in all locations.

Where there is less agreement is how that can be best achieved, and so apprenticeships have been a critical feature of the new government's skills policy since coming to office last year.

We welcome the fact that Skills England is now operational, and look forward to engaging with them further as we move to the implementation phase from September. Beyond Skills England, there are a wide array of reforms yet to be implemented – not least the reformed Growth and Skills Levy, in addition to establishing how skills funding will operate in the context of devolution and local government reform.

As Co-Chairs of the Apprenticeships APPG we welcome the huge interest in our meetings, making the APPG one of the best attended in Parliament and remain committed to fostering engagement with industry. We will continue our work to promote best practice for apprenticeships policy, bringing diverse and experienced voices to the table and building on that cross-party consensus on this most vital of education debates.

Apprenticeships are not just a tool for skills development – they are the cornerstone of social mobility and long-term prosperity.

Over the last year, we have been hugely encouraged by the level of positive engagement from government, civil servants, MPs and Peers, and apprenticeship providers. Our programme has been positive, constructive, and forward-looking, and we are grateful for the support of critical stakeholders as we work together to reform skills and apprenticeships.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our fantastic sponsors for their ongoing support of the APPG. Without them, our programme of engagement would not be possible. They are the ones on the front line, designing and delivering apprenticeships across the country and transforming the lives of thousands of learners every single day.

As we look ahead to next year, our focus will be on ensuring that the Government's skills programme is implemented effectively, working on a cross-party basis to encourage lively, well-rounded debate on critical aspects of reform.

If you would like to get involved in the work of the APPG, please contact the secretariat at: **ApprenticeshipsAPPG@connectpa.co.uk**.



Andrew Pakes
MP for Peterborough
Co-Chair of the APPG on
Apprenticeships



Toby Perkins
MP for Chesterfield
Co-Chair of the APPG on
Apprenticeships

RECOMMENDATIONS

As we look ahead to 2025-26, the APPG makes the following recommendations to Government:

1

Ensure an employer-led system. Apprenticeships only happen when people are employed, and that requires employers. They should be at the forefront of making decisions about the skills needs of their workforce. Skills England should prioritise employer engagement and ensure recommendations for reform are co-designed with employers. This is essential to achieve the Government's ambitions for economic growth.

2

Ensure Skills England clears the apprenticeship standards backlog. There is a significant backlog of apprenticeship standards which are overdue for review and approval, this needs to be tackled and prioritised expeditiously so that people can access opportunities and employers can have confidence in the portfolio of standards.

3

Introduce further flexibility, such as modularisation, to improve take-up and completion of apprenticeships. The Government should respond to employer calls for greater flexibility in the system and explore modularised apprenticeships. A modular approach would use content from approved apprenticeship standards to maintain the high-quality bar of existing IfATE standards, but enable people to benefit from personalised skills training. This provides an alternative solution to shorter apprenticeships and would likely improve completion rates.

4

Introduce a new UCAS-style system for unsuccessful applicants. The APPG urges the Government to explore a UCAS-style system for those apprenticeships applicants who are unsuccessful in securing a job with a large employer. Organisations, and especially smaller companies, can struggle to fill apprenticeship vacancies. It would be of real value to the young people seeking apprenticeships and to employers with vacancies, to explore strategies that can offer and deliver apprenticeships to those that seek them. These strategies would connect interested applicants with demand.

5

Increase transparency around how Levy funds are spent. Investment in apprenticeships is popular with the general public: recent polling has shown that increasing funding for apprenticeships is a top education priority for the general public. However, a lack of transparency over how funds are spent has damaged the credibility of the Apprenticeships Levy in the eyes of employers. The success of the Growth and Skills Levy will hinge on amending this approach. DfE should provide further clarity on how Levy funds are reinvested back into the skills system.

6

Produce an SME Apprenticeships toolkit. SME employers are the lifeblood of the economy. The Government should produce a practical toolkit for SME employers, enabling them to recruit, train and retain apprentices seamlessly. Many smaller employers do not have extensive HR functions and without simplification, the administrative burden is too great for many, denying opportunities to learners.

CASE STUDY ADA, THE NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR DIGITAL SKILLS



Ada, the National College for Digital Skills, is dedicated to harnessing tech as a tool for positive social mobility. Their mission is to educate and empower the next generation of diverse digital talent. Since 2016, Ada has been working to bridge the gap between education and employment. Their unique approach combines rigorous academic learning with intensive pastoral and employability skills support, empowering students to achieve remarkable outcomes.

Across their London Victoria and Manchester Ancoats campus, they have 363 apprentices currently enrolled on Higher and Degree Level Apprenticeship programmes across five disciplines: software development, data analytics, tech consultancy, cyber security and business analysis, working with a wide range of SMEs and corporate organisations such as PwC, Bank of America, Deloitte, ClearScore, Just Eat, Capita, MHRA, Booking.com and Salesforce.

89% of apprentices complete their apprenticeship. Over 60% of their teaching is completed in person and 97% of apprentice alumni are in permanent aspirational employment. This work-integrated model is proven to deliver value early – Ada apprentices contribute to digital transformation, modernisation projects, and the development of in-house capability within their first year.

Ada's programmes have a 96% retention rate compared to an industry average of 68%. Ada provides full wraparound support for line managers in addition to their learners having their own dedicated skills coach. Ada leads the sector in diversity, with 45% women and non-binary apprentices, 64% from minority ethnic backgrounds which ultimately allows these learners access to the sector where traditionally they aren't represented.

"At ClearScore, we've always believed that talent can come from anywhere – and our partnership with Ada, the National College for Digital Skills, has become one of the most important ways we bring that belief to life. Over the past few years, we've worked closely with the team at Ada to hire and support a growing number of software engineering apprentices, and the experience has been nothing short of transformative for our business."

The team at Ada has helped us shape a robust, meaningful apprenticeship programme. They've offered strategic advice to help us align our internal training and rotations with the academic requirements of the Digital and Technology Solutions Professional degree.

But perhaps most impressive has been the calibre of the apprentices themselves. The candidates we've met through Ada are some of the most motivated, curious, and capable early-career technologists we've ever worked with. These young professionals come to us with not just technical knowledge, but a real hunger to learn, grow, and contribute meaningfully from day one. Their ability to pick up complex concepts, work well in teams, and take ownership of real-world projects so early in their careers is a testament to the preparation and mindset Ada helps instil. In a competitive industry where great engineering talent is hard to find – and even harder to grow – our partnership with Ada has given us a pipeline of high-potential individuals who are helping to shape the future of our technology teams. We wholeheartedly recommend Ada to any company serious about building meaningful, diverse, and future-proof early careers programmes in tech."

Angela Piergiovanni, Talent Acquisition Partner,
ClearScore



CASE STUDY

BABCOCK INTERNATIONAL



As a people business, Babcock's employees are their most valuable asset. That's why they are investing heavily in their apprenticeship programmes, focusing not only on Early Careers entry routes but also the upskilling of existing employees. They currently have 1,273 apprentices on programme across the UK, utilising the full spectrum of apprenticeships, from Level 2 to Level 7, and are very proud of a 92% achievement rate – 32% higher than the national average across all sectors.

This year, they have had their largest ever annual intake of c.900 early careers employees, creating exciting opportunities for these new employees to build rewarding, long-term careers with Babcock. The company plans to double the number of early careers employees by 2027, helping to support its ambitious growth plans. Babcock is also investing by making time available to over 300 apprentices to enable them to develop their skills, in addition to those already undertaking technical apprenticeships. The estimated value to the wider economy of this time spent developing skills is c.£23million, demonstrating the huge value apprenticeships have to the UK.

Their sites in Plymouth, Rosyth, and Clyde have the highest concentration of apprenticeships, with more than half of their total numbers in these areas, demonstrating the regional value of apprenticeships to the UK skills base. The uptake of apprenticeships continues to grow year-on-year in line with business demand and the desire to upskill existing staff, as well as to maximise apprenticeship levy usage. They continue to launch new apprenticeships each year across multiple Babcock functions, disciplines and sites, with a further eight new programmes planned for September this year.

Babcock is keen to appeal to as broad a base of applicants as possible, including those who may need additional support to start their career. For those that might not yet meet Babcock's apprenticeship requirements, last year saw the launch of an innovative pre-apprenticeship scheme in Clyde. The programme is focused on supporting those in socially deprived areas to access apprenticeships in the sector and is being delivered in partnership with West College Scotland. Its objective is to increase social mobility and diversity, as well as give Babcock access to a broader range of talented young people. At the end of the year-long programme, those taking part are guaranteed an interview for a Babcock modern apprenticeship.

The 2024 cohort saw 90% of those who completed the course successfully offered a modern apprenticeship. The 2025 cohort, with double the number of students who attended the previous year, had a similarly successful achievement rate of 87% and, importantly, a 10% take up of females. Building on the success of the pre-apprenticeship programme to date, it has been expanded further across other sites around the UK.

In Devonport, Babcock has also been looking at recruitment tools and recently piloted the use of gamification as a modern, inclusive tool, which allows players to demonstrate various skills through a fun platform with mini games contained within it. This inclusive approach allows hiring teams to assess candidates' suitability for programmes through a selection tool aimed at a different demographic than their usual apprenticeship recruits. Babcock is delighted to currently have 18 students now completing a pre-apprenticeship programme as a result of this innovative recruitment tool.



SESSION ONE: THE GOVERNMENT'S VISION FOR APPRENTICESHIPS (DECEMBER 2024)

Our first session of the Parliament welcomed Rt Hon Baroness Smith of Malvern, the Skills Minister, to set out the Government's vision for apprenticeships reform.

The Minister talked about the importance of a well-functioning skills system in helping to deliver the Government's missions. She emphasised that in addition to providing opportunities for learners, better apprenticeships would enable the Government to rebuild the NHS, meet its clean energy targets, and ultimately to grow the economy.

The Minister suggested that the skills system is presently letting down too many people. Since 2015-16, there has been a nearly 40% drop in apprenticeship starts, with only 4% of people in England taking on a level 4 or 5 apprenticeship. Moreover, she added, the UK is far behind European and Canadian counterparts, where the figure is around 34%. She also stated that the UK has 7.5 million working age adults who lack basic digital skills.

The Minister said one of her driving principles was to help foster a business culture where employers support apprenticeships and break down the barriers to growth. This would be achieved by close coordination between the Department for Education and the Industrial Strategy Advisory Council, who at that time had been tasked with drafting a nationwide industrial strategy with priority growth areas. In a similar vein, the Minister said that the Migration Advisory Committee is well placed to identify in which sectors we need an improved domestic skills pipeline.

The Minister also generously gave time for an extensive Q&A session, which gave parliamentarians and other attendees a chance to scrutinise the Government's reform package directly.



CASE STUDY

BAE SYSTEMS

BAE Systems is the largest defence, aerospace, and security company in the UK and is the largest supplier to the UK Ministry of Defence. The Company operates across the air, land, sea, space, and cyber domains, designing, manufacturing, and integrating, equipment, technologies and services. In the UK, they build submarines, warships, and some of the world's most advanced military aircraft.

Apprentices are critical to the Company's talent pipeline and BAE Systems is committed to delivering outstanding apprenticeship programmes which supercharge skills capabilities and meet workforce requirements. Apprenticeships are fundamental to meeting current and future skills needs including the requirements of new defence programmes like the AUKUS and Dreadnought submarines projects, and the Global Combat Air Programme's Tempest aircraft. These new programmes will be delivered from 2030 and beyond.

Since 2020 and by the end of 2025, BAE Systems will have invested ~£1 billion in education and skills programmes with around £230 million invested in 2024 alone. The Company's UK businesses recruited 1,263 apprentices in 2024, employing around 4,600 in total, equivalent to 10% of the UK workforce. This year, BAE Systems will recruit a further 1,200 apprentices.

Apprentices are trained at bespoke academies and training workplaces at BAE Systems, with an emphasis on building skills and creating career pathways for life. Care is taken to offer pastoral and wellbeing support to all trainees. Apprenticeships deliver opportunity and drive social mobility in the regional communities where the Company operates. This impact is further amplified by supplier companies to BAE Systems, with many of the Company's 5,800 suppliers offering apprenticeship programmes.

BAE Systems offers around 60 apprenticeship pathways at a range of levels, providing a flexible way of meeting STEM skills and business requirements. Two-thirds of apprenticeships offered are at Levels 2/3 and one third are degree apprenticeships or above. Of the 2024/5 intake, 84% of roles were within engineering and manufacturing (88% in 2025). Apprentice achievement is >90% (2020-2024), with retention ranking at >90% three years post completion.

BAE SYSTEMS

Apprenticeships at BAE Systems focus on the importance and priority of safety at a personal and organisational level. The training programmes deliver Suitably Qualified Expert Personnel (SQEP), essential to operating in highly technical and regulated safety-critical environments. Opportunities exist for progression to the highest level; currently the Managing Directors in BAE Systems' Air and Submarines businesses began their careers as apprentices. The Company was ranked 2nd in the Apprentice Top 100 Employers 2025 listing by the Department of Education.

Apprenticeships are integral to helping to build greater diversity within BAE Systems' workforce and in addressing social inequality. From a gender perspective, the Company has moved from 5% of apprentices being female 10 years ago to 30% of our intake in 2022-2024, including craft trades where female representation is typically lowest in our sector. Over 60% of recruits are in the north of England, with around 30% being from the top 3 deciles of disadvantaged communities in 2024.

Recruiting from local communities supports workforce well-being and satisfaction, leading to strong retention of high calibre people. Last year, the Company marked 10 years of collaboration with Movement to Work. Through this initiative, BAE Systems has provided more than 1,000 placements for young disadvantaged and unemployed people, translating into over 600 positive outcomes of which more than 300 progressed to an apprenticeship/job with the Company. The other 300 progressed to a job with an alternative employer or into education.



BAE Systems in the UK received nearly 31,000 applications for 1,200 roles in 2025. In order to better support those apprentice applicants who were good but were not successful, the Company partnered with UCAS in 2024/5 to create a new landing page that matched them to other live apprenticeship opportunities.

CASE STUDY

COACH CORE FOUNDATION



Coach Core Foundation is an award-winning education and employment charity that helps young people from disadvantaged backgrounds make long-term positive changes in their lives. Its 15-month sports apprenticeship programme combines hands-on experience, accredited qualifications, and personalised mentoring. It supports young people who often feel excluded from traditional pathways, giving them a route into meaningful work and a brighter future.

Independent research from the University of Bath found that Coach Core's model helps economically inactive young people reconnect with learning and work, often for the first time in years. By offering local placements, practical training, and consistent mentoring, Coach Core creates an environment where apprentices can thrive in their own communities, building skills, confidence and local networks.

This wraparound approach is delivered through a bespoke partnership with Lifetime Training, one of the UK's leading apprenticeship providers. Together, they have developed a delivery model that combines high-quality vocational training with one-to-one support that reflects the diversity and individual needs of each apprentice.

Since launching, Coach Core has granted over £3.5 million to employers to help them support young people into meaningful jobs. The sport, leisure, and physical activity sector is rich with opportunity, offering the transferable skills and flexibility that young people are increasingly seeking.

In the last three years:

- 43% of apprentices came from the top 30% most deprived areas – 23% above the national average
- 52% lacked basic English and Maths qualifications
- 57% had additional learning needs

In 2024, 74% of apprentices completed their programme – well above the national average of 53% – and 79% progressed into employment, education or further training, compared to a national average of around 60%.

Coach Core places a strong focus on small and micro employers: in 2024 alone, 112 apprentices were placed with 60 employers, with nearly half offering apprenticeships for the first time. 85% of Coach Core's partners are small or micro businesses (fewer than 49 employees).

These employers receive tailored support to overcome barriers like time, cost, and capacity.

Coach Core also partners with organisations such as Sport England, UK Coaching, Mind, CIMSPA, and the Department for Work and Pensions – and, as one of UK Sport's first Event Social Impact Partners, embeds apprenticeships directly into major sporting events like the World Boxing Championships 2025, European Athletics Championships 2026, and Men's EURO 2028. These opportunities give young people real, hands-on experience while creating a workforce legacy for communities.

Looking Ahead: Coach Core's Commitment to Sector Change

Coach Core's three-year mission, Project 1500, directly aligns with the APPG's recommendations to widen participation, close gaps for disadvantaged young people, and support employers to build more inclusive apprenticeship pathways.

By 2027, Coach Core aims to support an additional 500 apprentices – taking the total to 1,500 since its first programme in 2012 – through a delivery model that works for young people and employers alike.

Coach Core's mission is clear: to create apprenticeships that not only open doors for young people but also strengthen communities, diversify the workforce, and deliver the long-term change that this APPG calls for.

SESSION TWO: THE AMBITION FOR SKILLS ENGLAND (JANUARY 2025)

In January, the APPG hosted the then Interim Chair of Skills England, Richard Pennycook CBE, in the Palace of Westminster for an informative discussion on the Government's skills agenda and the core objectives for Skills England.

Welcoming the attendees, APPG Co-Chair Andrew Pakes MP noted that the high turnout in the room “reflects the fact that, or I hope, it reflects that not only do we have important legislation in the House of Lords, which will come into the House of Commons, but the value of apprenticeships and how we reboot this country's economy through good work is of a higher priority than we've seen for a number of years”.

Mr Pennycook highlighted the unique nature of Skills England's development. He said unlike typical initiatives that must integrate with existing programmes, this project is starting from scratch. As such, it offers a rare opportunity to shape its direction in alignment with other new, and major initiatives such as the ongoing curriculum review and the creation of the Industrial Strategy.

He explained that through to Autumn, Skills England would be in “listening mode” to glean as much insight as possible from key stakeholders. He noted that series of workshops and road shows were held to find out the state of the skills system, with around 1,000 organisations and institutions providing input.

Turning to apprenticeships directly, he said the non-university route is opaque, and outcomes are unclear – but that when the pathways for apprenticeships are clear, their success is outstanding.

He added that the key objectives for Skills England will be:

- 1 Authoritative:** Skills England aims to become the definitive and authoritative source for identifying and understanding the nation's skills demand and supply. It will work towards significantly improving the quality of data and insights available to guide skills development across the country.
- 2 Qualifications, accreditations, and standards:** Skills England will take ownership of this, ensuring qualifications and standards remain agile and relevant. Learners and employers need a system that adapts to the fast-changing demands of the world of work. This requires acknowledging that solutions from Whitehall may not always be the most effective.
- 3 Effective engagement:** Engagement is critical at multiple levels, including with devolved nations, regions, learners, and employers. Learners and employers are the primary users of the system, and their needs should drive decision-making. Skills England must prioritise a customer (learner) centric approach in order to maintain relevance and impact.

Following the remarks, APPG Co-Chair Toby Perkins MP explained that the concept of Skills England emerged from a desire in opposition to enable more flexible use of the Apprenticeship Levy and respond better to employer needs. However, Mr Perkins noted that during his time as shadow Skills Minister, it quickly became evident that Skills England would need to be far more than just a mechanism for managing the Levy.

Mr Perkins also highlighted a significant issue in the current education and training landscape: the absence of a cohesive and structured skills system. He said there is a lack of clarity about how A-levels, BTECs, T-levels, and apprenticeships fit together. Historically, skills policy has been more about filling immediate gaps rather than creating a comprehensive and strategic framework. As such, he said the key question was whether Skills England continued this piecemeal framework or successfully developed a more systematic approach.

CASE STUDY

THE CO-OPERATIVE GROUP



The Co-op is a key member of The Royal Foundation Business Taskforce for Early Childhood, which was convened by The Princess of Wales in March 2023 to galvanise business action on early childhood.

Co-op, along with other members of the business taskforce (Deloitte, Iceland Foods, IKEA UK and Ireland, The LEGO Group, NatWest Group and Unilever UK) has committed to raise £5 million over five years to create over 600 early years apprenticeships through its Co-op Levy Share service.

Investing in appropriate apprenticeships is a crucial strategy for businesses to contribute to the development of the workforce needed to support substantial expansion plans in the childcare sector. The goal of these 600 apprenticeships is to strengthen the early childhood workforce, focusing on careers dedicated to early childhood development, which spans from pregnancy to age five. This initiative encompasses employers from the private, public, voluntary, and community sectors, all of whom play a vital role in supporting the wellbeing of children aged 0-5 years.

Key aspects of the Co-op's involvement with The Royal Foundation and the creation of Early Childhood Apprenticeships include:

- **Apprenticeships:** Co-op is spearheading a service to create apprenticeships in the early childhood sector, particularly for those working with children aged 0-5.
- **Levy Share:** The sector utilises the Co-op Levy Share service, allowing organisations to allocate unspent apprenticeship levy funds to support apprenticeships in underrepresented areas, specifically within the early childhood sector.
- **Community Focus:** Co-op's work with the Taskforce aligns with its broader community-focused initiatives and its commitment to supporting families and children.
- **Impact:** The Taskforce has already reached £1.4m of pledges which funds 116 early childhood apprenticeships.



As a not-for-profit that works with over 400 organisations across the engineering and technology sector, EngineeringUK continues to promote the expansion of technical and vocational entry routes for young people, particularly apprenticeships, into the sector. As such, we have welcomed the Government's commitment to re-balance apprenticeships towards young people and look to the Government to maintain this momentum to grow the number and diversity of young people taking up engineering and technology apprenticeships.

EngineeringUK's inquiry into engineering and technology apprenticeships in England, 'Fit for the Future' (published in 2023, led by former ministers Lord Willetts and Lord Knight), identified several challenges for the Government to address. Chief among these was reversing the decline in engineering and technology-related apprenticeship starts – covering 3 sector subject areas: Construction, Planning and the Built Environment; Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies; Digital / Information and Communication Technology – which have dropped by over 6% in the past five years (from 2018/19 to 2023/24), despite a modest recovery after the pandemic.

Equally concerning has been the decline in entry-level apprenticeship starts in the sector, with Level 2 starts falling by over half (52%) since 2017/18, and by 8.7% in the year ending April 2024 alone, driven predominantly by a steep decline in engineering and manufacturing standards. Our analysis shows that the small growth in level 3 starts, has not been sufficient, overall, to compensate for this decline. Moreover, young people are bearing the consequences of this decline, with the proportion of engineering apprenticeship starts by under-19s falling from 41% in 2017/18 to 36% in 2023/24.

As the Government supports industry to expand entry-level apprenticeship pathways, there must be a clear focus on improving gender diversity, boosting the 17% of engineering and technology apprentices who are female. Whilst the number of female starts in digital and technology apprenticeships have doubled since 2018/19, driven by rising higher-level starts, engineering and manufacturing apprenticeships have failed to see a similar increase in female representation.

The introduction of the Growth and Skills Levy provides an opportunity to address these challenges. Skills England's recently published sector evidence on the growth and skills offer highlighted that there is gender disparity across multiple priority sectors and that building a more diverse workforce can help fill skills gaps.

EngineeringUK recently convened employers from across the engineering and technology sector, as well as awarding organisations and provider representatives, to discuss the potential of new skills products eligible under the levy, such as foundation apprenticeships, to address skills gaps in the sector. We looked at how foundation apprenticeships fit with existing qualifications and products, as well as what more needs to happen to open up more training opportunities in the engineering and technology sector for young people in particular. EngineeringUK is planning to publish a report on the outlook for foundation apprenticeships in the engineering and technology sector in summer 2025.



EngineeringUK's stand at the Parliamentary Apprenticeships Fair. L-R: Darla Pearce (Electronic Engineering Degree Apprentice, Leonardo); Ben Lavery (Early Careers People Coach, Leonardo); James Gordon (EngineeringUK); Robert Howes (Senior learning and development specialist, Orsted)

CASE STUDY

HIT TRAINING LTD



Divisions of HIT Training Ltd.



HIT Training Ltd is one of the UK's largest providers of specialist apprenticeships and skills training, delivering programmes from Level 2 to Level 7. We work nationally across the hospitality, catering, brewing, and retail sectors, along with adult care, early years, funeral services, and leadership and management.

Through our three expert divisions, we offer high-quality, people-focused training that empowers individuals to reach their potential and helps businesses develop a skilled, confident workforce.

With a national team of expert trainers and a commitment to inclusive education, we work with over 8,000 apprentices each year to tackle sector skills shortages and transform individual career journeys.

HIT played a leading role in the Department for Education's SEND Exemption pilot, which addressed a long-standing barrier for learners who could not meet standard English and maths requirements. Through diagnostic assessments, adapted delivery models, and specialist coaching, HIT enabled 180 learners to begin apprenticeships they would otherwise have been excluded from. The pilot achieved a 76% success rate for learners with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and was subsequently adopted as a national policy.

This work laid the foundation for HIT's broader approach to inclusive learning. Over the past year alone, more than 550 apprentices with learning difficulties or disabilities (SEND) have been supported into and through apprenticeship programmes. HIT's dedicated SENDCo team provides personalised learning plans, practical adjustments, and one-to-one support to ensure every apprentice can succeed.

HIT's Level 4 Brewer Apprenticeship – run in partnership with the University of Nottingham – is reshaping the future of brewing, a sector historically dominated by older, male workforces. Since launch, 111 learners have completed the programme, including 31 women – clear evidence that inclusive design and targeted outreach can expand participation in technical industries and challenge outdated perceptions.

The programme blends technical brewing expertise with sustainability, innovation, and commercial awareness. It equips apprentices to lead change in their workplaces, whether by creating new products, reducing waste, or improving operations, while also preparing them for further study or progression within the industry.

HIT Training shows how apprenticeships, when designed and delivered inclusively, can remove systemic barriers, upskill industries, and provide meaningful career pathways for individuals who might otherwise be left behind.



CELEBRATING NATIONAL APPRENTICESHIP WEEK (FEBRUARY 2025)

The APPG was proud to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week once again by hosting its annual Apprenticeships Parliamentary Fair. The event, held in Portcullis House, celebrated the vital role of apprenticeships – and apprentices – in shaping the future workforce and contributing to the UK's economy.

This event brought together over 30 parliamentarians, leading employers, training providers, and apprentices from a wide range of sectors. In total, there were over 100 attendees. APPG sponsors showcased their outstanding work in advancing apprenticeship programmes, providing parliamentarians and external attendees with the opportunity to engage not just with those directly involved in delivering apprenticeship schemes across England, but also with apprentices themselves.

Exhibiting at this year's Fair were: London South Bank University, Babcock International, Warwick Manufacturing Group, BAE Systems, Manchester Metropolitan University, Multiverse, EngineeringUK, HIT Training, Ada the National College for Digital Skills, and the Coach Core Foundation. The Fair heard from Co-Chair of the Group, Andrew Pakes MP, and the Editor of FE Week, Shane Chownen.





In the context of the new Government and recent announcements on Skills England leadership, this year's Fair underscored the importance of apprenticeships as a pathway to successful careers and economic growth.

Andrew Pakes MP, Co-Chair of the APPG for Apprenticeships, said: "The Apprenticeships APPG's Parliamentary Fair was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate the invaluable contributions apprentices make to our society and economy. It's also a chance to reflect on how we can continue to improve the apprenticeship system to ensure it delivers for learners, employers, and the country."

The Fair once again served as a dynamic platform for discussions around the successes and ongoing challenges within the apprenticeship system. MPs, Peers, and stakeholders had the opportunity to meet apprentices from various industries and hear firsthand about their educational journey. They also engaged with employers and training providers to gain insight into apprenticeship delivery and learned more about the APPG's ongoing work.



CASE STUDY

LONDON SOUTH BANK UNIVERSITY

EST 1892 **LSBU**

London South Bank University (LSBU) has long championed apprenticeships as a vital route to skills development. As the second largest university provider of degree apprenticeships in the UK, and through its unique Group model which includes South Bank Colleges and South Bank Academies, LSBU offers programmes from Level 2 through to Level 7 across disciplines including construction, engineering, business, and health and social care.

LSBU partnered with Amazing Apprenticeships to raise awareness of this Group offer across Southwark. Their goal was to engage schools, colleges and community groups, to produce high-quality, multilingual resources featuring real apprentices, and to increase apprenticeship starts from local residents. They developed assembly slide decks, posters, flyers and a flagship promotional film, complemented by short case-study videos subtitled in four locally popular languages. These materials were distributed through targeted mail-outs, a bespoke monthly newsletter, and social media.

Between September 2023 and August 2024, 102 out of 135 invited school and college contacts (75%) actively engaged with their events or promotional material. The dedicated LSBU landing page recorded 1,110 page views and 129 clicks through to application information, demonstrating genuine interest among prospective apprentices. Teachers and careers advisers rated the in-person events at an average of 4.5 out of 5, praising the relevance of content and the opportunity to hear directly from apprentices.

The project highlighted the importance of showcasing a broad range of apprentice role models – including younger participants and non-traditional sectors – to dismantle stereotypes and appeal to a wide talent pool, and embedding apprenticeship outreach within community networks using bespoke, locally informed approaches.



Apprentice View: Isha Ahmed, Level 6 Architect Assistant apprentice

I am working at WW+P and studying at LSBU, having joined the Level 6 Architect Assistant apprenticeship programme aged 18. I am now in my third year, with one year left until I plan to complete this standard and progress onto the Level 7 Architecture apprenticeship, which is required to qualify as an architect.

Coming from a socio-economic background where traditional university pathways were not financially viable, this apprenticeship route was the only accessible way for me to pursue a career in architecture. Without it, becoming an architect would have been out of reach.

I've experienced first-hand how transformative the apprenticeship route can be. Immersing myself in real-world practice has accelerated my learning in a way which traditional education cannot. The hands-on, workplace experience has deepened my understanding of architecture and sustained my passion for the profession.

I have worked on global infrastructure projects from Saudi Arabia to Cardiff, and through my current role as national ambassador for apprenticeships I contribute to sector-wide campaigns promoting access and diversity in architecture.

The Government's decision to defund the Level 7 Architect apprenticeship for those aged 22 and above presents a significant challenge for me and for fellow Level 6 apprentices.

Because learners must complete a four-year Level 6 Architectural Assistant course before progressing onto the Level 7 Architect course, it is difficult for any prospective Level 7 Architect aged under 22 to be eligible for funding under the new rules.

This decision will affect myself and many of my fellow learners who were attracted to the apprenticeship route because of our socio-economic background and who enrolled on a Level 6 apprenticeship course assuming that we would be able to progress and eventually qualify as an architect.

Without an exemption for current learners like me who started a Level 6 course under the age of 22, with the clear intention to progress onto a linked Level 7 standard, I fear for my future career prospects.

SESSION THREE: INSTITUTE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS ETC) ACT 2025 – BRIEFING SESSION (FEBRUARY 2025)

The Group hosted a closed briefing session for Parliamentarians and sponsors in advance of the Act's Second Reading in February, chaired by Lord Aberdare – a long-standing APPG officer. The briefing provided an opportunity to examine the Government's plans to transfer the powers of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) to the Department for Education, paving the way for the creation of Skills England.

Lord Aberdare noted that the Bill represents a significant restructuring of the skills system as it will dissolve IfATE as an independent non-departmental public body and transfer its functions to a new executive agency within the Department for Education. As the Bill was introduced in the Lords, Lord Aberdare was able to reflect on its progress through the Chamber, and highlighted the concerns raised by colleagues during legislative passage through the Lords: the logic of abolishing IfATE, which was functioning well; a lack of clarity on the dual function of Skills England – a strategic role in shaping skills policy across departments and regions, and a practical function in preparing apprenticeship standards and assessment plans, previously handled by IfATE; and concerns about accountability and transparency, in particular the role of employers in setting new apprenticeship standards under the new structure.

Other parliamentarians present spoke to the importance of ensuring appropriate transparency and accountability frameworks to enable Parliament and the wider skills system to monitor the performance of Skills England.

Richard Quigley MP asked Lord Aberdare to outline his concerns for better clarity and understanding. By highlighting the large number of standards and awarding bodies, Lord Aberdare questioned how Skills England would deliver on its objectives and highlighted the complexities of working with devolved nations, regional and local skills improvement plans, and emerging areas such as green and digital skills. He asked who would be responsible for tying all these elements together as the Bill does not say anything about this.

Lord Aberdare expressed doubt that the Government would change its approach, noting that while industry prefers an independent authority, the Government in response to all amendments has remained committed to Skills England as an executive agency. He acknowledged and praised Baroness Smith's genuine commitment to the revival of the skills system but pointed out that ministers frequently change, which could impact long-term stability and success. He also noted that the transition from IfATE to Skills England would not be seamless, as it won't just happen on one day, and especially as different industries operate in varied ways, so there are inevitably going to be hurdles in the transfer of powers.

After parliamentarians concluded their remarks, APPG sponsors were invited to comment on the legislation. Topics raised included the importance of the employer-led model, a flexible skills system and the need for Skills England to retain the expertise of IfATE officials now that it has responsibility for setting apprenticeship standards.

CASE STUDY

MANCHESTER METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY



Degree apprenticeships at Manchester Metropolitan University have created pathways for people from lower socio-economic backgrounds, women, disabled learners, and those from minority ethnic groups, across all ages, to access well-paid careers.

Our latest report, Force for Impact, which was published in September 2024, highlights the role degree apprenticeships play in tackling social inequity, closing skills gaps, and boosting productivity, particularly in critical priority areas such as nursing, social work, science, digital and technology.

Research for the report shows that Manchester Met apprenticeships are widening participation:

38% of their apprentices come from backgrounds of multiple deprivation

- 61% are the first in family to attend university
- 51% are aged 24 or under
- 19% identify as from minority ethnic backgrounds

Key outcomes from their most recent data include:

- 95% of apprentices achieve merits or distinctions
- 76% receive a pay rise during their studies (median increase: £9,000)
- 96% secure full-time employment within six months of graduation

23% of Manchester Met apprentices were eligible for free school meals (FSM) when growing up. Today, these same individuals are earning an average of just over £53,000 per year. This is remarkable when considered alongside national data which reports that only half of former FSM pupils earn more than £17,000 by the age of 30.

Degree apprenticeships have transformed career prospects for thousands, equipping apprentices with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours needed for their next steps. We found that within one to four years after completing their programme, our undergraduate degree apprentices earn an average of £49,784 and postgraduate alumni £60,028. These figures significantly outstrip the national average.



In addition to making a transformative impact on social mobility, the University's degree apprenticeships are driving economic growth and productivity. By providing a powerful combination of high-quality education and work-based learning, degree apprenticeships have empowered apprentices to progress into well-paid careers, while also addressing critical skills shortages across multiple sectors.

Manchester Met was one of the first universities to launch degree apprenticeships in 2015 with 60 apprentices, partnering with just 12 employers. Through nine years of significant growth, over 6,500 apprentices have been trained to undertake vital job roles, and we are now working with over 700 employers.

Employer partners, including innovative small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), public sector organisations, and large multinationals, report that degree apprenticeships bring essential higher-level skills and talent to their teams, especially vital with the speed of technological advance.

Their partnerships with over 180 SMEs have led to the creation of 500 new jobs, with plans to expand further in the coming years. 70% of employers reported productivity gains as a direct result of employing a degree apprentice.

Manchester Met's innovative model has been shared globally, and they have supported others to develop successful degree apprenticeship programmes. Four years ago, they set up an international network to foster the development of work-based degree programmes. This network is still growing and has led to the establishment of similar programmes in Canada, Spain, New Zealand, and now South Africa, demonstrating Manchester Met's commitment to advancing degree apprenticeships worldwide.

CASE STUDY

MULTIVERSE

multiverse

Tech apprenticeships are boosting economic growth, while opening doors to the best jobs for people of all ages and career stages – from 16 to 68.

By closing critical skill gaps in AI, data and tech through a new kind of apprenticeship, Multiverse has helped learners to accelerate their careers and earn while they learn. Their programmes open up economic opportunity, drive productivity and, importantly, enable the workforce to upskill and reskill as technology redefines the workplace.

With a community of over 22,000 learners, Multiverse has helped their 1,500+ customers save time, derive greater value from their tech investments, and reduce costs, all while investing equitably in their people – this has amounted to more than \$2 billion in ROI for our customers. Nearly 45% of Multiverse learners secure a promotion while on the programme or in the 12 months following, and 60% achieve a pay rise.

Multiverse delivers apprenticeships for organisations from financial services to construction and energy. Their apprentices are also driving digital transformation in the public sector – having worked with 100+ NHS trusts and 50+ local councils.

Public sector spotlight:

Improving efficiency and patient outcomes at North London NHS Foundation Trust

North London NHS Foundation Trust (NLFT) provides mental health and wellbeing support to local communities across Barnet, Camden, Enfield, Haringey, and Islington.

In recent years, demand for mental health services has soared, resulting in acute financial and resource pressures for service providers – making it an essential priority for NLFT to leverage the benefits of data and technology, and equip staff with the skills to drive innovation and improve patient experience.



The solution - the NLFT Digital Academy, delivered in partnership with Multiverse

In 2023, NLFT launched their [Digital and Data Academy](#) funded through the Apprenticeship Levy, helping them to build new skillsets in data, AI, and transformation.

Learners from every division of the Trust span a range of clinical and operational functions – from Support Officers, Service Managers, Analysts, to Clinicians and Nurses.

Teams across NLFT are seeing the benefit of new skills, driving impactful changes that enhance patient experience and operational efficiency. 100% of learners understand how the Academy contributes to the Trust's strategy and supports their professional career goals.

"Multiverse has been an invaluable partner, and the Digital Academy has been transformational for our staff. It's really opened their eyes to the power of data and how they're using it, creating a huge impact for our services. We're seeing staff becoming more confident – they're proactively using data insights and asking important questions like "Have we thought about this? This is what we're seeing in our service, is this true in other areas of the Trust?" It's a real step change for us."

Sarah Wilkins, Chief Digital and Information Officer at NLFT

Creating time savings for clinicians and improving the patient experience

Mitasha's story

Using her skills gained through the Multiverse Business Transformation Fellowship, London Prisons Service Lead Mitasha analysed the current reporting in her department – and found that several team leads were spending 2-3 days per month fulfilling mandatory, time-intensive reporting requirements as part of the Care Programme Approach.

After conducting iterative testing, Mitasha implemented improvements to the reporting process that collectively saved team leads 45 hours per month. NLFT has been invited to share learnings nationally with other healthcare providers in Healthcare in Justice to roll out a similar process in their services.

SESSION FOUR: WIDENING ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION IN APPRENTICESHIPS

(APRIL 2025)

With 80% of the 2030 workforce already in employment, apprenticeships play a vital role in ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds have opportunities to upskill, reskill, and contribute to the UK's economic growth. Safeguarding access to apprenticeships at all levels will be key to tackling skills shortages, improving social mobility, and ensuring the UK remains competitive in what is a rapidly changing economy.

In April, Mark Smith, CEO of Ada, the National College for Digital Skills, hosted a private roundtable discussion with Kate Ridley-Pepper, Director of Work-Based Skills in the Department for Education, followed by an informal networking event bringing together parliamentarians, employers, careers advisers, and industry stakeholders.

The closed session focused on expanding access to apprenticeships for people from all backgrounds, particularly those from underrepresented groups, disadvantaged communities, and non-traditional education pathways. The networking session served as a valuable opportunity for attendees to engage with industry leaders and education providers who are working to expand access to apprenticeships and increase participation among diverse talent pools.

In her prepared remarks, Ms Ridley-Pepper provided an outline of the DfE's current policy priorities. Given that the Department was in a period of policy development, she noted the timeliness of the session. She also emphasised the benefits of apprenticeships: career progression, earnings for apprenticeships, and the productivity benefits for employers.

Ms Ridley-Pepper said that Ministers know apprenticeships are a crucial part of the skills offer in supporting the Government's missions to kickstart economic growth and breakdown barriers to opportunity. She explained that ministers have asked the DfE to introduce greater flexibility in the system to facilitate additional skills offers and rebalance opportunities for young people.

Ms Ridley-Pepper also set out the Government's ambitions on foundation and shorter duration apprenticeships to provide further pathways into employment, explaining that the Government has committed to introducing foundation apprenticeships, which will bridge the gap between employers with skills shortages and those looking for an entry into sectors – the first such pathway will be in construction from August. To support these opportunities, she noted that employers will receive £2,000 for every construction foundation apprentice they take on and retain in the industry.

Ms Ridley-Pepper highlighted the introduction of shorter duration apprenticeships following feedback that a minimum 12-month duration is too inflexible for some sectors. To be introduced in August, these will broaden access to high-quality training, giving employers the flexibility to train people up more quickly where that makes sense. Whether that's because an apprentice has high levels of prior experience or because a sector does not work in 12-month training cycles. DfE will work with trailblazers and employers to further identify where shorter duration apprenticeships will have the most benefit.

She also reiterated that DfE will be working with Skills England to identify the skills that people will need to secure jobs in key growth sectors and other crucial sectors such as healthcare.



CASE STUDY

UNIVERSITY VOCATIONAL AWARDS COUNCIL (UVAC)



In the past year, UVAC celebrated its Silver Jubilee: 25 years of championing higher level technical and professional learning, progression pathways into the professions and the role of universities in delivering skills and training.

To coincide with this anniversary, UVAC released its Strategic Priorities with the hope that higher and degree apprenticeships remain at the heart of England's skills strategy. UVAC's members make up 76% of all universities approved to deliver apprenticeships, account for one quarter of all apprenticeship starts (all ages, all levels), and deliver 73% of all degree apprenticeship starts in England.

With the change of Government, UVAC undertook two surveys of its 100 university, HE provider and corporate members. Firstly, on what impact the elected government will have on the future of higher-level apprenticeships and secondly exploring degree apprenticeship expectations of Labour's Growth and Skills Levy. 60% of UVAC's members reported that the Apprenticeship Levy better supported the delivery of apprenticeships across all levels, ages and occupations when compared to Labour's new funding proposal.

In January 2025, UVAC published its own blueprint advising its university members on how to navigate the Growth and Skills Levy and Skills England. UVAC's continuous message is that Government must be aspirational. By any measure, there are too few higher and degree apprenticeship opportunities available to deliver the Government's five missions and industrial strategy.

Our key ask is that Government needs to determine ambitious targets and develop and implement a strategy to boost numbers and make higher and degree apprenticeships a mainstream offer for both young people and adults. UVAC's continual argument is that apprenticeships should be focused and prioritised based on the skills shortages and occupations needed in the economy and to deliver effective public sector services, regardless of apprenticeship level, the age of an individual, or the highest level of qualification already achieved. We need more high-quality apprenticeships in occupations needed by the economy and by the eight growth driving sectors.

With regard to new level 7 funding criteria, UVAC's view remains that restricting the use of apprenticeships at level 7 when apprenticeships for such key NHS roles have been developed, seems entirely at odds with the Government's fifth mission, building an NHS fit for the future. UVAC estimates that the Government's decision to cut levy funding of Level 7 apprenticeships for apprentices aged over 21 from January next year will cost UK employers around £214 million in additional training costs.

One of UVAC's main purposes is to carry out practitioner-led research and in 2024/25 we published six concept papers on higher and degree apprenticeships and the role of Higher Technical Qualifications. These papers covered many aspects of policy and practice including reconceptualising degree apprenticeships, exploring higher and degree apprenticeships as one example of effective integrated professional development pathways, challenging the purpose of apprenticeships in England, and examining assessment challenges in work-integrated learning, including apprenticeships. At UVAC's annual conference in November 2024, the theme of 'back to the future in higher technical and professional education and skills' implied something from the past being recycled in the present (think Labour Government's view of the purpose of apprenticeship and the move against level 7 funding that finally crystallised in 2025) but it inevitably means the importance of embracing change too. This is now central to UVAC's mission in 2025-26.

CASE STUDY

WARWICK MANUFACTURING GROUP (WMG) AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Skills have been a central pillar to the work of Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG) since its foundation 45 years ago. As both a provider of degree apprenticeships and employer of technician apprentices, they understand the value of work-based learning, and the importance of listening to industry partners. WMG's work to apply quality higher education to the needs of industry is shown in their degree apprenticeship programmes.

Degree Apprenticeships are an increasingly valuable tool in equipping our future, and current, workforce to meet the ever-changing demands of modern industry. Their Applied Professional Engineering (APE) and Digital Technology Solutions (DTS) Level 6 apprenticeships were designed with exactly this in mind. By focusing on industry needs and quality education delivery WMG seeks to give apprentices the best start in their careers. By working closely with employers such as JLR, Thales, and Fanuc, they have been able to deliver courses that complement their businesses, preparing students to take up roles in some of the UK's most well-respected companies.

"The Digital and Technology Solutions degree at the University of Warwick's WMG offers a curriculum encompassing computer science, business, and maths – subjects which complement working in a fast-paced, innovative and large organisation, like JLR, brilliantly. Joining straight after sixth form, the DTS business modules taught me valuable lessons about the economic and strategic considerations in organisations, and maths and computing modules furthered technical and problem-solving skills."

Suliemaan, Degree Apprentice Digital and Technology Solution, JLR.



The popularity of the courses among learners speaks to their value. APE, first launched in 2021, has seen a 179% increase in intake with 165 students enrolled in 2024. As well as students, employers have also seen the benefits of these apprenticeships. By listening to employers and building close relationships with them, WMG ensures that they have confidence in our ability to deliver immediate impact with a cohort of work-ready staff equipped to fill their skills gaps. The success of WMG's degree apprenticeship programmes rest on this collaboration and trust. Maintaining a system that works with – and for – employers is essential for the continued success of apprenticeships across all levels.

SESSION FIVE: SKILLS ENGLAND AND THE INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY (JUNE 2025)

Immediately following publication of the Government's Industrial Strategy, the APPG was delighted to welcome Phil Smith CBE, Chair of Skills England, and Tessa Griffiths, Co-CEO of Skills England to a well-attended session covering both Skills England and the Industrial Strategy.

Mr Smith opened his remarks by introducing himself and Tessa Griffiths. He explained that Skills England was launched by the Prime Minister in July 2024 in response to a fragmented and complex skills system. He said that while the system is not broken, it can be difficult to navigate and often lacks coherence.

Mr Smith emphasised that he is not overly concerned with defining the boundaries of Skills England. Instead, he is focused on addressing the fundamental issues within the skills system itself. Drawing on his previous experience as head of CISCO, where he oversaw 3,000 partners, he stressed the importance of identifying and removing barriers across the system. He noted that this work would be underpinned by data-rich insights and analytics, asking a key question: how do we break down barriers without simply creating new ones?

Mr Smith said that simplification is at the top of his agenda. He acknowledged that while some individuals and organisations can navigate the system, it must be made accessible to those outside the structure. He argued that there needs to be a shift from merely collecting responses through consultations to creating real conversations that can guide meaningful change. Since he and Tessa Griffiths cannot speak to everyone directly, he emphasised the importance of finding a more effective and inclusive way to gather and respond to feedback.

Responding to questions about Level 7 funding, Mr Smith explained that the Department for Education made a conscious decision to shift investment toward opportunities for younger people. He noted that the Government had to strike a balance in resource allocation.

When asked about the significant powers held by the Secretary of State in relation to the skills agenda following the IfATE Bill, Mr Smith said that while it is true that the Secretary of State can move quickly, he does not see this as a problem if it leads to action. He argued that systems may not be perfect at first and will require iterations, but he prefers a mindset of “acting to a new way of thinking rather than thinking to a new way of acting”.

On the topic of how Skills England works with government and industry, Mr Smith was clear that although government needs skilled workers, it is businesses that need them more urgently. He noted the importance of clarifying the respective roles of the state and employers in delivering skills. He also reiterated that Skills England has had more direct conversations with industry than IfATE, and is committed to continuing that engagement.

Later in the session, Mr Smith responded to concerns raised by employers and stakeholders. He acknowledged that everyone wants the system to be tailored to their specific needs, but that this is not possible. Instead, Skills England must focus on building partnerships and scaling best practice in a way that makes everyone feel involved. He also commented on the limitations of using broad categories like “young people” or “SMEs,” noting that such terms simplify a very complex landscape.

In his closing remarks, Mr Smith reaffirmed his commitment to listening and adapting. He said that while Skills England may not be able to tackle every issue, he “will give a good run at it!”

Throughout the session, parliamentarians and other attendees asked a broad range of questions about Skills England, its implementation, and how the new body would integrate effectively with the Industrial Strategy Council.



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