

TOP 100 EMPLOYERS — 2013 —

RECOGNISING EXCELLENCE IN BUSINESS AND
APPRENTICESHIPS

WITH A FOREWORD BY
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER NICK CLEGG



Brought to you by
National
Apprenticeship
Service

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In association with National Apprenticeship Service

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Personnel Today

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Congratulations to this year's Top 100 Employers

Apprenticeships are key to building a stronger British economy, Deputy Prime Minister **Nick Clegg** says

I'd like to congratulate each and every one of the organisations included in the City & Guilds Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers List 2013.

Selected from more than 1,600 entries in this year's National Apprenticeship Awards, these businesses have proved themselves to be the very best workplaces in the country for apprentices to start and build a successful and fulfilling career.

From a wide range of sectors, and covering a host of occupations, what all of these employers have in common is that they are providing the highest quality of training and support possible for their apprentices. And throughout this supplement, you'll find real-life examples of the valuable return these organisations get on their investment through the innovation, focus and hard work of their apprentices.

Central to our ambition to build a



Every week, the average fully trained apprentice boosts business productivity by £214 per week.

stronger economy and fairer society in Britain is ensuring more companies, across all sectors, can benefit from the value a dedicated apprentice brings to their work, and that more of our talented young people can reap the opportunities a good Apprenticeship offers to realise their full potential and plans for the future.

Every week, the average fully trained apprentice boosts business productivity by £214 per week. I've made a personal commitment to work in partnership with business to double the number of employers offering Apprenticeships from 100,000 to 200,000. So if you're not yet an Apprenticeship employer, please take the time to read these case studies to find out more about the powerful difference you could make to your organisation, and someone's life, through an Apprenticeship.

Closing the gap between education and employment



Chris Jones

CEO,
City & Guilds

The UK faces ever-increasing skills gaps in both established and emerging industries. This is a clear obstacle on the road to economic recovery.

So how did we get into this situation? Part of the reason is that, for too long, Apprenticeships and vocational training were viewed as second class to degrees. It was widely believed that academic credentials alone prepared young people for the workplace.

Now employers say the opposite. Our recent *Making Education Work* report worryingly showed

that one-third of employers were considering looking abroad to bolster their workforce due to skills gaps in the UK. It also revealed that approximately two-thirds think that young people don't understand employers' requirements.

Clearly, the current school system's focus on academia isn't meeting the needs of business – something that 47% of the employers we spoke to for *Making Education Work* agreed with.

This is where Apprenticeships come in. The combination of theoretical knowledge and on-the-job training – alongside core skills development – can truly close the gap between education and employment. Businesses gain employees who are enthusiastic and equipped with the right skills to add value and help companies grow. I have certainly seen this in our own apprentices.

They are ambitious and eager to learn. Indeed, many have already gone on to more senior roles in City & Guilds.

Over the past couple of years, we have seen more and more employers recognise the value of Apprenticeships. But according to research from the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, 71% of employers don't offer them.

That's why we have supported the National Apprenticeship Service's Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers for the past few years. By showcasing inspirational businesses that have seen the benefits Apprenticeships can deliver, we can inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

In the long run, this will help give employers the skills they need, and, more importantly, help strengthen the UK economy. Find out more at www.cityandguilds.com.

Why offer an Apprenticeship?

As employers search for the right skills to help them grow, there's never been a better time to offer an Apprenticeship, as Personnel Today's **Jo Faragher** discovers

More and more employers are starting to reap the benefits of offering an Apprenticeship. And as the economy finally begins to turn a corner, businesses realise that developing a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce will help them attain real competitive advantage.

Figures from the National Apprenticeship Service show that Apprenticeships have grown at a record rate: since 2010, more than 1.5 million people have started an Apprenticeship. They now cover more than 170 industries and 1,500 job roles, including those not traditionally associated with Apprenticeships.

Karen Woodward, Interim National Director of the National Apprenticeship Service, believes this demand is growing: "Apprenticeships are becoming the first-choice option for many young people.

"Recent research shows that demand for Apprenticeships is high in sectors that may not have previously been associated with Apprenticeships, such as IT, software and professional services. We need more employers to think about how they can offer Apprenticeships to these passionate and motivated potential employees, and we are doing all we can to help employers meet this increasing demand."

There are now three levels of Apprenticeship available to offer: Intermediate; Advanced; and Higher. At the Intermediate and Advanced levels, apprentices work towards a Level 2 or Level 3 work-based learning qualification and, typically, a relevant knowledge-based qualification.

In 2011, the Government announced it was investing £25 million in a Higher Apprenticeship Fund to support thousands of apprentices to gain a degree-level qualification through a Higher Apprenticeship.

Employers as diverse as management consultants such as PricewaterhouseCoopers through to public relations agencies and McDonald's Restaurants now offer Apprenticeships.

Many of these organisations have been given the opportunity to shape how their Apprenticeships are



delivered and provide their input on the curriculum, so the skills apprentices acquire are more relevant for their business needs. Meanwhile, apprentices are more engaged at work because they can see a clear career pathway through Intermediate, Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships.

In all Apprenticeships, the focus on quality occurs at every level. More than 100,000 employers have so far offered Apprenticeships with a minimum duration of 12 months, reflecting the depth of the skills training available. The National Apprenticeship Service produced an Apprenticeship Quality Statement, which sets out the standards it expects for the delivery of a high-quality Apprenticeship.

These standards include guidelines on minimum wages, working hours and time spent on guided learning, and they aim to raise standards and make sure that all Apprenticeships offer a positive experience.

As well as building skills, employers report tangible financial benefits as a

result of employing an apprentice.

In a survey by the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) in 2012, almost three-quarters of respondents said productivity had improved, while the average Apprenticeship completer increases business productivity by £214 per week, according to figures from the Centre for Business and Economic Research.

The fact that training costs are covered for many apprentices, and apprentices can be paid the relevant minimum wage, (although many employers pay more than the minimum) makes it a financially sound option for employers looking to grow skills in-house.

The benefits aren't just financial. Offering Apprenticeships can also have a positive effect on employee retention.

Typically, apprentices who have gained their qualification while working for the business feel greater loyalty to that employer – and figures from BIS have found that two-thirds of

apprentices stay with the same employer after gaining their qualification.

"Apprenticeships provide employers with the workforce of the future. Through Apprenticeships, employers gain the talented, skilled individuals they need to boost productivity and growth," says Chris Jones, CEO and director general of City & Guilds.

"We partner with employers of varying sizes and industries on their Apprenticeship programmes. All of them have seen the benefits Apprenticeships can offer. Apprentices add value from day one – not just through their skills, but through their enthusiasm and drive."

Certain employers may be eligible for support in hiring an apprentice. If your business employs up to 1,000 staff and has not employed an apprentice in the last year, you can apply for a £1,500 grant per apprentice to help cover starting costs for up to 10 new apprentice recruits aged between 16 and 24.

Between February 2012 and July 2013, this grant has enabled more than 35,000 more young people to start an Apprenticeship. The National Apprenticeship Service has dedicated teams – including a small business support team – to guide employers through this process (see p.8 for more information).

For employers who want to help prepare young people for Apprenticeships and their future careers, new Traineeships have been launched to help them to become "work ready".

According to the National Apprenticeship Service's Karen Woodward: "Traineeships provide a young person with the essential work preparation training, English and maths support if required and a meaningful work experience needed to get an Apprenticeship or other job."

With many organisations searching hard for the right talent to help them grow, Apprenticeships offer a unique chance for employers to build the skills they need, and gain access to high-quality training that benefits both parties. Employers can draw from the widest possible pool of talent, safe in the knowledge that they are mobilising young people into a career, and boosting their own bottom line at the same time.

Southern comfort

The Top 100 Employers are the highest scoring employer category entries in the prestigious National Apprenticeship Awards. Here are all the Top 100 Employers from the south of England

Award category applied for:

- Macro Employer of the Year (5,000+ employees)**
- Large Employer of the Year (250–4,999 employees)**
- Medium Employer of the Year (25–249 employees)**
- Small Employer of the Year (1–24 employees)**
- Newcomer (An employer that has recently started employing apprentices)**

THAMES VALLEY

- DAF Trucks
- Hitachi Capital Vehicle Solutions Ltd
- ILEC & IMEC Building Services
- Resource Productions
- Spirit Pub Company
- SPP Pumps Limited
- Telefónica UK
- Virgin Media

Christie Delaney: "A fantastic alternative to university"

Christie is an employee at PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC), winner of the Newcomer Employer Award at the London National Apprenticeship Awards 2013



Christie had completed her A-levels and started a BTEC National Diploma in Business when she discovered that she could pursue a Higher Apprenticeship in professional services. "While at college I was employed part time, and earning my own money motivated me to look for opportunities other than university," she says. After a successful application to professional services company PwC in London, she began her Higher Apprenticeship in professional services (management consulting) in 2012, aged 18. She is employed as a junior associate in the consulting division and combines this with her studies. PwC supports Christie to learn through doing – she attends client meetings and has been given responsibility for tracking the firm's relationship with different employers. When she completes her Apprenticeship in 2015, she will have gained a Level 4 certificate in management consulting and a Level 4 diploma in management consulting practice – and she hopes to use these skills to progress through the firm.

Large Employer of the Year at the South West National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Plymouth City Council: building skills and tackling youth unemployment

As a major local employer, Plymouth City Council wanted to help tackle youth unemployment in the area. Offering Apprenticeships to young people was also a way to bridge an emerging skills gap. The council has been employing apprentices since 2010 and provides 70 Apprenticeships from Intermediate to Advanced level in areas as diverse as horticulture and vehicle maintenance. Developing and managing such a large number of training programmes is no mean feat, but Ken Holder, Apprenticeship coordinator at the council, has been able to access support from an employer adviser at the National Apprenticeship Service. The council plans to create 33 further Apprenticeships this year and expand the number of Apprenticeships to 100 posts during 2013/14. Offering Apprenticeships has helped to improve engagement, according to their latest staff survey.



SOUTH WEST

- AgustaWestland
- Airbus Operations Ltd
- Algram Group Ltd
- Blue Flame (Cornwall) Ltd
- Brunelcare
- Daniel K Neaves Hair Ltd
- North Bristol NHS Trust
- Plymouth City Council
- Premier Employer Solutions Limited
- QuEST Global Engineering Limited
- Serco Limited

SOUTH WEST

Medium Employer of the Year at the Central Eastern National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Arcana Group: boosting retention through Apprenticeships

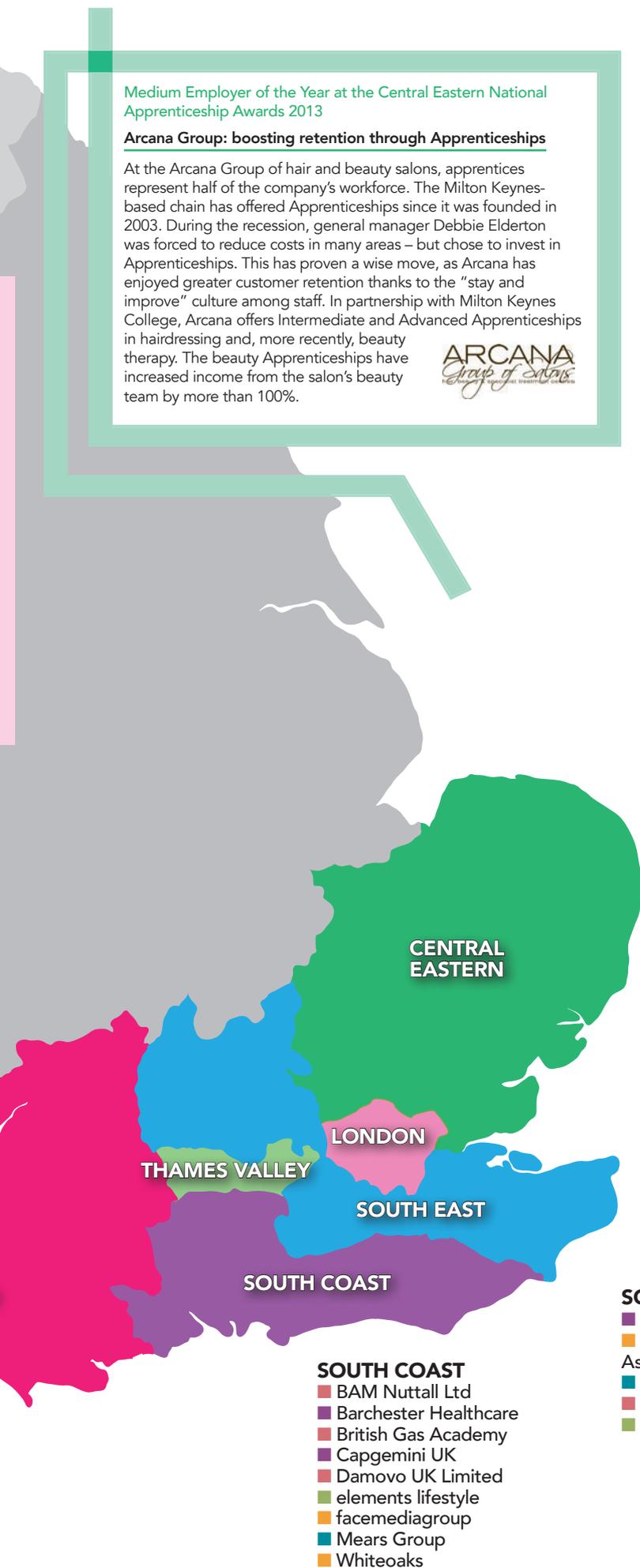
At the Arcana Group of hair and beauty salons, apprentices represent half of the company's workforce. The Milton Keynes-based chain has offered Apprenticeships since it was founded in 2003. During the recession, general manager Debbie Elderton was forced to reduce costs in many areas – but chose to invest in Apprenticeships. This has proven a wise move, as Arcana has enjoyed greater customer retention thanks to the “stay and improve” culture among staff. In partnership with Milton Keynes College, Arcana offers Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships in hairdressing and, more recently, beauty therapy. The beauty Apprenticeships have increased income from the salon's beauty team by more than 100%.



Macro Employer of the Year at the South Coast National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Capgemini: building a motivated and loyal workforce

Capgemini has enjoyed the benefits of employing apprentices since 2005 and currently has more than 250 apprentices across the UK. In 2011, the company started to offer Higher Apprenticeships in software development. The National Apprenticeship Service helped Capgemini to develop its Apprenticeship, both in defining what the company needed and exploring potential training partners. Anouska Ramsay, Capgemini's head of talent, says that recruiting apprentices has led to a number of business benefits: “Apprentices are not just a cost-effective resource; they bring innovation, inspiration and energy into everything they do.” After completing an Apprenticeship, employees can embark on a structured progression within the company. Having a clear career path has meant that 90% of apprentices stay with the company on completion. Apprenticeships are so important to Capgemini that 2013 was the first year the company recruited equal numbers of apprentices and graduates.



CENTRAL EASTERN

- Arcana Group of Salons
- EPOSability Ltd
- Greene King plc
- Liebherr GB Ltd
- MBDA
- Orchid Pubs and Dining
- Whitbread

LONDON

- Angels The Costumiers
- Bluefin
- BT
- IBM UK Ltd
- ITV plc
- Lancaster London
- McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
- PricewaterhouseCoopers
- Starbucks Coffee Company Ltd

SOUTH EAST

- Ford Motor Company Ltd
- Orbit East and Orbit South Housing Association
- Scientifica Ltd
- Selex ES, a Finmeccanica company
- Strangeways

SOUTH COAST

- BAM Nuttall Ltd
- Barchester Healthcare
- British Gas Academy
- Capgemini UK
- Damovo UK Limited
- elements lifestyle
- facemediagroup
- Mears Group
- Whiteoaks

Northern pride

The Top 100 Employers are the highest scoring employer category entries in the prestigious National Apprenticeship Awards. Here are all the Top 100 Employers from the north of England

Award category applied for:

- **Macro Employer of the Year (5,000+ employees)**
- **Large Employer of the Year (250–4,999 employees)**
- **Medium Employer of the Year (25–249 employees)**
- **Small Employer of the Year (1–24 employees)**
- **Newcomer (An employer that has recently started employing apprentices)**

Carrie McClean: "An Apprenticeship has built my confidence"

Carrie is an employee at Smart Assessor, Small Employer of the Year at the West Midlands National Apprenticeship Awards 2013



Undertaking an Intermediate Apprenticeship in business and administration helped Carrie gain more than a qualification. After she showed aptitude for dealing with customers during her Intermediate Apprenticeship, West Midland-based software company Smart Assessor promoted Carrie to an account manager, and she now manages more than 20 clients. She began her Apprenticeship aged 17 and her skills are vital to the company. "The account manager role is important for the quality and service we provide. I keep tabs of clients' queries and requests, and head up weekly meetings," she explains. Carrie feels the style of learning in an Apprenticeship has built her confidence to handle different situations and acquire skills she would otherwise not have gained had she gone straight into a job. She plans to stay at Smart Assessor and pursue account management as a career, possibly undertaking further study.

WEST MIDLANDS

- Hendra Healthcare (Ludlow) Limited
- HSBC Bank plc
- Jaguar Land Rover
- Redrow Homes
- Sanctuary Group
- Smart Assessor
- The Community Housing Group
- Walter Smith Fine Foods Limited

NORTH WEST

- Aintree University Hospitals
- Andrew Collinge Hairdressing
- Arthur Padgett Ltd
- BAE Systems
- Foran & Blake Hair & Beauty
- Nutricia Liverpool
- Sellafield Ltd
- Speakman Contractors
- Twin Valley Homes
- Unilever UK Limited

GREATER MANCHESTER

- Barclays RBB Technology
- Barlows UK Ltd
- Manchester City Council
- Newgate Kennels & Cattery Ltd
- Regency Glass Ltd
- The Co-operative Group
- Vital Services Group

Small Employer of the Year at the Greater Manchester National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Newgate Kennels & Cattery: growing its own skills

Taking on apprentices has ensured that Newgate Kennels & Cattery can develop the exact skills it needs. It has employed apprentices since 2005, offering Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships in animal care, along with Intermediate Apprenticeships in customer service. The team at Newgate clearly appreciates the training opportunities afforded through Apprenticeships – all current full-time staff, including five of the managers, trained through Apprenticeships. Joel Millet, Newgate's director, says: "The flexibility of Apprenticeships and the strong work-based focus on assessment meets the needs of both our staff and of our business."





Medium Employer of the Year at the North East National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Liebherr Sunderland Works: a new generation of skills

Faced with an ageing workforce and shortage of skills, offering Apprenticeships has enabled Liebherr Sunderland Works to transfer knowledge and experience to a new generation of employees. Based in the North East, Liebherr manufactures maritime cranes and has slowly grown its Apprenticeship programme since 2008. The company now employs 29 apprentices on Advanced Apprenticeships in advanced manufacturing engineering. Highly skilled and experienced tradesmen pass down their knowledge, helping the apprentices to develop key skills on the job. Furthermore, efficiency and productivity has increased since Liebherr began taking on apprentices, and there is a significantly lower turnover of employees. "Offering Apprenticeships means we can have the most highly skilled team possible," says Stephanie Hogan, HR assistant.



Small Employer of the Year at the East Midlands National Apprenticeship Awards 2013

Fairfield Control Systems: embedding knowledge in a fast-growing company

Fairfield Control Systems has doubled its size in the last three years. As experts in designing and building control systems, it is important that the knowledge its employees possess stays within the company. All of the eight apprentices the company has trained over the past 10 years are still there; a reflection on how they value the support and training offered. The business offers Advanced and Higher Apprenticeships in engineering manufacture, process manufacturing and consumer electrical and electronic products. Apprentices can gain qualifications up to Bachelor of Engineering (BEng) level. Fairfield has developed a quantifiable set of measures for each apprentice to gauge their contribution to the business, and an in-house engineer mentor provides on-the-job training and support.



How your business can get involved

Now that you've learned the benefits involved in making Apprenticeships part of your company, we look at how to kick off your Apprenticeship offering

The first step for any employer new to recruiting apprentices should be to contact the National Apprenticeship Service, the organisation that supports, funds and coordinates the delivery of Apprenticeships throughout all of England.

The National Apprenticeship Service provides a dedicated service to employers, offering free expert advice and support to those looking to recruit apprentices for the first time or for those wishing to expand the Apprenticeships that they offer.

The National Apprenticeship Service has a team of experts, including small business specialists, on hand to help employers.

There is also financial support available – if your business has fewer than 1,000 employees, you may be eligible for a grant of £1,500 per apprentice, which is intended to enable smaller companies to

Get involved in the awards

If you're a business that currently employs apprentices and you want to be considered for the Top 100 list next year, you must enter one of the employer categories for the National Apprenticeship Awards 2014. Further details of next year's awards and information on how to enter will soon be available online at apprenticeships.org.uk/awards.

take on an apprentice aged between 16 and 24.

Step 1 ▶ Decide on your requirements with an Apprenticeship adviser, and drive recruitment through the free Apprenticeship vacancies service.

The employer teams will encourage you to ask yourself the right questions such as "where can an apprentice add most value to our business?" and "what sort of training should we provide?"

You can then advertise your vacancies for free on Apprenticeship vacancies, the job site for Apprenticeships. This allows quality

vacancies from employers to be viewed and applied for nationally by thousands of candidates who have registered. Well over a million Apprenticeship applications were made via this system last year.

Step 2 ▶ Deliver the Apprenticeship, working with a training organisation to support your business. Training organisations offer training as part of the Apprenticeship, and there are two main types – further education colleges and independent training providers, which can be in the private or voluntary sector.

Step 3 ▶ Develop your apprentice by, for example, entering them into awards and competitions to put your business on the map. Once you have established your Apprenticeship programme, you can identify areas for development. The National Apprenticeship Service employer teams, including small and medium-sized business specialists, are always on hand to guide you through these various opportunities such as expanding Apprenticeships into other areas of your business. You might also choose to enter skills competitions or the National Apprenticeship Awards to celebrate the success of your business and apprentices.

To find out more information about Apprenticeships and the AGE 16 to 24 Grant, go to apprenticeships.org.uk or call the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600.

Traineeships

UP AND COMING

A Traineeship is an education and training programme which helps prepare young people for their future careers. Traineeships include work preparation training, English and maths if required, and a high quality work experience placement.

- Nurture the next generation.
- Tailored to the needs of the business and the individual.
- All training costs are met by Government funding.

Find out more at apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600

Brought to you by National Apprenticeship Service

Register now to enter your team of apprentices!

Brathay Apprentice Challenge

Do your apprentices have what it takes to be the 'apprentice team of the year'? To find out more and enter visit www.brathay.org.uk

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