

Open University Apprenticeships

Webinar: Blaze a Trail by Investing in Apprenticeships

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Good morning everyone. I hope you can all hear me. This is Phil Kenmore from the Open University. Welcome to our webinar this morning on Blazing a Trail by Investing in Apprenticeships, part of our celebration for National Apprenticeship Week 2019. Thanks very much for joining us. I'm just going to do some brief introductions and I'll run through what we're going to do this morning. We've got an hour, so between 10 and 11. We probably expect to take the hour with Q&A, but we'll see how we go.

I'm Phil Kenmore, I'm Director of Employer Engagement at the Open University. I'm joined by my colleague, Angela Gill, who works in our Apprenticeship Team for the Open University. Also, I'm very pleased to say I'm joined by Anne Ashworth, who's the Head of Employee Apprenticeships for Pearson, and Anne's going to be talking a bit about her experience of developing apprenticeships towards the end of the webinar before we do the Q&A.

So what we're going to do this morning, we're going to talk a bit about the business issues facing people at the moment, and particularly around the skills gaps that people are facing and how apprenticeships can help with that. We're going to talk a bit about why you would choose apprenticeships as a solution. A bit about how you might make it work for you in your business or your organisation. A little bit at the end about the OU and what the OU does. Then we'll talk to Anne about her experience and do a bit of a mini interview with Anne about her experience of developing apprenticeships in Pearson, how they've addressed business issues with them and so on and so forth. So hopefully that's what you're expecting on the webinar this morning.

We've got a live chat function going, which my colleague, Angela, and some others are looking at, so if you want ask questions as we go we can try and do that. We will have time for Q&A at the end. I think we'll probably have a good 15 minutes hopefully for Q&A towards the end as well.

We are going to start with a couple of questions for you the audience just to see what type of organisations we've got on the webinar at the moment, just so we can all see who's listening in. This first poll question is an easy one to answer, it's is your organisation a levy payer? So if we can send that poll out please. You should see that on your screen and be able to answer that. So: yes; no; or don't know, and we should see the results come up in a second.

While that's happening I'll just say as we go through we've got three polls this morning, this first one, we're going to do another on in a second, and then in a few more slides we'll do another quick poll as well, just so we can get you interacting with us as we talk through some of the content this morning. Hopefully the results for that are coming in. Let me just have a look on the screen. Okay, there we go. So we have the results in so far.

75% of you are levy payers, which is fantastic, just under 10% of you don't know, and about 15% of you are not levy payers. So we've got a nice selection that we would expect at the moment in terms of people out there. That's fantastic. As we talk about the levy today we're not going to talk in detail about how the levy itself works, we can of course do that for you if you'd like us to, but most of you are paying the levy already so you'll probably know some of the detail of that. We will talk a little bit about some of the high level stuff for that.

So here we go, second poll question for you all. Do you feel that your organisation is making good use of the levy at present? If we can send that poll please. And you've got a couple of choices here: you've got the yes we're on top of it choice; you've got partly we're getting there; or no we've still got a lot more to do; or maybe again don't know. Again, if you're not a levy payer of course this still applies to you because are you getting access to the levy through one route or another? That poll should now be out and let's see if the results are coming in. Okay, there we go.

We've got about 20% of you on yes you're making fairly good use of the levy, which is fantastic. 37% of you saying partly, which is still pretty good. And we've got 36/37% of you again saying no we've still got quite a lot more to do. So a fairly even split there in terms of people using it partly or perhaps having more to do, which is what we'd expect from employers. I'm looking at my colleague Angela next to me who's nodding going yes that makes sense.

So great, fantastic, thanks for that. It's nice to know what sort of people we've got on in terms of organisations and where you all are. Hopefully you can all see those results as well, so you've got a sense of who else is with us as we go through our discussion here.

Three key business challenges

Let's talk a little bit about some of the challenges that we're facing as organisations and as businesses at the moment, and actually how these then feed in to apprenticeships. We sort of summarised on this slide three key challenges, and obviously there are lots around at the moment. But we know for example that UK employment is very close to its highest level ever, 75.5%. It's pretty astounding to be honest that we're at that level of employment. That of course creates challenges for us as businesses and organisations, because it's quite difficult to recruit when you've got high levels of

employment like that to do the jobs that you want. But also what we've actually got is the challenge that people are stretching their workers in terms of being unable to recruit, and people tend to end up having to do more work or different types of work, and that can lead to knock-on effects on productivity.

We also know that there's quite a lot of challenges at the moment around automation and new technologies. Interestingly, obviously there's a planning issue with automation if you're going to be losing jobs or changing the nature of your jobs. But there's an argument that that leads to much more demand for higher tech and digital skills, and actually potentially also an argument that it would mean that the jobs you've got left after you've changed through to an automation process might require higher levels of soft skills. So again these present different types of skills gaps and challenges for businesses as we know.

The final one of course is the elephant in the room at the moment and it's the exiting the EU or the Brexit debate. Now of course the big issue for us in terms of business and organisations for all of us is what's this going to mean for us. That uncertainty has a bit of a knock-on effect in terms of doing any workforce planning and planning in terms of addressing skills gaps. What are the skills gaps you've got, what are the skills gaps you're going to have, and what impact is Brexit going to have on us all? Unfortunately none of us can answer that at the moment, but we all obviously recognise that's a bit of a problem for us as we go forward.

Introduction of higher and degree apprenticeships

So why did the government introduce the levy and where did this come from? Again, most of us will probably know this but it's worth just recapping a little bit. I mean there's been a bit of a focus on the issues around productivity in the UK, and the government was keen to introduce apprenticeships to try and address some of the critical skills gaps in the economy. CMI did some research and showed that UK productivity was 21% lower than the average of the G7, which is pretty shocking. But also the fact that time wasted by poor management or poor management skills was costing the economy about £84bn.

The digital skills gaps of which a lot has been written of course. There was talk about the fact that the digital skills gap is costing the economy about £63bn. All of which are pretty amazing figures, and just make the point I think that we need to make sure we can invest in our skills gaps to try and reduce where we can the skills gaps we've got and increase the productivity for the UK economy.

Open University apprenticeships, how bad is the skills economy?

So we did some research at the Open University called the Business Barometer, which we're repeating again this year. What last year's results showed us from the businesses that we spoke to, were that the businesses were telling us that there were a number of different things they were having to do because of the skills shortage to try and address the gaps that they had, and the costs of those skills shortages were averaging at about £6.3bn a year for those businesses.

What was interesting is that quite a lot of businesses, and you can see on here 64%, were spending more on recruitment each year, basically because they were struggling to fill posts, and as they were struggling to fill posts they were then finding that they were having to do a number of different things. One was that they were having to spend more money on salaries, increasing the salary offers for jobs. A number of businesses we spoke to, in fact just over the 50% mark, were saying that they actually had to increase salaries on jobs more than once in order to fill some key roles in their businesses.

We also found 63% were recruiting jobs at lower levels than they wanted to, largely because they couldn't get the levels of skills they needed for some of their core jobs. Of course the knock-on effect of this is that a number of people, in this case we found 47%, are hiring temporary staff at a cost of about £1.5bn a year. The challenge of course with hiring temporary staff as we all know is that it's a great short-term solution, but actually it doesn't solve the underlying skills gaps. This is where effectively the debate about apprenticeships comes in and how do you actually make sure you can address those skills gaps in a more sort of planned for way for businesses and organisations.

Let's just have a little pause here and introduce our third poll. If we can send out the third poll question please, which is what do you feel is the most important skills gap for your organisation at present? Now you can only choose one from this list. I'm sure most of us would probably choose a number from this list. But if you can just have a quick look at that list and perhaps come up with an answer there. You've got a choice of: managerial skills; leadership skills; technical or operational skills; IT or digital skills; industry specific skills; or just general soft skills. So if you can choose perhaps what you think is the most important skills gap for your business or organisation at this present time. Okay, let's just see if the results of that are coming in.

We've got a fairly even split there. We've got just under 20% on managerial. 22% on leadership. Just under 20% on technical or operational skills. 20% on IT or digital skills. Just under 15% on industry specific skills. And only a small slither there on soft skills or other soft skills, 3% or so. I think that is anyway.

That's quite interesting. What we're seeing there from the group of employers that we've got on, and we've actually got quite a good mix, and I think that shows the range of skills gaps that people are facing at the moment across different types of industries and

different types of organisations. We've certainly got about 300 people on the webinar, so I think we've probably got my guess would be about probably 150/200 employers, maybe 250 employers. So that's a pretty good sample of what's going on in the economy at the moment.

Where are the skills gaps?

Let's just have a look at the information on the screen, which is the data that came from our Business Barometer, this is the research that we did about skill gaps. We found that 40% of organisations said that managerial skills gaps were really important to them. 35% leadership skills. There's a bit of an overlap between those two. Then a third on technical or operational skills. 28% IT and digital. And then industry specific was 23%, soft skills at 20%.

I think the thing that we found, which just reflects the poll that we've just done with you there, is that actually obviously that's quite a spread, and most people have got a range of different skills gaps that they're trying to work out how to address. Of course what we're finding is that people are trying to plan how to address these skills gaps. The apprenticeship levy of course now is one of the vital and most important ways of doing that, otherwise there's a risk that that investment gets lost. People are reviewing how they're doing their own CPD, they're reviewing how they're doing and using their training budgets. Lots of people actually have reduced their training budgets as the levy has been introduced, and some of that has had a bit of a knock-on effect about how they're addressing their skills gaps.

An unsustainable solution...

One of the challenges when we did the Business Barometer that we thought was quite shocking in some ways, is that 57% of businesses were effectively using the temporary staff opportunity to fill gaps in the next year, or intending to use temporary during the next year. Of course as we all know that's an unsustainable solution. It's fine for a short-term solution, but effectively that's nearly 60% of businesses planning in the next year to still have to use temporary staff to fill skills gaps. This of course is something that as we start to use the levy in a better way, and as we start to plan how to integrate apprenticeships into addressing the skills gaps in the workforce strategies that we all have, we should be trying to avoid the overuse of temporary staff as we do that.

Why apprenticeships? Importance of providing work based learning

The question then leads to why apprenticeships and actually what can we do with apprenticeships to make it work for our businesses? One of the things that's really important about providing work based learning is the fact that the number one principle in effect is that you have to have a real job that you can have training and education

alongside as an apprenticeship. It's not the other way round. So when you start thinking about work based learning and actually having apprenticeships in your business, the first thing is to understand that you've got to make sure you understand what the jobs are that you want people to do, and then you wrap the training and education around them.

But the importance to work based learning is very well proven, and of course the organisational benefits of this are actually quite strong. The first thing is the fact that you know you need to blend knowledge and skills with role competencies and work experience. So the fact that you can have academic and other skill based development backed around the fact that people are doing real work, real jobs, and learning real competencies in your businesses, in your organisation, in your workplace. So they're not just doing it as a sort of dry academic experience outside in a classroom in terms of some forms of training and education.

It's important when thinking about planning apprenticeships and actually the value of apprenticeships into businesses, is the fact that what you're doing is addressing specific skill gaps through tailor-made training. So what you're trying to do is make sure you understand your own specific skill gaps and applying the appropriate apprenticeship standards towards those, and making sure the jobs you have are aligned around those skills gaps. We'll talk a bit more about how we do that in a moment.

The other opportunity for apprenticeships of course is the positive effects it has on recruitment and retention. So actually we know that building apprenticeships into workforce strategies has a great effect on recruitment and retention, and we'll talk a bit more about that in a moment. But it's this idea of actually what you're doing is you're creating real jobs for people to come in and be built up and trained into, into your organisation. What you're actually doing is creating a fit for purpose workforce that are very much aligned with the skills and the gaps that you've got in your organisation and your business.

Major changes to apprenticeships

So let's just say a little bit, and I'm not going to go on too much about this given that most people are already levy payers, say a little about where the levy came from and some of the changes that happened in apprenticeships. There's so much change in the recent years. There's probably more change in recent years than there's been in the previous 20 years in relation to apprenticeships, those that have worked in apprenticeships for any length of time.

The government introduced the apprenticeship levy back in 2017. There was the shift in apprenticeships for those that have done it before from frameworks to standards and the development of the new standards. There has been some criticism I think of the levy

that the standards process has been perhaps a bit slow and a little bit cumbersome. But hopefully that will be improving and that's continuing to improve. We could talk a little bit about the National Audit Office report this week which has levied some criticism at the levy. I'm not sure I meant to say that, but there we go. I'll try and get levy in as many times as possible in one sentence before the end of the webinar!

Of course the other thing that the government was clear about, they introduced some specific targets when they introduced the levy. The government talked about having three million new apprenticeship starts by 2020. They wanted to make sure that there was a specific target within that three million for increasing the uptake of apprenticeships within BAME communities, and the target for that was to increase the uptake by those communities by about 20%.

They also introduced a target for the public sector specifically. I see we've got a number of employers and people online from public sector employers. Public sector have the very unenviable target of having 2.3% of their workforce as apprenticeships by that 2020 period. Of course that is a very challenging target and there is still a very significant way to go for many public sector employers, although some actually have got there already I understand.

The government also of course introduced Degree apprenticeships, and that's the sort of thing that organisations like the Open University are doing, and there's quite a significant take up of Degree apprenticeships. Of course the National Audit Office report this week has flagged that the uptake of Degree apprenticeships has been significantly higher than it previously was. So that's one thing that the levy has shifted. Of course part of the debate there is whether what organisations are doing is actually addressing their higher level skills gaps by using those Degree level apprenticeships to do that, or whether actually there's just a shift in the budgets that people use for CPD, and that's part of the ongoing debate that NAO have made comment on. So that's where the levy came from.

Apprenticeships fall into four categories

Of course for those perhaps that just want to see a structure there, we've got four categories or four points of apprenticeships: you've got intermediate, which is the Level 2 sort of entry level; you've got advanced; you've got higher level; and then Degree level. Levels 6 and 7 as they're defined in there is Level 6 is a Degree level, generally a Bachelors or Undergraduate Degree level. Level 7 is effectively a Masters level qualification. That's the general education levels you'd apply towards that. So those are the types of apprentices and apprenticeships that the standards are addressing. We won't dwell on that, but again if you've got questions specifically about those or how those work, then please feel free to ask them and we'll be happy to try and answer them as we go through.

Apprenticeships: a win-win solution

The thing about apprenticeships, and one of the reasons why we believe it's such an important thing for businesses and organisations to address, is they actually are real sort of win-win solution to try and address some of the issues that lots of us are facing in running our organisations and our businesses.

What you're doing when you're building an apprenticeship into your workforce strategy is effectively you are investing in your organisation's future. So you're basically taking the opportunity, albeit through the levy that's being taken off us and we're bringing it back into the organisation, but taking the opportunity to invest in the future organisation in the way that we want the organisation to develop in terms of its skills and capabilities. There's an important part about that about how you plan that, which we'll talk about in a second.

Apprenticeships also help to increase overall productivity, and that's basically through ensuring you've got the best academic and workplace skills that you need to drive productivity. Our own research has shown that well over 20% of organisations that already have apprenticeships since the levy, so since April 2017, are already finding significant benefits within their organisation, they're reporting significant benefits. Considering how early it is in terms of the new apprenticeship standards, that's quite a nice figure to see.

You can grow your own. One of the things that apprenticeships allow you to do is build good succession planning into your business and your workforce. There is still a view in some parts that apprenticeships are effectively about bringing new people into organisations. Of course that is true, but apprenticeships are also about growing talent that's already within your organisations. We're certainly seeing within many of the public sector organisations that we're working with that there are lots of people who are already working in those organisations using apprenticeships as a ladder to grow their careers and grow their skills and capability. And that's a fantastic way of growing your own talent.

It also helps with retention, because effectively if you're investing through apprenticeships then you're demonstrating to your staff and your employees the investment you're putting into them through apprenticeships. Then of course people are more willing to invest their loyalty in the organisation. There is some evidence that people that are investing through apprenticeships tend to retain loyalty into organisations when they were already working in there particularly. So if you're taking existing employees and building them and growing them through an apprenticeship, that certainly helps with retention for those groups. We're seeing that again particularly in the public sector, which is a very strong thing, for example in areas such as nursing where retention is a key problem.

The final area that apprenticeships is a win-win, it's also a significant win for the individuals on the apprenticeship, because what they're getting is they're getting really good training, really good skills, really good qualifications. But at the same time they're also getting an income, and actually they don't have any debt, for example if they're getting a Degree through their apprenticeship. It's a really good way as an alternative route into getting a Degree if you want to go through an apprenticeship route. For example, here at the Open University we've got some of our apprentices who are doing our Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship, and they will come out after that apprenticeship having done a real job, having been fully trained, and having got a good solid Degree on the back of that, and of course they'll have been earning while they were learning and they don't have any debt. So it is a win-win at many levels for both the employees and the organisations.

The benefits of apprenticeships

So just to summarise the benefits of apprenticeships in brief. You can talk about building skills, addressing skills gaps with the organisation. The important thing there is about building a workforce strategy, which we'll talk about in a second. You can help them to drive recruitment, and certainly drive recruitment into your new organisation of new talent and young talent to build up and fill the skills gaps that you need. Motivation and engagement by demonstrating investment in your employees. Really important. And of course then the knock-on effect of that in terms of helping build retention.

The apprenticeship levy opportunity

There's four areas on here. We've already talked a bit about building new skills, but I'm just going to talk a bit around this circle here. The first one I'll talk about I think is the use it or lose it element. This is because of course the lose it part of that is coming up very rapidly. For the significant proportion of you that are levy payers already of course you probably already know you have until April 2019 to start using your levy or you will start to lose it back to government, to the DfE. We know that at the moment as things stand the government are going to be getting about £120m per month of levy money back from April 2019. For those that don't know, the levy is drawn down on a month-by-month basis depending on how much you're using, and of course the same is in the way it works going back to government, it goes on a month-by-month element. You've got 24 months to use your levy.

So I would advocate very, very strongly, if you're not currently using your levy, it really is important to try and make sure you can do the best you can to get use of it, otherwise that money is going back to government for reinvestment in education and training of course, but it means it's not money that you've got access to directly yourself.

The second one of these is return on investment. We've already said our research has shown that about 20% of people who have apprentices under the new standards are already finding significant benefits to their business. We reported a figure of about 25-30% of businesses we spoke to felt that the apprenticeships they had were already adding value in terms of the apprentices within the business in terms of showing deliverable ROI. Now of course you need to decide how you're going to measure ROI in your business/organisation, but of course I think the value around productivity and improvements in business change, are ones worth measuring. And that is part of your workforce strategy, to make sure you've got some ROI measures in there.

We've talked a bit about building new skills gaps, the opportunity to build new skills, the opportunity to meet your skills gaps. Digital, management, leadership are ones that come up quite a lot. But just to go to the last one, the government top-up. Of course if you don't pay the levy and you're a non-levy payer, which we've got a chunk listening to this webinar, then of course the government will put in a significant proportion of the cost of the apprenticeship. They'll currently put in 90%, soon that's going to be 95% towards the cost of an apprenticeship. That is a massive opportunity for any business that's a non-levy payer.

Apprenticeship providers such as the Open University, for example, can access that non-levy funding for you, and we can work with you to get that money from the government to help balance the small amount of investment you would therefore need to make in addition to that as well. What that means is you can get very good value for money from any training budget you've got to help you build your skills. Then if you're a levy payer then you still of course want to make the most of the opportunity you've got and spend all of your levy.

Apprenticeships – making it work

If you're thinking about using apprenticeships or you already are using apprenticeships, how do you make it work for you? How do you make sure that you're going to get the most you can from having an apprenticeship or apprenticeships as part of your workforce strategy? There's a five step process we would recommend, and I've got a slide on each of these and I won't dwell on them too long, but just to quickly canter through this.

You need to align the apprenticeships with your workforce strategy. You need to make sure you've got a strategy and effectively your apprenticeships are part of that strategy. You need to make sure you conduct a skills audit to understand what skills you're going to need in the future. You need to take an integrated approach, so don't treat apprenticeships as something completely separate from everything else you're doing. You need to be diligent when choosing a provider, and we'll talk a bit about what might that look like. Also, you need to make sure you've got the support mechanisms in place

for your employees. And by that we mean apprentices and of course the people around them like their line managers and mentors.

Align apprenticeships with your strategy

So let me just say a little bit about each one of those as we go through.

The first one is aligning apprenticeships with your strategy. Now of course the hard part about this is that developing a workforce strategy or a five year workforce strategy sounds great on paper, but actually when you sit down and do it yourself in your business it's always a bit more complicated than people might imagine. The important thing that we say to people and we talk to people about is actually understanding where your business is going. So whether your agenda is about things like growth, automation or productivity, or maybe restructuring or culture change, or any sort of changes in your business. Most organisations are struggling with the number of different challenges that they have, and that's what's going to drive your strategy.

Then of course from that understanding what type of skills gaps you will have, not what you have got now but you will have as you implement that strategy, whether it's IT and digital, management, leadership, industry specific etc. Basically what you need to do is make sure that your apprenticeships and the ideas for the apprenticeship standards that you think fit you and the things that are going to help you, align directly with the strategy. Therefore you get that organisational buy-in to the idea that apprenticeships are part of solving your organisational issues, not just something you're doing because you've got a levy and you have to spend it.

I say that slightly tongue and cheek, but of course the truth is that we do talk to organisations who have this levy and we have to spend it, what can I spend it on? Of course if you're doing that that's sort of okay, but it's not really the best solution. What you really want to be doing is standing back a little bit and thinking about what your strategy is, and then working out where your levy goes to address the strategy. Easy for me to say, difficult to do I know, but that's certainly the conversation we have with employers when we're trying to help them understand what their strategy could be.

Conducting a skills audit

Once you've got an idea of your workforce strategy and you've got that planning, for a lot of organisations who have got their workforce strategy in place already, and you make sure apprenticeships are part of that, it's really important to address the fact that you understand the skills you need, and therefore you do a skills audit.

The key point about skills audits are obviously considering the current and future skills for the next five years. So thinking about what those skills are to fit your strategy. But

also working from job roles, so not just the roles that you've got but the roles that you think you will need in five years' time or three to five years' time, and understanding what those roles are going to need in terms of skills and capabilities. That's really where you want to align your apprenticeships and the standards that you're using, and the providers that are going to provide those apprenticeships for you.

Of course the other things that's on here, and again it's an obvious statement, but identifying and involving key stakeholders when doing a skills audit is quite important. We do see a lot of employers that we work with where the skills audit, and in fact the workforce strategy, is seen as a HR agenda and it's owned by HR. Of course the reality is, if it's not really owned by senior leadership across the board as it were, then actually it's not really going to bite into the organisation. If you're going to be conducting a skills audit you really need your senior leadership and your management cadre to be bought into the fact that you need to do a skills audit and why it's important for the business.

Taking an integrated approach

Then we talk about taking an integrated approach. The key message here is effectively don't plan apprenticeships in isolation. Think about how your apprenticeships are part of your overall strategy. Think about the nature of the roles you're going to need. Your whole wider training and development needs, of which apprenticeships will address some things but of course won't address everything. One of the challenges that some employers are facing is, they're trying to shift some of their CPD investment into apprenticeship, understandably because the levy is being taken away from them. But of course apprenticeships can't address everything, not everything can be done through an apprenticeship, and that is a bit of a challenge for some organisations that have very little development and training money left.

Also, understand what sort of partnership you want with your provider. Because if it's an integrated approach to a workforce strategy then you need to make sure that partnership fits within your overall strategy and the things that you want to do in terms of developing your skills and capabilities.

Choosing a learning partner

In terms of choosing a provider, and this is specifically for apprenticeships of course, you need to think about what you need from a provider and why you need it. So in other words, how it fits with your skills audit results and your strategy. What you really want to be looking for we would argue is a provider that has a proven track record in apprenticeships of whatever type you're particularly interested in. A provider that can support you in fitting those apprenticeships and the apprenticeship standards to your strategy. So they're not selling you an off the shelf product that says here why don't you buy some of these, what they're actually doing is understanding with you why they are

going to solve some of your problems for your business or your organisation, and why they're going to fit with where you're going in the future.

It's important to make sure you've got providers that will help you with the levy and understand how the government funding etc works, particularly if you haven't got many of those skills in-house, and not everybody has. But also an organisation like ourselves at the Open University, we can help organisations access both the levy, and of course those that are non-levy payers we help them access the levy as well, and make sure that all of that process works very robustly and very smoothly for you and your apprentices. The bureaucracy involved, let's be honest for those involved it can be quite significant, and it is important to have a team, that the provider understands that in detail, understands the rules in detail, understands how that can work.

You can also make sure that you have a provider that's going to help you with attraction, selection and recruitment, both for recruiting and selecting new people into your business, but also of course for helping recruitment select those people that already work within your organisation that you want to put onto apprenticeships and help them develop as talent within your organisation. The selection process for those people is just as important, because of course it not only helps them commit to getting on board with the apprenticeship as it were, it also helps you understand what talent you've got within your organisation and how that talent can be aligned for where you want to go in the future. We certainly help many organisations think about how they do that.

You may have the need to make sure that your apprenticeship provider can have some sort of wider reach, whether that's national or certainly cross-regional reach. You may also need them to be able to scale-up to service certain volumes for you. Of course the challenge there is to make sure if you've got multiple geographies involved in your organisation, or multiple sites, that you have a provider that can service all of that for you.

And of course you may need access to a wide range of standards. Some providers such as ourselves provide a range of standards, but we also work with partners for example to draw in the opportunities for employers to have other standards whilst working through one central point. You may choose to find a provider that can do that for you, for example, and therefore offer a wider range of standards that even though they themselves don't provide but through partnership they can offer as part of your workforce strategy. That can make life a little bit easier for you if you feel that you want to do that.

Support for employees

The last thing in our route map as it were to making apprenticeships work for you is about making sure you have support for your employees. Some of this is fairly obvious,

but it's surprising how many employers sometimes don't build this in upfront and think about how this is going to work.

The first one of course is time. Your apprentices are going to need time to do the work that they need to do, particularly in terms of the off the job learning. The off the job learning is about 20%. The challenge with the off the job learning, and very, very many employers ask us how's that going to work for us, and of course the old fashioned view of this is that it's effective one day a week out of the workplace sat in a classroom in a college somewhere doing old style face-to-face learning. Now of course it does not need to be like that. If you use a provider such as ourselves, for example, who offer modern, flexible, supported online learning, then actually that 20% off the job can be delivered very flexibly in a way that works both for the apprentice and of course for you as a business/organisation. For example, it can work around different pressures in the business, whether you have certain parts of the year there's certain pressures in the business or certain times of the month etc, where you need to flex the amount the time your apprenticeships are perhaps working versus doing study. And of course we can do that in the methods that we approach.

You also need to make sure that you have appropriate work to make sure that the learning happens in the workplace. Again, it's back to the point I made earlier, this has to be a real job with work that is genuinely needed in your organisation, that the apprentice is doing a genuine job, that their learning is wrapped round learning and education rather than the other way round.

Of course we always say not to forget your line managers and support for the line managers. Line managers of apprentices need to understand the needs of that apprentice and the needs of the apprenticeship and how the apprenticeship works. For example, we would offer support to line managers around understanding apprenticeships, understanding what support they can offer, and how they might mentor and coach apprentices during that process of the apprenticeship.

You need to make sure your apprentice has got good access to learning by whatever method you're using, and actually whether that's a classroom based approach or an online based approach, or a blended mix of the two, that they can access that. Of course you mustn't forget the pastoral care element, and I would stress quite strongly don't overlook that, it is really important to apprentices. For example, we always make sure – and I've got a slide coming up I think – we try and wrap care and pastoral care around the apprentice so they've got as much support as they need to have to be successful.

What I'm going to do for the last couple of minutes, I'm just going to say a little bit about the Open University and what the Open University does. Then we're going to talk to Anne from Pearson's and get Anne to talk a bit about her experiences of

apprenticeships and how she introduced them into her business for successful addressing the skills gaps.

Why the OU?

So just saying something briefly about the OU for a couple of slides. The Open University is 50 years old this year, so we're very proud of that, and we're celebrating 50 years of innovation in learning delivery. We're also the largest university in Europe, we've got 175,000 students. We offer a very supportive wraparound for apprentices and for their employers to help them manage the entire process.

It's a very flexible approach to deliver around busy work and lives, the fact that the academic training is certainly online but balanced with blended and face-to-face interactions for apprenticeships. It's backed up by high quality expert learning content from leading academics. We have internationally recognised qualifications. Our MBA, for example, is triple accredited in the top 1% of the world, and our Senior Leaders' Masters Degree Apprenticeship has our triple accredited MBA as part of it.

Programme delivery

Also, we've got innovation around education technologies. For example, our online delivery is pretty amazing through apps and web based VLE etc. We've got our OU Anywhere app so you can study on your tablet, on your phone online or offline at any point whatsoever. Of course all of this technology and ability to have that online interaction is backed by face-to-face interactions as well, either through Adobe Connect in a virtual face-to-face, or actually a few face-to-face elements within the workplace by our practice tutors with the apprentice and employer.

A support team around your apprentice

This is the bit where as I said earlier we wrap a service around the apprentice. This is something that's important to think about when you're choosing employers for apprenticeships. For example, we would have around the apprentice a practice tutor who does the face-to-face and practical support of the apprentice in their work based learning. We'd have an academic tutor who supports the online delivery of the academic content. We have a student support team. We have a functional skills support team as well. Functional skills are an important element of the skills, building what you need for your apprenticeships. We also have apprenticeship programme delivery managers who work both with the employer and the apprentice to deliver a seamless service and make sure they're well supported. Of course all of that is supported within your organisation by the line manager and the mentor arrangements that you have for your own apprentices or apprenticeships.

Current apprenticeships

There's the list of the current apprenticeships that the Open University provides, ranging from nursing and lab science, policing, social work, management, digital technology etc.

Case study: Anne Ashworth, Head of Pearson Employee Apprenticeships

Okay, so let's move on and have a chat with Anne from Pearson. Anne is the Head of Employee Apprenticeships for Pearson. Anne, can you hear me?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yes, I can. Good morning.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Fantastic. Good morning, Anne. Thanks for joining us, we really appreciate it. So Anne, can you tell us a bit about your role at Pearson and the story about introducing apprenticeships within your business.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yes, of course. I head up our Employee Apprenticeship Programme. We're rather unique as an employer in the fact that we are an awarding body. We are the world's leading learning company. So we're pretty steeped in apprenticeships as a product and a service that we sell out to employers, providers, colleges etc. We have had apprenticeships in the business for quite a number of years. But with the levy, that gave us a real opportunity to look again at how we used apprenticeships in the business to support workforce development. I think it was fair to say historically that people really didn't maximise the benefits that they could bring into a business like ours. So we approached the levy in a very different way. Listening to what you said, I absolutely totally agree, we started off with our strategy. What was our strategy, what were our business objectives, and how could the apprenticeships actually lend and support those business objectives being met?

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Fantastic. In terms of the sort of skills gaps you had, what sorts of things were you thinking about when you started building your apprenticeship programmes?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Again, I suppose based on history of apprenticeships we thought it would be customer service, team leading, that type of generic apprenticeship. However, two things came into play that were new for us to consider. One was standards, they have really opened up the opportunities in our business. I am now able to go to our legal department and offer apprenticeships in that sector, I can go to facilities and health and safety. Project management has become a very, very important standard to us.

The other thing was that we're very much in a position of digital transformation. Again, what we've managed to do is really open up our technology and operations part of the business to take on board apprenticeships, and get rid of some of the preconceptions that the people in that team tended to have about it being only for 16-18 year olds, only being for low level academic achievers etc. So it's really changed.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Have you found it challenging to try and address those preconceptions? What sort of process have you had? Because lots of people listening out there will probably have businesses that have got some of that.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

I wouldn't say it's challenging, it's just a natural part of what you have to do when you're bringing something like this into a business. And it's continual, it's part of your communication strategy, so I am always talking to different parts of the business, I'm always looking at opportunities. I'm actually situated with my programme manager in our HR department, which means that we work across the business, and we work very closely with our HR colleagues. Communication, that is absolutely key to people understanding what job roles in the business, whether they'd be new vacancies or existing staff, would suit an apprenticeship rather than any other form of learning.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

You mentioned a number of different areas like project management, health and safety, digital transformation etc, so you've got a wide range of apprenticeships running already in the business.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

We absolutely have. We've got over 120 apprentices from our standing start in May 2017. We've got 30 achievers already. We do everything from Level 2 up to Level 7. You've been a key strategic partner for us in bringing in the Degree Apprenticeships and the Master Degree Apprenticeships.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

So is it management apprenticeships you're doing with the Open University?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

We're doing management, and this year we've also branched into digital and technology.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Fantastic. How is that model working for you, the supported online learning model?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yeah, really well. Again, because of the sort of business we are we've got a range of sites across the UK. Some people like face-to-face, if you like the old fashioned sessions, so we have providers for that. But also we have parts of the business where flexibility is really important. Because of who we are we have, for example, one of our sites where we process exams, so there are some weeks of the year when access and activity in an apprenticeship is really difficult. Having the OU model gives those members of staff that flexibility to negotiate with their line manager what 20% looks like for them. And that will differ week-to-week, but they monitor it.

The flexibility of having that workplace tutor who comes out and talks to the line manager as well as the apprentice. Really vital. I mean I can go to any one of our line managers and they know exactly what the apprentice is doing, and they're working with your members of staff on the assignments and the projects along with mentors. We have mentors that we put in place for all of our apprentices, but those that are on Degrees and Master Degree Apprenticeships, we have senior leader sponsors who really are senior people from our business who are there to support that individual and guide them on how to interpret the theory they're learning into a corporate organisation like ourselves. I have to say, the feedback from our senior leaders has been amazing. Of course it helps me in terms of the communication out to the business.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Brilliant. Have you got a sense of the value that the apprentices are adding to your business already? Is there some of that coming through by now?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yeah. What have we been going, two years now, we've had a number of our apprenticeships that have been promoted, some are now managers and are actually managers of apprentices. We've had one of our former apprentices that's been headhunted by another part of the business and bless him he's now in Dubai and is having a wonderful time. But he keeps in contact, which is nice.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Which is great, yeah.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yeah, it absolutely is. We've actually got a really interesting model for one of our Degree Apprenticeship Programmes which has an international rotation to it, and they're going to be going off soon into different sites in our global countries. We've got one of our apprentices going to New Delhi, going to America, going to Melbourne for example. So that's very exciting. Very exciting.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

It just shows the flexibility of how you can use the apprenticeships and how you can build them into the type of movement you want for your talent in terms of part of your strategy presumably.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

I think also internal rotations, that can work with the apprenticeships, a short secondment, work placement, so that they get that broader breadth. Of course from our perspective we're looking to keep this talent in the business. We're investing in them, we're investing time, we're investing the levy, so we really want to maximise their future with us. So this is futureproofing, it's developing them. The skills that they are learning are the new skills that are really going to help our business in the way it moves forward.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

That's fantastic to hear Anne, thank you very much. That's really great to hear that such a clear strategy and such a range of apprenticeships going through there to help the business.

I'm just thinking now we might go to some Q&A, if that's okay with you Anne?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Absolutely fine, yeah.

Question and Answer Session

Phil Kenmore – Open University

If we open up to questions on the chat if people want to type in a question or two. My colleagues are going to be managing this for me. I've got a question here from Ross Harrison, this is for you Anne. Anne, can you tell us a bit about how you offer pastoral care to a young apprentice compared to a more mature existing member of staff?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Absolutely. One interesting thing for us is that we had never previously recruited people into apprenticeship vacancies. But that is something actually we do, and about half of our apprentices come in through vacancies. We also now are very much bringing on under 18 year olds.

The way that we have supported that, because obviously our line managers don't have a huge amount of experience in it, is that we've done a lot of work in awareness raising, as they're working on the advert and the job description we tout our position. We do training with them, so we put all of our hiring managers and line managers of apprentices, regardless of age actually, we put them on safeguarding and prevent training. We have a risk assessment that we also do for young people when they come into the business that the line manager is responsible for, and we work very closely with our health and safety team on that. The HR business partners also work very closely, so they sort of have more of a watching brief over those young people as they come in.

We do have a pretty good at risk process as well that we apply to all apprentices. But obviously the younger ones we just sort of monitor a little bit more closely, particularly through the first few weeks of their learning when they're more likely to drop off for more personal reasons than anything. So it's very much using the systems that we have, but being a little tighter with them when it comes to a younger person.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

That's really helpful. Thanks Anne, it's very interesting. We find ourselves that certainly that first six week period is quite crucial to make sure people have the support they need around them.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Very much. What we've done with yourself and our other providers, is we ask you to do a weekly catch-up call with learners and managers in that first four weeks.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Yeah, exactly. And I think what's really interesting there is going back to the slide I had earlier about the wraparound the apprentice, it's making sure that all that support is there. We always do try and make sure for people that are thinking about an Open University apprenticeship for example, that we have a very clear amount of information giving an engagement with the apprentice prior to sign up so they understand what it's actually going to involve. Some of the workloads are quite heavy for some of these apprenticeships. For example, if you do the Senior Leaders' Masters Apprenticeship, you're effectively doing an MBA whilst working. It's not a task to be taken on lightly shall we say.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

That's right. And I think that's why the initial advice and guidance piece is really important, so that you're almost trying to turn people off the idea of joining to make sure that they absolutely understand the commitments that are needed. That goes for the line manager as well, because that line manager has to absolutely understand their responsibilities to support the apprentice in that 20% off the job, and of course the personal study commitments that come with doing a higher level programme.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

We've got quite a few questions coming in for you here Anne, so let's take a couple and see if we can quickly answer them. The first one is short but probably quite deep. How did you sell apprenticeships to your Board?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Well maybe I was lucky because we are Pearson. But I did have to tell them, you're absolutely right. I sold them on the basis of workforce development and talent development. I didn't look at it from a financial perspective of we've got a levy and we must use it. It's about making sure that we've got something that's fit for purpose. And they bought into that. I have to say, they have been the champions through the business. Having them on board really does help cascade that message down.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

That's fantastic to hear, Anne. Certainly we found from the Open University point-of-view talking to lots and lots of different employers, we work with about 350 employers,

that you have to get some form of Board level commitment. Certainly from an apprenticeships' point-of-view as well it has to go beyond HR, doesn't it.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Oh, absolutely.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

It's important that the generic business as it were, the rest of the business, understands the value of them.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Yeah. I think if you are clear that there is a direct correlation between the apprenticeship programme and the return on investment it brings and business objectives, then it's going to work because it's a clear measure of success.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Yeah, exactly. We've got a number of questions coming in which I think are probably for both of us, you and I, about the 20% and managing the 20% off the job requirement. People are making comments on the lines of managers are keen initially but this quickly drops off. A couple of people have made comments that the promise of the 20% being allowed, so people are guaranteed it in order to do their learning etc, is there, but it actually doesn't necessarily materialise when things are busy in the business etc. How do you find that, Anne? That's a challenging one I know.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Obviously it's within the commitment statement that the apprentice and the manager sign up to in the very first place. But we reinforce it. We do training of managers where we talk it through. If I hear that the 20% is not happening for whatever reason I'm straight on to the manager for that conversation, and then we work through how that's going to be managed better. Obviously you monitor it on our behalf as well, so you're constantly giving me reports, and if you pick up an issue then both of us together work on that. So I work on it from the employer angle, you work on it from the apprentice angle.

It's not an easy thing because as you say business does get in the way, but we're very clear, and we're very clear with our managers that they must commit to this and do it properly. What I tend to find actually is that the apprentices don't do it because they feel

guilty leaving the workplace. Again, I use the managers and the HR VPs to assist with that.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

It's really interesting, certainly again from an Open University point-of-view we make sure as you say and we monitor very closely the 20%, and make sure that apprentices are getting their 20% however they do it. Of course with the Open University model that 20% can be flexed in a way that isn't just one day a week out in a classroom. The challenge of that is of course the apprentice and the manager and the business together have to make sure that happens, which is part of the requirement.

We have our APDMs or apprenticeships programme delivery manager roles, which support the employer and the apprentice to make sure that happens, and part of their job is to monitor that and ensure that that is actually enforced. What we do is – not necessarily with organisations like yourself Anne – with some organisations we basically intervene at a point where we're saying this doesn't look like it's happening the way it should do, and we make sure that therefore people are reminded that it has to happen and how that works.

As I said earlier during the presentation, what we do do as well is we understand, and our practice tutors who do the face-to-face work with the apprentices understand that business comes and goes, it ebbs and flows a bit, sometimes there are really busy times, sometimes there are quieter times. For example, we work in the NHS and during the winter it's always a busy very period for the NHS. We might accept that some of the 20% is done to a lesser extent on a per week basis during certain months of the year during the winter, but there's a much higher proportion in perhaps other weeks. Some businesses that works for them, others don't. But of course that has to fit within the structure of the academic study of the apprenticeship.

Okay, so let's have a look at some of the other questions coming through Anne, we've still got a few here. How do you measure the success of apprenticeships and what sort of factors do you measure and/or assess?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Oh, that's a good one! Obviously you've got your achievement and your achievement on time. I think with the standards that is an incredibly difficult thing for providers at the moment because we've only had a few go through, so actually working out the planned end date and then marrying that up with the reality of end point assessment is a bit tricky.

In terms of success for us it's about retention, it's about social mobility through the business. We love to see our apprentices applying for different roles within the business, being successful, being promoted, going for higher level roles. Also, picking up higher level apprenticeships. We've got a number that have done one apprenticeship and now automatically progressing onto the next level for them, because it's sitting with the promotion that they've had or the extra responsibilities that they've taken on. For us that's definitely the case.

I think the other knock-on success is the fact that more parts of the business are engaging, and managers are being far more proactive in the way that they work with us than they were originally.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

It's really interesting there to hear about the career ladder opportunities that apprenticeships give people, and actually how you can help people move through, and they can see stages of that as well, see where their career progress is going to go. Which is a great sort of ROI for the business, I think.

I don't know whether you're monitoring retention, it might be too early yet perhaps Anne? Some people are talking about retention.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

We are monitoring retention. It's one of our KPIs that we set for our providers. We monitor it against each of our divisions and against each of the programmes as well. We obviously take into account things that are outside of our control. Unfortunately providers can't do that when it comes to the SFA monitoring data etc. But we certainly do. We are looking at it in terms of all the other things that are going on in the business. Our normal retention for different job roles within the business as well. So yes, we're absolutely looking at that. It is improving. It very much is a better picture for those that are on apprenticeships than not.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Fantastic. Thanks, Anne. One question here that perhaps I'll start with. How do you adjust funding to recognise prior learning and qualifications for staff?

From a higher education point-of-view certainly if we're taking people onto one of our Degree or Masters level apprenticeships, what we would do is we'll recognise prior learning or qualifications as part of the academic process of bringing people into that apprenticeship. For example, in some areas people will come in at Stage 2 of the

apprenticeship if they get recognition for 120 or 180 credits of prior learning, for example.

Most well established providers will have a method of doing that and they'll be able to find a way from an academic credits point-of-view anyway of looking at the prior learning and qualifications and translating that into recognition of credits for the apprenticeship. So you can do that, you can come in at Stage 2 for some apprenticeships. There are some caps on how many credits you can take over, but that does work in a way.

Have you had any of that, Anne?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

As we're an employer not an employer provider, I don't specifically have to think about that, that's our providers. But we certainly look at it from a functional skills' perspective, because we take on the responsibility of the initial assessment for that. Then obviously from a provider perspective there's looking at the Ofqual site in terms of where there are exemptions or acceptable coverages of qualifications. Particularly on the international front as well, we have a number of our employees that come from different countries and come in with foreign qualifications. Some are accepted by Ofqual, some are not. So really it's linking in with those. There's a special database actually. I can't remember the name off the top of my head, but there is a database where you can actually go and look at the qualifications that are approved against UK ones.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

And that's really important for international businesses. We have so many employers talk to us about that, people coming from different parts of the world and now being resident in the UK.

Somebody did ask a question further back in the stream actually and I didn't pick up on it, about how you manage the internationalism of people moving around when they have to spend the majority of their time in England to be relevant for the apprenticeship and to be on the apprenticeship. Do you have that problem at all, Anne?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

Not really, no. People that come onto the apprenticeships are people that are actually working in England. We haven't had any that have gone international during their apprenticeship. I'm trying to think. We do have some members of staff that do go abroad during their apprenticeship for periods of time, and we work around that. So if they're away for a couple of weeks or a month then the providers work around that in

terms of setting them work. Sometimes they will actually dial in remotely to sessions where normally they would have been in a face-to-face session. From that perspective there is a little bit of a challenge. Generally speaking they stay with us, get their apprenticeship. Or maybe it's me, I don't let them go until they've finished their apprenticeship!

Phil Kenmore – Open University

We do know of course that you have to be based in England to be on an apprenticeship. We've had other employers ask us a question about people that go for a six month placement or something internationally. I can't remember exactly the rule, but I think the rule is that you have to have the majority of your time during the apprenticeship in England.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

50%, yeah.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

That's right, yeah. And of course you can step off and step back on again with some providers such as ourselves at certain points in time, and if employers want to do that they can do that.

Somebody's asked a question here, and I again can say an Open University point-of-view on this. They're asking whether all apprentices are brought in from outside or current employees offered as well? I'll answer that first Anne if I can.

Basically from the Open University point-of-view, we work with a lot of employers who actually are using apprenticeships to develop existing employees and help them move up the career ladder in one way or another, or address their skills gaps. Of course what that does is it does help improve retention, it helps improve motivation, it gives people career ladders and career paths within their business.

We've had examples of people that worked in organisations at a fairly lower for maybe 15/20 years, suddenly seeing the opportunity of an apprenticeships to gain a Degree for example, and actually can still carry on working in the organisation that they love, and actually they can gain their Degree and build their career within the organisation in a way they wouldn't have had an opportunity for before. We see that quite a lot actually. So there are lots of employers using apprenticeships for existing employees.

But of course some employers do recruit brand new people in for apprentices, and of course that happens at all different levels. For example, we work with people like DHL or Unilever who we know do things like that.

Anne, have you had a mix of both new and existing?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

We're pretty much 50/50, which has been quite a surprising thing, I didn't think it would be as high as that. But yeah, we've really changed the mind-set of some of our hiring managers in looking at apprenticeships. And in recognising it's a training role, that's really, really key. We have people coming into a huge variety of roles, probably generally about Level 2/Level 3 when they're new recruits, and then as you said very much that development of existing members of staff where they've been identified in their performance review as either moving into the next level of development, or needing some performance development. The apprenticeship work beautifully. So it very much fits both of those sides of things. And great stories from both types of apprentices, I have to say.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Brilliant. Thank you, Anne. Last question then. A couple of people have asked the question about entry criteria for programmes, particularly for the higher end Degree programmes versus the others. Again, what I can say from the Open University point-of-view is, the only entry criteria we have for our programmes are those which are either set by regulators where's there's a regulatory entry requirement, for example nursing, social work etc. Or where employers have a particular view on what the entry requirements need to be. From an Open University point-of-view as a higher education institution, we don't put barriers to entry. We exist to widen participation in education, and that's our purpose. So we will follow what regulators say, and we'll follow what employers say, but our programmes generally don't have that.

Have you found entry criteria to be an issue, Anne, at all?

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

I would say from the beginning when hiring managers were looking at it from the way they'd always done it. Very much graduates, because our business does tend to need people that have got really good background and experience obviously of teaching, for example. However, that's really changing, and now we've got young people coming on with GCSEs. We've had young people coming in from Sixth Form and going into Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeships. We do also have a Graduate Apprenticeship where we need people that have got skills in say English and modern

foreign language, but they certainly do not know the job of publishing assistant. So it's a real mix. I think that's an exciting concept for employers there that you can use apprenticeships in that way.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Fantastic. Okay, so we're out of time. That went jolly quick didn't it, Anne.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

It did, yes.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

Thanks everyone for joining us, we really appreciate it. We've had fantastic interaction, lots and lots of questions. Apologies that we didn't manage to answer all of them. In fact, I think we've probably really only just skimmed the surface of them. If you'd like to know more about the Open University apprenticeships obviously please go to our website open.ac.uk/apprenticeships, there's lots of information there. And our team would be very happy to speak to employers about any apprenticeships that we're involved in or how we can help you with others.

Anne, thank you very much for your time, we appreciate you joining us this morning from Pearson. It's really nice to hear your story and the success that you're making of apprenticeships in your business.

Anne Ashworth – Pearson

It's my pleasure. And isn't it a wonderful National Apprenticeship Week this year, it's really got a lot of momentum to it.

Phil Kenmore – Open University

It's fantastic, yeah. Well thank you everybody for joining us. We hope you enjoy the rest of National Apprenticeship Week. We hope the webinar has been helpful and useful, and please do give us feedback via our website, we'd be very happy to hear it. Thank you very much. Goodbye.