

Apprenticeships Trailblazers

One year on

Progress against aims

The Apprenticeship Trailblazers aim to achieve greater employer ownership of Apprenticeship training, as recommended by the Richard Review. Trailblazers are networks of employers and other sector and industry bodies, working together to design Apprenticeships for jobs in their sector.

IES was commissioned to lead an evaluation of the early Trailblazers, which comprised interviews and surveys with those involved in Trailblazer development. The final report was recently published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Here, we map the progress findings from the evaluation against the ambitions that the government highlighted as important.

Aim

Progress

Redefining Apprenticeships so they target those new to a job or require training to perform the job.



Achieved!

But is Apprenticeship the appropriate form of training for each career progression individuals make?

Focusing on the outcome of the Apprenticeship rather than the process of developing competency.



Achieved!

Tensions about weight given to end-point over on-course assessment; some believe apprentices and employers need to understand progress throughout training.

Introducing trusted, independent assessment.



Work in progress

There is a range of models for independence. Unclear there is trust that an open assessment market will enable independence or be practicable.

Recognised industry Standards as the basis of Apprenticeships with links to professional registration.



Achieved!

Aim has the support of employers. Important to involve all professional bodies operating in each sector.

Requiring all Apprentices to achieve Level 2 English and maths before completion.



Achieved!

Standards at Level 3 and above include this level as desirable in entry criteria.

Ensuring funding creates the right incentives, with purchasing power lying with employers.



Too early to tell

Support for the 2:1 ratio for co-investment but concerns about impact on small firms.

Greater diversity and innovation in training with employers and government safeguarding quality.



To a degree

Diversity has emerged but innovation is not necessarily required to meet employers' needs. Uncertainty about future governance and safeguarding quality.

This research was published in: Newton B, Miller L, Williams J, Buzzeo J, Hinks R (2015) Process evaluation of the Apprenticeship Trailblazers, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, Research Paper 256.

<http://www.employment-studies.co.uk/resource/process-evaluation-apprenticeship-trailblazers>