

Additional information text

Introduction

Learning and Work Institute (L&W) is undertaking research to identify features of effective practice in English, maths, and digital skills delivery in apprenticeships and traineeships. This project is being conducted on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE).

L&W is an independent policy and research organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. We bring together over 90 years of combined history and heritage from the 'National Institute of Adult Continuing Education' and the 'Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion'.

Policy Context

Apprenticeships are a key government policy for supporting transitions into work. In the 2016 Welfare Reform and Work Act the Government committed to a target of three million apprenticeship starts in England between May 2015 and March 2020. Traineeships were introduced in 2013 and are aimed at young people aged 16-24, or people with Learning Difficulty Assessments or Education, Health and Care plans up to the age of 25. They are designed to support people to gain relevant skills and experiences so they progress into apprenticeships or employment. Traineeships consist of work preparation training, a quality work experience placement, and support with English and Maths, where required.

English and maths are integral requirements of apprenticeship and traineeship programmes. Combining English and maths with vocational training is recognised as a way of consolidating and developing these skills, which benefit learners, employers and the wider economy. Level 2 apprentices are required to achieve level 1 in English and maths to complete their apprenticeship and then must work towards level 2. Level 3 and 4 apprentices must achieve level 2 in English and maths prior to taking their end-point assessment. All young people undertaking a traineeship are required to study English and maths up to GCSE grade 9 to 4 or A* to C if they do not already have this. Within these programme requirements, apprenticeship and traineeship providers adopt different delivery models to develop learners' English and maths skills. For example, English and maths learning might take place in the workplace, 'off the job' with a specialist tutor, or through online learning.

The Government's recently announced UK Digital Strategy recognised that many jobs now include a digital element, and that within the next 20 years 90% of jobs will require basic digital skills. The Government has committed to ensuring free training and support for individuals who lack basic digital skills, where this is part of a publicly-funded adult education programme.

The need to tackle basic digital skills gaps has implications for apprenticeship and traineeship programmes. Digital skills are not a mandatory requirement for

traineeships and functional Skills ICT qualifications are not currently included in the framework / standard for some apprenticeships. However, in some cases, digital skills form a key element of the study skills required for successful completion of a programme, for example where content is delivered online, or e-portfolios are maintained by learners. Again, providers may adopt different approaches to the development of learners' basic digital skills within apprenticeships and traineeships.

This work aims to outline the main characteristics of differently types of delivery models for English, maths and digital in a representative range of providers, sectors, and employer sizes, and identify features of effective practice in each. Supporting the recommendations of the Maynard review, there will be a focus on identifying features of effective practice in English, maths and digital skills delivery for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). This is particularly important as people with LDD are underrepresented in apprenticeship start figures.

Evidence Sought

We would like to invite you to take part in this online call for evidence, through which we are seeking to identify different ways in which traineeship and apprenticeship programmes deliver English, maths, and digital skills.

Specifically, the aim of this Call for Evidence is to:

- identify and illustrate a range of English and maths delivery models used by apprenticeship and traineeship providers, identifying features of effective practice;
- identify and illustrate how basic digital skills are currently being embedded within apprenticeships and traineeship programmes, identifying features of effective practice;
- assess the implications of digital skills as a 'third basic skill' for both programmes; and
- produce case studies which highlight effective practices in the delivery of English, maths, and digital skills in apprenticeships and traineeships, including for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Who Might be interested in responding

We are interested in hearing from providers of traineeships and apprenticeships. We want to capture the diversity of English, maths and digital delivery in traineeships and apprenticeships by illuminating a range of delivery approaches across diverse providers, contexts and sectors. Our aim is to extract and share effective practice which supports learners' development, including those learners with LDD.

How will the information be used

The evidence gathered will inform our production of a set of effective practice case studies and a final report. These outputs will illuminate key characteristics of provider delivery models and features of effective practice, and explore the implications of digital as a third basic skill for apprenticeship and traineeship provision.

Individuals will not be named in any of these outputs, and organisations will only be named if permission has been given for us to write a case study. The project outputs will be used to support the development of effective practice in apprenticeship and traineeship programmes. The report, case studies and videos will be published on the L&W website, shared with the DfE and shared via our networks, sector events and social media channels.

CONTACT

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