

THE EARWIG

UPDATES FROM WEST BERKSHIRE TRAINING CONSORTIUM

Dear Members

Summer recruitment is well underway at West Berkshire Training Consortium and it has been buoyant compared to other years. We've been working hard for many employers seeking to snap up the brightest and most promising new entrants to their workforce. Our Top Apprentice Recruitment Day which kickstarts our summer was a vibrant and exciting affair and positions are already being filled.

In this edition we focus on national achievement rates for apprenticeships in 2015-16, the last full year of results. We have our Learner of the Quarter result and we also focus on the Digital Marketer Apprenticeship Standard.



Matt Garvey
Managing Director



FULLY FUNDED TRAINING FOR SMALLER BUSINESSES



This new pot of money is aimed at companies in Berkshire with 249 or fewer employees. It is called Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) and provides funding for training for staff aged 19+

1. It is fully funded training potentially saving a business thousands of pounds
2. Aimed at smaller or bite sized sessions
3. Ideal for existing staff wishing to improve or broaden their skills
4. Includes a training needs analysis of your organisation
5. There is a focus on progressing participants into Adult Apprenticeships

We first delivered this programme in 2013 in partnership with East Berkshire College with great success and we aim to offer opportunities in

- Management (particularly the Level 3 ILM Award)
- Office Skills
- IT Skills
- Customer Service

Rachel Eaves, along with project manager Jon Thompson will be providing the advice and guidance to local employers. If you are a Berkshire organisation with 249 or fewer staff who would like to benefit from this opportunity then contact Rachel@wbtc-uk.com or Jon@wbtc-uk.com

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT APPRENTICE OPEN DAY

On Thursday, September 7th, we are opening up our doors once again as we host another of our popular Open Days. This event showcases the benefits and opportunities Apprenticeships offer and is designed to help those unsure of the potential or unaware of the wide range of industries we represent, to see just how good apprenticeships are.

Running all day, from 10am through to 6.30pm, everyone is invited, no appointment is needed just turn up when you get some time.

If you know someone who could benefit from an apprenticeship and might want to find out more, bring them along with you or let them know the time and date.

If you'd like further information, give us a call or send us an email: rachel@wbtc-uk.com



NATIONAL APPRENTICE ACHIEVEMENT RATES FOR 2015-16 BY COLLEGE AND PROVIDER

In June Apprenticeships Achievement Tables were released providing the opportunity to compare and contrast colleges and providers. These tables not only show the latest rates but also offer a chance to reflect on trends over the preceding years. With the government pressing for millions of new apprentices much attention has been focused on the quality coming out of providers. At WBTC, our published rate of 85% puts us in the top 7% of all providers and colleges in England. For our employers it means that their apprentices have a greater chance of successfully completing their apprenticeship with WBTC than will most other institutions.

In my opinion, the achievement of an apprenticeship programme must remain the priority for the employer and the learner. In my 18 years in the sector I have only worked with employers who planned for, and anticipated, a successful outcome to their apprenticeship programme. It is common sense. Why would you invest the time and money unless you were looking for a return in terms of a productive and happy apprenticeship programme? Consequently, these tables are really important for separating the wheat from the chaff.

For 2015-16 the Education & Skills Funding Agency amended their calculation process to omit some loop holes which had inflated achievement rates with some colleges and providers. This activity was applied retrospectively and meant that the national achievement rate for apprenticeships remained at around 67% for the last three years. The recently released data tables show that over 29,000 apprentices enrolled nationally with colleges and providers offering achievement rates at 50% or below. Given that these have been paid for by the tax payer, it brings up the question of value for money.

A national achievement rate of 67% is a disgrace. To tell an employer engaging three apprentices that one of them will fail is pretty embarrassing for the sector. Thankfully, within this picture are some much better providers and colleges delivering true high quality



apprenticeship programmes. Quality begins and ends with a programme that not only has inspirational training but which stretches the apprentice to fully achieve. Everyone at WBTC is proud that 85% of apprentices fully completed their programmes with a further 80% going on to secure promotion, added responsibility or higher learning with their employer.

This snapshot provides some evidence for the provision in our area, although employer-providers are excluded. With a national average of 67% it is easy to see who is performing well. Buried in the disappointing national figures are some strong and successful apprentice providers working in partnership with excellent employers.

Employers can use this data to make informed decisions on their prospective training partner. As my first boss told me, "buy cheap - buy twice!" The full tables can be [viewed here](#).

Institution Name	Cohort size 2015/16	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Basingstoke Youth Action Trust Ltd	80	86.40	84.6	84.7	85.7
West Berkshire Training Consortium	710	78.00	84.6	82.5	85.0
Basingstoke College of Technology	590	80.80	71.9	79.7	78.6
Abingdon and Witney College	180	63.60	84.2	76.9	78.4
Newbury College	70	57.00	70.5	83.0	75.0
Sparsholt College	490	72.00	76.5	70.3	74.9
New College Swindon	450	82.40	80.5	77.3	74.6
CITB	4,960			74.1	71.0
QA Ltd	1,530	83.00	85.3	86.2	70.2
Activate Learning	770	63.30	51.5	71.6	68.4
Key Training Ltd	1,700	78.00	67.2	66.5	66.8
Aspire Achieve Advance Ltd	1,930		89.5	82.0	65.1
QUBE Qualifications and Development Ltd	2,560			73.9	63.6

The table compares some colleges and providers over the latest and preceding years who work in our area. While the method of counting years 2012-15 were different to 2015-16, the rates shown are like for like between each institution. The table looks at all apprenticeships at all ages and data for some institutions was not available.

PARA ATHLETICS 2017

In July we had three trips to the Olympic Stadium in London to watch the 2017 Para Athletics. There was a great atmosphere and the largest audience ever for a Para Athletics World Championship.

Apprentices, mentors and members along with WBTC staff all had an awesome time as these photos show.



WBTC LEARNER OF THE QUARTER

Congratulations to Tilly Javes who is an apprentice at FirstXtra Financial Services and our latest Learner of the Quarter. Here is what Tilly's Training Consultant, Andrea Wood said about her;

'Wow what a difference a year can make! When Tilly started her apprenticeship she had just dropped out of 6th Form and she didn't come across as the most engaged apprentice. She'd secured an apprenticeship at FirstXtra Financial Services and while this was a really good job Tilly didn't seem motivated in her studies.

Then things started to change for the better and when later I observed her after 2 months I noticed that she was amazing on the telephone and really confident. I fed this back to her and then I fed it back to her manager. He started to give Tilly more challenging tasks and Tilly began to thrive.

Tilly was recently promoted as a Personal Assistant to one of the financial advisors and she has developed in her role. Tilly began to engage in her apprenticeship seriously and this resulted in excellent progress. Tilly achieved her apprenticeship recently and has become a highly valued member of the team at FirstXtra.

On my final assessment visit her manager commented on how Tilly had blossomed and how amazing she is with the clients on the telephone. His words were that "she is the voice of FirstXtra"

Well done to Tilly. This proves how an apprenticeship can be transformative both in terms of opportunity and outlook in life. We love to see apprentices blossom into promising professionals who are committed to their careers.





SHIP AHOY! COME ABOARD AND JOIN OUR HIGH SEAS ADVENTURE

In October we'll be taking part again in the Cowes Small Ships Race onboard TS Maybe. This popular event is perfect for apprentices because it develops the core skills that employers crave:

Team work, Confidence, Leadership, Problem Solving and Initiative

Last year we came third in our class and so we're hoping it is third time lucky.

We leave WBTC on Monday 2nd October and embark TS Maybe at Gosport in the afternoon. We'll get a full briefing on the ship, safety and the week ahead.

Tuesday through to Friday will be a schedule of training in preparation for the race. Participants will be drilled and trained in the full working of a rigged ship. Rigging, steering, rescue, sailwork and navigation will be just some of the skills developed. All crew will also be assessed on leadership skills and we'll give priority to those who are studying their ILM Level 2 Young Leaders Award.

Saturday is race day and we'll be looking for strong winds to help us on our way. It can be fast and furious as well as fun and we'll be racing through the Solent all day. We then get to celebrate our achievements before we return to WBTC on Sunday.



WHO IS IT FOR?

We have 10 spaces for WBTC Apprentices and/or mentors. Usually we have around 7 apprentices and 3 mentors plus 2 WBTC staff.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

We're providing this awesome opportunity **entirely free of charge to our members.**

WHAT DO YOU GET OUT OF IT?

It could be a once in a lifetime experience to crew a racing vessel of this size. TS Maybe is big enough to be considered a tall ship, but compact enough to warrant a small friendly crew that can be kept busy.

There is no experience to rival the sense of achievement of working together as a finely tuned team in a racing environment. You'll also study to achieve the RYA Competent Crew Certificate.

HOW TO BOOK

You'll be away from work so you must have the agreement of your employer to participate. Please send an email to yvonne@wbtc-uk.com with your details and you will be placed on a list. Copy in your line manager to this email. If we are over booked we may need to select participants. **Priority will be given to apprentices undertaking the ILM Level 2 Young Leaders Award.**

Please note, we are very keen to hear from under-represented groups of learners/mentors. Out of the 10 spaces, 5 will be set aside for female participants and 5 for male. Should we receive less than 5 applications from either then those spaces will be released to meet demand.

Cancellation & No Show. Your employer will be invoiced £600 per person in the event of a cancellation after 15th September 2017 or in the event of a no-show.

For more information you can contact matt@wbtc-uk.com

SAFEGUARDING & PREVENT DUTY TRIBUNAL FEES DEEMED UNLAWFUL

There has been some recent good news for employees. Particularly those who struggle to pay the fees required to bring employment tribunal claims to courts.

Fees for those bringing tribunal claims have been ruled unlawful, and the government will now have to repay up to £32m to claimants.

This is another great example of British Values in action, when the rule of law is enacted through the democratic process to protect the individual liberties of our workforce.

The government introduced fees of up to £1,200 in 2013, which it said would cut the number of malicious and weak cases.

Government statistics showed 79% fewer cases were brought over three years - trade union Unison said the fees prevented workers accessing justice.

The government said it would take steps to stop charging "immediately" and begin the process of reimbursing claimants, dating back to 2013.

The Supreme Court ruled the government was acting unlawfully and unconstitutionally when it introduced the fees.

The tricky, the difficult, the fluid balancing act that we've got is we want to make sure there's proper access to justice...

'PROPER ACCESS TO JUSTICE'

The government had already made a voluntary commitment to reimburse all fees if it was found they acted unlawfully. Fees have raised about £32m since being introduced.

Justice Minister, Dominic Raab, has said it would fall to the taxpayer to pick up the bill. "The tricky, the difficult, the fluid balancing act that we've got is we want to make sure there's proper access to justice, we want to make sure frivolous or spurious claims don't clog up the tribunal and at the same time we've got to make sure we've got the right way to fund it," he said.

Fees ranged between £390 and £1,200. Discrimination cases cost more for claimants because of the complexity and time hearings took.

The Supreme Court said that some people would not bring cases to employment tribunals because paying the fees would render any financial reward pointless.



The court's summary added claimants in low or middle income household could not afford the fees "without sacrificing ordinary and reasonable expenditure for substantial periods of time".

TUC general secretary Frances O'Grady said it was a "massive win" for workers.

"Too many low-paid workers couldn't afford to uphold their rights at work, even when they've faced harassment or have been sacked unfairly," she said.

Further advice and guidance contact martyn@wbtc-uk.com



A QUICK REMINDER

APPRENTICE ONBOARDING is the new name for induction. All new apprentices, regardless of age/level will attend their Apprentice Onboarding day with WBTC.

This will be a sequence of assessments, diagnostics and training activities that signal day-one of the apprenticeship training programme

TRAINING CONSULTATION VISITS is the new name for reviews. These visits will now contain more in the way of 1-1 mentoring and training alongside on-programme assessment and of course monitoring progress.

FOCUS ON NEW STANDARDS - DIGITAL MARKETER

Following on the June edition's look at the new Customer Service Practitioner Apprenticeship, this month we take a look at the new Digital Marketing Apprenticeship Standard called Digital Marketer.

DIGITAL MARKETER ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIP

This is a new Standard targeted at the ever growing digital marketing sector. It is aimed at those in roles who spend a lot or most of their job role working with social media, websites, coding and digital platforms in order to promote the products and services of their business. Consequently this Standard contains two prongs to the learning outcomes - marketing and digital technology.

TYPICAL JOB ROLES

- Digital Marketing Assistant or Executive
- Campaign Executive
- Social Media Executive
- Content Co-ordinator
- Email Marketing Assistant

For some businesses where digital marketing is in its nascent form, the 'marketing and social media' tends to be bolted on to somebody's role. In our experience, apprentices recruited to undertake Business Admin quite often have digital marketing duties assigned to them by virtue of their age and tech savviness. Consequently, this could be a good progression for those finishing their Business Administration apprenticeship.

[View the government publication here.](#)

WBTC MODEL OF DELIVERY

The Digital Marketer Apprenticeship has mandatory qualifications listed to support the technical knowledge or this programme. Apprentices must achieve one internationally recognised vendor or professional qualification shown in blue in the list below. This then exempts one of the Ofqual-regulated knowledge modules, as shown in red.

The knowledge modules are summarised below and further details are available in the occupational brief available from the Tech Partnership by [clicking this link](#).

Individual employers will select which vendor or professional qualification the apprentice should take. At WBTC we are specifically offering the following:

- BCS Learning Modules - Principles of Coding (Mandatory)
- CIM Level 4 Award in Digital Marketing
- Google Analytics IQ

Training will take place at WBTC Newbury with one digital skills session per month and one skills/behaviour session per month. In addition, apprentices will be set work to do to support their assignments and exams.

The Digital Marketer EPA consists of:

1. Apprentice showcase 65%
 - a. This is a reflective portfolio evidencing all the skills and behaviours of the apprentice
2. Practical observations 20%
 - a. The apprentice will be observed in a range of circumstances to demonstrate their skills in customer service.

These assessments are carried out by an independent third party organisations and not WBTC.
3. Professional discussion 15%
 - a. The professional discussion will be a structured discussion between the apprentice and the Independent Assessor, following the observation, to establish the apprentice's understanding and application of knowledge, skills and behaviour.

FUNDING

The cap for this Customer Service Practitioner is £12000 and WBTC's price is £9000. Non-Levy customers will pay our tariff of £20 per week until the apprentice completes their programme.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Don't forget that if you have an apprentice with WBTC then you, the employer, become a member. Consequently you can enrol any of your staff on our additional training sessions and enrichment activities at the member rate! This could save you hundreds if not thousands of pounds over a year.



WORKSHOPS, COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Many of the events below are free of charge to WBTC members. Our customers can send any of their staff* on these events at the member rate. To book please use the email address against each event. Spaces go fast so please let us know ASAP if you wish to make a reservation.

*please note that added value workshops and enrichments not available to the apprentices employed by our members who are enrolled with training providers other than WBTC. This would constitute WBTC supporting the services of our competitors.

We operate a £35 no-show fee for anyone who doesn't attend without notice on any free of charge course. This will be invoiced care of the employer. WBTC have enhanced the confirmation process as follows

- We'll confirm your attendance by email and send a meeting request that you can import to your outlook or webmail calendar.
- We'll confirm your space with your employer and **call** you 2-3 days prior to the event.

VIEW & BOOK COURSES ONLINE
Course details are all available on our website [here](#)

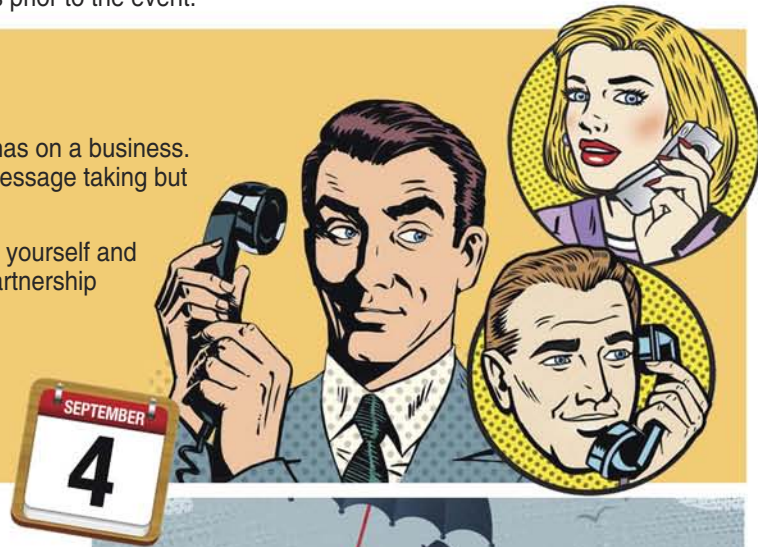
SEPTEMBER

OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE ON THE TELEPHONE

This session looks at telephone techniques and the massive impact it has on a business. Poor telephone manner can not only lead to mistakes for example in message taking but it can also portray you in a really unprofessional manner.

This session explores good practice to provide a positive impression of yourself and your organisation. It is a fun and interactive workshops developed in partnership with Graham Hill of Verbatim Call Centres.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Monday 4th September 09:30 - 16:00
Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **Free for WBTC members.** £100 for non members



MANAGEMENT MASTERCLASS STRONG DECISION MAKERS AND RISK MANAGEMENT

This latest session in our Management Masterclass series looks at the sometimes complex world of decision making and risk management. Risk can take many forms from financial and reputation risk to managing risks from a safety perspective. This session will explore:

- Understanding how to solve problems and make effective decisions
- Developing an understanding of Risk Management within an organisation

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 8th September 09:30 - 16:00
Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **£199 for WBTC members**
£269 for non members



FIRST AID CERTIFICATE

This qualification equips staff with the skills to be a nominated 'First Aider'. This is an incredibly useful skill to help keep customers and staff safe from accidents to illness.

It is a very popular course so early booking is essential.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 8th September 09:30 - 16:00
Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **Free for WBTC members.** £149 for non members

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Do you go all weak and sweaty at the idea of presenting to a group of people? Do you enjoy it but want to be more confident and engaging?

This session focuses on the techniques and skills to develop an engaging presentation that could be used for colleagues or prospective customers. It will examine the correct use of presentation aids, how to use your voice to good effective and ways to engage people.

Venue: WBTC
Date: Friday 15th September
09:30 - 12:30
Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com
Cost: **Free for WBTC members**
£100 for non members





OCTOBER

COWES SMALL SHIPS RACE

This is a members only event.

Date: Monday 2nd - Sunday 8th October

Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com

Cost: **Free for WBTC members**



BRITISH SAFETY COUNCIL LEVEL 2 HEALTH & SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

This popular one day course is ideal for health and safety purposes and equips delegates with the skills and confidence in the workplace.

Full details can be found by [clicking on this link](#)

Venue: WBTC

Date: Friday 20th October 09:30 - 16:00

Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com

Cost: **Free for WBTC members**
£149 for non members



MANAGEMENT MASTERCLASS DEALING WITH CONFLICT AND DEVELOPING RESILIENCE

Sometimes it can be a challenge to deal with employees who get you down. Conflict is something that many people (including managers) try to avoid.

This session will look at ways to diffuse and deal with conflict in an assertive way that leads to clear direction and purpose. It will also look at techniques to keep up your resilience and remain robust during difficult times.

This could be helpful when people aren't performing or when there is significant ongoing change.

Venue: WBTC

Date: Monday 9th October 09:30 - 16:30

Contact: yvonne@wbtc-uk.com

Cost: **£199 for WBTC members.** £269 for non members



Remember, if you are an employer that has an apprentice or hosts a work experience student through WBTC, then you are a member.

This entitles you to subsidised or free access to our one-day workshops and enrichment activities.

WBTC

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We now have a full 12-month calendar of workshops. This will be sent out via a separate mailer and also handed to all apprentices during their face-to-face visits with one of our staff.