

Welcome from our Deputy Director



Welcome to the Christmas edition of the Trailblazer Times.

I wanted to say a big thank you for all the hard work you've put in to standards development over the past year. We now have over **220 Trailblazers** that have collectively either developed or are in the process of developing **nearly 500 standards**. Recent standards approved for development include ones as diverse as Actuary, Photographer, Social Worker and Serious and Complex Crime Investigator. You are all part of this success!

Work at our end also continues at pace with further progress made on the establishment of the new Institute for Apprenticeships (more details below) and more detail due out in the New Year. Please do take the time to catch up on the various updates covered below – a little light reading to take with you over the festive break...

Seasons Greeting to you all,

Carl Creswell

Deputy Director, Apprenticeships



Update on Institute for Apprenticeships

Recruitment to posts in the Institute is progressing well. We received 300 applicants for the Board places and are aiming to announce successful candidates early in the New Year. We will also be consulting on a draft of the Government's strategic guidance for the Institute.



The application window for chairs of the Institute's Routes Panels has recently closed and applications are currently being reviewed. From January 2017, we are planning for a lot of activity and further opportunities for employers to engage with the Institute. The Shadow Institute intends to launch its Operational Plan for public consultation. This plan will set out further detail on the role of the Institute, including proposals for how it will deliver its functions; and key objectives for its first year of operation and up to 2020.

There will be a consultation period running early in the New Year alongside a series of stakeholder events. Peter Lauener will update attendees of the Trailblazer National

Conference in Birmingham on 24 January on the work of the Institute, so make sure you book your place (see below).



In the meantime, the Technical and Further Education Bill is making its way through Parliament, setting out the Government's proposals to expand the role of the Institute in April 2018 to cover college-based technical education, as well as apprenticeships.

National Trailblazer Conference



By now, all Trailblazer chairs should have received their invitation to the National Trailblazer Conference on 24th January 2017 at the NEC in Birmingham.

This is our first conference of this kind on this scale and we encourage representatives of all Trailblazers to attend. The conference will be an excellent opportunity to get updates on the recent standards policy and process changes and the latest on the set-up of the new Institute for Apprenticeships in April.

The event will also feature employer led workshops on key elements of the journey from developing a standard to delivering starts, so there will also be plenty of time to network and share best practice throughout the day. You can confirm your attendance by clicking [here](#) but please be aware that spaces are limited, so invitations are restricted to two places per Trailblazer.

Update on the Digital Apprenticeship Service

The National Apprenticeship Service has created a new narrated presentation to explain the main features of the digital apprenticeship service

The video is aimed at levying-paying employers and outlines the employer journey – from the account home screen and registration to the funding and apprentice management sections.

It shows screenshots taken from the prototype system (though note these are still in development and may be refined before the service is fully live in May 2017).

You can find the presentation on the [Skills Funding Agency YouTube](#) channel.



Technical Education Reforms and Apprenticeships



The government's Technical Education strategy reforms aim to give employers greater input to ensure that skills provision meets their needs. We commissioned an Independent Panel on Technical Education, chaired by Lord Sainsbury, to make recommendations on how to further improve technical education in England.

Following from the publication of the [Skills Plan](#), which sets out the overarching framework for the skills system, Technical Education will be arranged around the common framework of 15 technical education routes. Each route will group together occupations with related skills, knowledge and behaviour requirements. These routes will transform full-time college-based courses into high-quality technical options which fit alongside reformed apprenticeships. They will also help us to align apprenticeship standards and content for new technical qualifications available in colleges.

In light of this, we have introduced a new criterion requiring any apprenticeship standard approved for development to align with one of the 15 Technical Routes. **From now on, we are therefore asking bidders to detail which of the 15 Sainsbury Technical Education Routes their proposed standard aligns to.** This new requirement is covered in the new proforma for proposals contained on gov.uk (see the "Support, Guidance and Events" section below)

Over time, occupational maps will become available for each of the 15 routes. As and when they become available we will ask bidders to specify which occupations within the route map their proposed standard covers. A link will be provided on the Trailblazer Guidance webpage¹ as these maps become available.

We are currently drafting occupational maps for each of the Technical Education routes and we are looking for employer input on those which have been drafted so far, to ensure they provide an accurate reflection of industry. These are:

- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Health and Science
- Construction
- Legal, Accounting and Finance
- Childcare and Education, and
- Digital

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-apprenticeships-in-england-guidance-for-trailblazers>

For each route, we will also be recruiting panels for professionals which will develop occupational standards for new technical qualifications. These panels will be groups made up of industry professionals who are working in, and with current expertise in, the relevant occupational area. Look out for more information on how to get involved in the New Year.

If you would like to input into the development of these occupational maps, or for more information on the role of panels of professionals, please contact technical.education@education.gov.uk



'Find Apprenticeship Training' tool

'Find Apprenticeship Training' tool now live

The Skills Funding Agency has launched a new tool to help employers across England find apprenticeship training. 'Find Apprenticeship Training' is now available on GOV.UK: <https://findapprenticeshiptraining.sfa.bis.gov.uk/>

It gives employers information about apprenticeships on offer at approved training organisations and includes information on more than 16,000 apprenticeships, as well as details about the training providers that can deliver the qualifications.

Please encourage providers that you know are offering standards to enter the information on 'Find Apprenticeship Training'.

Information for training providers on how to enter data on find apprenticeship training be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/find-apprenticeship-training-how-to-submit-data>

Degree Apprenticeships



Degree Apprenticeships bring together the best of higher and professional and technical education, and see apprentices achieving a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of their apprenticeship. If you are considering bidding to develop a standard which you believe may be at level 6 or above, there is an opportunity to include a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of the apprenticeship programme.

As with any apprenticeship, the starting point for your Degree Apprenticeship is a clear occupational role. This is not always easy at these levels but it must be discrete and easily recognisable by other employers. The apprenticeship will effectively integrate a bachelor's

or master's degree into the training to provide a full level of professional and occupational competence. This is best considered in consultation with Higher Education providers.

Consulting with HE providers early in the process will allow you to:

- clearly define your requirements, and establish how they complement those of the HE providers
- allow HE providers time to design provision to meet your standard
- allow time to consider the best ways for HE providers to deliver their degrees (blended learning, workplace projects etc)
- build on your existing relationships with HE providers, or establish new partnerships to ensure there's a network of providers available for employers.

You have the flexibility to structure your Degree Apprenticeship in one of two ways:

- a fully-integrated degree course designed specifically for apprentices, which delivers and tests both academic learning, on-the-job training and attitudes, or
- through an existing degree programme to deliver the academic knowledge requirements of your profession, combined with additional training to meet the full apprenticeship requirements, and have a separate test of full occupational competence at the end of the apprenticeship.

As with other apprenticeships, you should ensure that professional bodies (where applicable) are involved in the design of your Degree Apprenticeship at the earliest stage.

There is a lot of emerging good practice on the Degree Apprenticeship model and we would recommend consideration of existing degree level standards, alongside discussions with HE providers who already deliver these standards, to further inform your planning. Some groups are discussing level 8 (PhD or Doctorate) apprenticeships too – these would be new so it's important to check there's now work going on elsewhere which might be worth including in your trailblazer.

Apprenticeship standards which do not include degrees but include other Higher Education qualifications (for example, diplomas, foundation degrees, certificates of education) are defined as higher apprenticeships rather than degree apprenticeships in our classification. All standards are known by their unique occupational title when in use.

Institute of Meat New Apprentice Membership

The Institute of Meat has introduced a new membership grade for apprentices who enrol on the butchery apprenticeship standard, a reflection of their confidence in the standard to deliver training required in the sector.

Walter Smith Fine Foods apprentices – Curtis Brind, Jack Hewson, Stephen Maltby and Reece Nevard, were the first apprentices to be enrolled on the butchery standard. They were presented with their membership certificates by Bill Jerney, Chair of the Institute's executive committee in March.



The Trailblazer is on target for over 100 starts on the standard this year. For further information please contact Terry Fennell: terry.fennell@foodtraining.org.uk. We'd love to hear about other such news stories across Trailblazers...

Notice – Trailblazer Small Business Travel Fund

Actions for claimants

To note: Please ensure that for the current year, any claims for reimbursements for travel expenses to the [small business travel fund](#) are sent in **by Thursday 23 March 2017**.

Please send your completed claim form and **original receipts** to:

Yeolanda Lopes,
The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills,
1 Victoria Street
London
SW1P 0EH

Support, Guidance and Events

- HMRC have published their guidance on paying the levy which can be found [here](#).
- Online application forms for proposals for new standards and for submitting draft standards / assessment plans by our 19 January deadline are available here:
 - New proposals - <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/YJ5XC/>
 - Standards and Assessment Plans <http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/3VFCD/>
- There will be an introductory webinar on Friday 27th January, 10am -11am, for new Trailblazers who have had proposals to develop new standards approved. This is designed to give such Trailblazers an overview of policy and process, and an opportunity to ask questions you might have. Please click [here](#) to register.
- “Future Apprenticeships” supports training providers and potential assessment organisations to respond to the apprenticeship reforms and deliver high quality apprenticeships. It includes workshops, intensive packages of support, on line resources, webinars and Provider Readiness Groups. For further information click [here](#).

