

Engaging small and medium enterprises in work experience and apprenticeships in London

This report identifies good practice and challenges for providers in engaging small and medium enterprises in work experience and apprenticeships in London. This project forms part of Ofsted's improvement activity in conjunction with the Association of Colleges' professional engagement with the further education sector and the London Work Based Learning Alliance.

Age group: 16+

Published: January 2015

Reference no: 140132



Corporate member of
Plain English Campaign
Committed to clearer communication

361

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/140132.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

No. 140132

© Crown copyright 2015



Contents

Introduction	4
Main findings	4
Recommendations	5
Context	6
Why work experience is important	8
Working with SMEs	9
Preparing learners for work experience and apprenticeships with SMEs	11
Work experience	11
Apprenticeships	12
Engagement from an SME's perspective	12
Notes	14
Annex 1. Organisations that have contributed to the project	16
Annex 2. Resource pack	19
Hints and tips	19
Hints and tips from SMEs for providers	22
Hints and tips from SMEs for SMEs	22
Case studies	23
Advice for providers on gaining work placements for learners – 2nd Chance Education	28
Good practice examples from Ofsted	31
Ofsted survey reports that may be of interest	32

Introduction

This small-scale project identifies some of the factors that have influenced London training providers' effective engagement with small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in apprenticeships and work experience.¹ The report considers a sample of London providers' and SMEs' perspectives on what enables or hinders effective engagement. It includes a resource pack of practical hints, tips and case studies to help other providers improve and enhance their engagement with SMEs in work experience and apprenticeships.

London training providers have made clear that it is a challenge to involve SMEs in providing work experience and to encourage more SMEs to be involved in apprenticeships. Other research suggests that this is a national challenge and not an issue specific to London. Although there are examples of good practice relating to work experience and apprenticeships, these tend to explore the impact on learners rather than how to go about engaging employers.

Main findings

- Providers routinely cite that the main barriers to engagement with SMEs in work experience and apprenticeships are employers' time constraints and the lack of availability of staff to work with learners and apprentices. These barriers make it challenging for providers to find work experience places and apprenticeships.
- Employers are not satisfied with learners' employability skills and are critical of how prepared young people are before moving into work.² The opportunity to have well-planned work experience with an employer is crucial for young people to find out about the world of work, develop their employability skills and make informed career choices.
- The providers responding to the questionnaire found it difficult to source sufficient employer-based work experience opportunities for all their study programme learners. The emphasis on developing employability skills in government-funded training programmes creates competition for places.
- SMEs interviewed said that work experience was not always a real benefit to their business and created a lot of additional work. However, they did typically recognise the value of work experience to learners in helping them develop employability skills and make career choices. Half of the providers who responded to the questionnaire said that they use work experience as an opportunity to introduce a potential apprentice to an employer.
- The 15 SMEs spoken to indicated that the large number of providers competing for work experience and apprenticeship places caused confusion. The SMEs found

¹ In this report, the generic term 'provider' describes both further education colleges and independent learning providers.

² *Gateway to growth: CBI/Pearson Education education and skills survey 2014*, CBI, 2014; www.cbi.org.uk/business-issues/education-and-skills/education-and-skills-survey.

it difficult to decide who to work with when different providers offered different options and services.

- Six of the 15 SMEs said that being involved in work experience and apprenticeships was too bureaucratic. They were unaware that the government had reduced the bureaucracy for Disclosure and Barring Services checks, employers' liability insurance and health and safety.
- Three SMEs interviewed had used the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) website but reported that they found it complex and confusing.
- Three of the SMEs interviewed found the apprenticeship frameworks complex and said they did not always match the work role on offer. There was little awareness from the SMEs about the option to add additional units to an apprenticeship framework to meet the needs of micro businesses.
- The SMEs interviewed had mixed experiences with providers, learners and apprentices. Nine SMEs had long-term relationships with their current provider and were very satisfied. However, others have had unsatisfactory experiences with providers, including poor communication, frequent changing of provider staff and being 'sold' a training package they felt they had to accept, even if it did not fully meet their needs.

Recommendations

Government departments and funding agencies should:

- ensure that SMEs are aware of the benefits and implications of being involved in work experience and/or apprenticeships. Improved communications should include simplifying the information on the NAS website.

Providers should:

- develop well-planned and comprehensive employability programmes so that young people are well prepared to move into the world of work
- ensure that there are sufficient employer-based work experience places for all learners for whom it is appropriate
- improve the information they give to SMEs so that SMEs fully understand the benefits and implications of being involved in work experience and apprenticeships
- ensure that SMEs are aware of the reduction of bureaucracy by the government
- ensure that they provide good communication and support for SMEs when they have a work experience learner or an apprentice.

Context

1. In 2014, London had over 934,000 private sector businesses – more than any other region in the UK. Across the UK, 99.9% of private sector businesses were SMEs.³ The breakdown of London private sector businesses in 2014 was:
 - 78.2% were sole proprietorships or partnerships
 - 21.1% had between one and 49 employees
 - 0.6% had between 50 and 249 employees
 - 0.2% had more than 250 employees.
2. There were 730,565 businesses in London that were sole proprietors or partnerships. Overall, 927,730 businesses employed fewer than 50 employees. This number of micro and small businesses in London is an additional challenge in increasing employer-based work experience opportunities and apprenticeships as they are less likely to offer places.
3. The government is focusing on increasing the number of apprenticeships, especially for 16-18-year-olds. In London, the London Enterprise Panel (LEP) has a Skills and Employment project looking specifically at this area.⁴ Although the number of people starting apprenticeships in London has grown by 133% from 17,180 in 2008/09 to 40,050 in 2013/14, it still has the lowest number of apprenticeship starts apart from the North East. The number of apprentices over 25 years of age has tripled between 2008/09 and 2013/14, while the number aged 16-18 has increased from 6,100 to just 9,510 in the same six-year period.⁵
4. The study programmes and traineeships introduced in August 2013 underlined the need for a greater number of employer-based, high quality work experience places. Under previous programmes, employer-based work experience was desirable but not always implemented.⁶ Currently, employer-based work experience is not mandatory but is highly recommended on study programmes. Learners can carry out non-qualification activity within simulated work experience, but funding for work experience is only available for learners working with employers. Traineeships require employer-based work experience. The competition for places is now high, with schools, colleges and independent

³ *Business population estimates for the UK and regions 2014* (Statistical Release BIS/14/92), Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/statistics/business-population-estimates-2014.

⁴ *Our work and priorities*, London Enterprise Panel, 2014; <https://lep.london/our-work-and-priorities/our-projects>.

⁵ *FE data library: apprenticeships*, Statistical data set, Skills Funding Agency and Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/fe-data-library-apprenticeships.

⁶ *Lessons from the Foundation Learning provision for the new 16 to 19 study programmes* (130115), Ofsted, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/publications/lessons-from-the-foundation-learning-provision-for-the-new-16-to-19-study-programmes.

learning providers all seeking employers to place their learners. Nearly all providers commented that they found it difficult to resource sufficient opportunities.

5. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) is the funding body for the study programmes and traineeships for learners up to 18. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is the funding body for apprenticeships and traineeships for learners over 18. It incorporates NAS. NAS recognises the importance of involving SMEs in apprenticeships and is looking for ways to enable this to happen. The Holt Review looked at making apprenticeships more accessible to SMEs.⁷ Since publication of the report in May 2012, NAS has implemented the majority of its proposals, including the production of a dedicated 'Apprenticeships for Small Businesses Toolkit' and the 'Find an Apprenticeship Training Organisation' web tool.⁸
6. As the Holt Review identified, the NAS website has an enormous amount of information on it but the design is not very appealing to SMEs and young people.⁹ The SFA is looking at the design of the NAS website but no changes will be made until the results of the 'Future of apprenticeships in England' reforms are finalised and published.¹⁰
7. The SFA is identifying other ways to engage with SMEs themselves, and its SME policy unit is looking to collaborate with organisations that have SME members. These include professional organisations, trade organisations, Chambers of Commerce, the Institute of Directors and the Federation of Small Businesses. Working in partnership with these organisations should enable NAS to access a wide base of SMEs across the country. One example is work with the British Hospitality Association through the British Hospitality Conversation (BHC). This includes supporting BHC events by either providing local NAS advisers where possible or by providing materials. All apprenticeship pledges made at these events will be individually followed up by NAS advisers who will explore what the employers want to do, help them find apprentices and training providers and support them through the process.
8. Jason Holt has been appointed as the Small Business Apprenticeship Ambassador, a role supported by NAS. He advises NAS on how best to engage

⁷ *Making apprenticeships more accessible to small and medium-sized enterprises: a review by Jason Holt*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, 2012; www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-apprenticeships-more-accessible-to-small-and-medium-sized-enterprises-a-review-by-jason-holt.

⁸ Apprenticeships for Small Businesses toolkit and Find a On Apprenticeship Training Organisation web tool, NAS website; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141006151154/http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/apprenticeships-for-small-business.aspx>.

⁹ NAS website: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141006151154/http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>.

¹⁰ BIS published *Future of apprenticeships in England: implementation plan* in response to the Richard review and proposed changes are being trialled; www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-changes.

with smaller businesses and how to help increase the number, quality, impact and reach of apprentices. He also acts as an advocate for the benefits of high-quality apprenticeships for businesses and individuals, works closely with the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network and helps raise the profile of apprentices in England. The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network in London is coordinated by the London Work Based Learning Alliance (LWBLA).¹¹

Why work experience is important

9. Ofsted concurs with the view of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) that

‘Work experience is the key to bridging the gap between education and the world of work. At its broadest and best, work experience can open young people’s eyes to jobs they have never thought of, help inform career decisions, offer a chance to prove themselves to an employer and help instil the attitudes and behaviours expected at work.’¹²

10. Ofsted’s 2012 report *Apprenticeships for young people* found that employers welcomed work experience as a way of evaluating young people’s work ethic.¹³ Young people who had previously undertaken well organised work experience or some form of vocational taster courses were more successful in making good progress with their apprenticeships than those starting straight from school without such experience. Very often, successful work experience led an employer to employ and support a young person through their apprenticeship.
11. The CBI’s 2014 education and skills survey *Gateway to growth* found that 33% of businesses were not satisfied with school leavers’ attitudes to work and 52% of employers urged schools and colleges to develop a greater awareness of working life with support from businesses.¹⁴ In a 2013 UKCES report, 29% of employers saw work experience as being critical when recruiting young people; a further 45% said it is significant.¹⁵ While businesses recognise the need to link with schools and colleges, progress by employers and providers has been slow in tackling barriers to business involvement. There is widespread uncertainty among providers and employers about how to make work experience worthwhile. Too many employers think work experience involves a

¹¹ London Work Based Learning Alliance website; www.wblalliance.org.uk/ambassador.php.

¹² *Making work experience work for you*, UKCES, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/collections/employer-guides-to-work-experience.

¹³ *Apprenticeships for young people* (110177), Ofsted 2012; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141124154759/http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/apprenticeships-for-young-people>.

¹⁴ ‘Employers want education system to better prepare young people for life outside school gates – CBI/Pearson survey’, CBI press release, 4 July 2014; www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2014/07/employers-want-education-system-to-better-prepare-young-people-for-life-outside-school-gates-outside-school-gates-cbi-pearson-survey.

¹⁵ *Not just making tea... Reinventing work experience*, UKCES, 2013; www.gov.uk/government/collections/employer-guides-to-work-experience.

two-week placement in the summer and do not realise that all types of employer contact are important in inspiring young people and enabling them to become aware of the range and variety of career opportunities open to them.

12. The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) has indicated that work experience in small SMEs exposes young people to the opportunities of working in a small business and completing an apprenticeship in one.¹⁶ Training providers' engagement with small businesses can also go beyond traditional work experience and can include activities such as mentoring, talks from businesses and teaching classes on entrepreneurship. Just under 40% of the 2,774 FSB members that responded to their survey felt that, with a greater range of work experience, young people would be better prepared for the workplace. Thirty-one per cent offer work experience but 67% have never been contacted by their local school or college asking for their involvement.
13. Providers' comments in Ofsted's questionnaires and other research indicated that many SMEs cite bureaucracy as a reason why they do not want to be involved. However, the government has recently cut down on bureaucracy:¹⁷
 - Employers do not need to carry out an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services check on members of staff supervising young people aged 16 and 17.
 - Employers' liability insurance now covers work experience students, providing insurers are members of the Association of British Insurers. More information is available on the Association of British Insurers website.¹⁸
 - Simplified health and safety guidance makes it clear that if organisations already employ young people, risk assessments will not need to be repeated for work experience students. Employers with fewer than five employees do not need a written risk assessment.

Working with SMEs

14. Ten out of the 24 providers questioned agreed that placing a learner with an SME, whether it is for work experience, a traineeship or an apprenticeship, offers much more than with a large employer. Not only do learners have the opportunity to be involved in a wide variety of tasks within the organisation but they are also more likely to be actively involved in the running of the organisation and seeing how the business works. However, there are challenges for providers in working with SMEs.

¹⁶ *The apprenticeship journey*, Federation of Small Businesses, 2012;

www.fsb.org.uk/policy/images/fsb%202012%20apprenticeships.pdf.

¹⁷ *Post-16 work experience as a part of 16 to 19 study programmes*, Department for Education, 2013;

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/268624/document.pdf.

¹⁸ Association of British Insurers website: www.abi.org.uk/Insurance-and-savings/Products/Business-insurance/Liability-insurance/Employers-liability-insurance/Work-experience-students.

15. Providers said that the main reason SMEs give for not offering work experience is the lack of time available to supervise and support learners. This was especially true in micro businesses, where, typically, the decision-maker was the managing director or a director with competing demands on their time. They were often covering a wide variety of roles including recruitment, human resources, finance and marketing, as well as managing the overall operation. As such, they needed to see the benefit to their business of offering work experience placements. The most common objections were time, too much risk, too much paperwork, too much hassle and too much cost. For work experience, providers responding to the questionnaire said that SMEs often confused the initial request with the two weeks that pupils have done at school. They were not aware that this request was part of a planned experience for a young person and an opportunity for them. Several of the providers found that SMEs were more willing to carry out mock interviews and offer talks, which were viewed as less of a commitment and not as time-consuming. Providers often found that this initial contact could later be turned into a work experience placement or an apprenticeship.
16. Providers also have to make sure that the SME fully understands that work experience involves a planned process with the learners carrying out work that is worthwhile for both them and the employer. Work must not be menial and repetitive.
17. The complexity of some apprenticeship frameworks was an issue for a few providers and SMEs interviewed. It can take a considerable amount of one-to-one support and development time to work through an apprenticeship framework with an SME. This was especially true where they worked in a niche area in which the most suitable framework either did not cover everything the SME did or covered many things they were not interested in. The SFA recognises that in businesses with fewer than 10 employees staff need to be more flexible and undertake a wide range of business tasks. From August 2012, micro businesses, in agreement with their provider, can add up to two broader business skills units per apprentice.¹⁹
18. Providers have to explain why there are different cost implications for different age groups. One college remarked that the amount of time spent persuading an SME to take one apprentice was the same as the time spent with a large company that was likely to take several apprentices. This made working with SMEs not very cost-effective. Providers said that SMEs' most common objections to taking apprentices were that: there was no time for recruitment or to support unskilled staff; they were unable to release staff for off-the-job training; and they could give no guarantee of enough work to cover the duration of the programme. These providers also identified that there was often a lack of a support structure and supervision of learners in SMEs. They also said that health and safety could be an issue as very small SMEs were not always

¹⁹ NAS website: <http://nas.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/steps-to-make-it-happen/units-for-micro-enterprises.aspx>.

fully aware of employment law. There could also be safeguarding concerns in micro businesses, especially if they operated from a home. The majority of providers recognised these issues and worked with the employers to support them. This included offering updates on health and safety matters and employment law, ongoing support and providing meeting and training rooms for SMEs to use. The enhanced Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE)²⁰ has been useful in encouraging SMEs to request an apprentice. However, in some cases, the money was more important to the SME than the development of the apprentice.

19. Another challenge cited by five providers was the number of competing organisations such as providers, sector skills councils and awarding bodies that deliver and promote apprenticeships. Providers said that a lack of awareness about apprenticeships by SMEs led to confusion over how to differentiate between these competing organisations and appeared to lead to employer apathy.
20. Three providers found that, once SMEs had decided they would like to take an apprentice, they were unrealistic about the amount of time it took to match them to an individual. Sometimes, the vacancy was advertised on the NAS website, 'which can take a while'. Then the provider had to meet the applicants and ensure that they had a CV that was suitable before they passed them on to the employer for an interview. A few SMEs found this so frustrating that they pulled out of the process before it was complete.

Preparing learners for work experience and apprenticeships with SMEs

21. Half of the providers that demonstrated successful practice in engaging with SMEs stated that, although much of the learners' preparation is the same as for any size company, there were adjustments that needed to be made, particularly if the SME was a micro business. For example, learners needed to understand that they might be required to carry out a wide range of roles, some of which might be outside the main area of their programme. Providers should help learners understand the benefits of working in an SME. A learner's ability to work as part of a small team and to take initiatives was seen as essential by SMEs interviewed. Attendance and time-keeping are important in all companies, but even more so in an SME where the whole company may be relying on the learner - for example answering the telephone and meeting customers.

Work experience

22. The learner's preparation for work experience by providers questioned varied depending on the programme the learner was on. Where work experience was a mandatory part of the course, this preparation was often embedded into the

²⁰ *Apprenticeship grant for employers of 16 to 24 year olds*, Skills Funding Agency, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/collections/apprenticeship-grant-for-employers-of-16-to-24-year-olds.

coursework and carried out by tutors and assessors. Where it was part of a planned progressive programme, as in study programmes, it was usually part of the employability curriculum. Colleges usually operate it as part of the tutorial system.

23. All providers carry out an initial assessment of learners' English and mathematics skills, where required, and a smaller number assess learners' personal skills and ways of learning. However, few providers carry out a comprehensive initial assessment of learners' employability skills so that individual work experience programmes can be developed for them. Where learners are not yet ready to have an external placement due to lack of confidence or behavioural issues, half of the study programme providers interviewed have internal or supportive external placements available. However, inspection reports and the Ofsted study programme survey²¹ suggest that a large number of learners do not have the opportunity to progress to work placements with employers.
24. Many of the study programme providers spoken to offered an employability qualification at level 1, either working towards specific units or towards the full qualification. However, these employability qualifications by themselves do not necessarily take account of individual learners' needs or include practical activities such as mock interviews with employers. The workshops that providers ran helped learners to understand the importance of planned work experience and establish realistic expectations. Nine of the providers had produced a work experience pack that included objectives, a daily diary and an evaluation section for the employer. (See case study six for an example of adapting a generic work experience pack.)

Apprenticeships

25. The provider responses indicated that some apprentices are already employed and come to the provider for their off-the-job training. Out of the 10 apprenticeship providers who introduced learners to the employer, eight delivered workshops on preparing CVs, interview skills and expectations about being an apprentice. The responses from SMEs were mixed about the effectiveness of this preparation. However, where apprentices had previously been on work experience with an employer or on a traineeship, they generally had a better understanding of the realities of the world of work and were considered by the SMEs to make good progress on their apprenticeship.

Engagement from an SME's perspective

26. Responses from the 15 SMEs interviewed described a wide range of experiences. Three offered work experience placements both with schools and

²¹ *Transforming 16 to 19 education and training: the early implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes* (140129), Ofsted, 2014; www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-16-to-19-education-and-training-the-early-implementation-of-16-to-19-study-programmes.

providers. Although they felt there was no benefit to their business, they thought it was very useful in helping young people to make career choices. Work experience placements create a lot of extra work and many of the young people, especially those from school, are not yet ready for the world of work.

27. The experience of initial contact with a provider was varied. Some of the SMEs had worked with their provider for a long time, but others were new to the training field. Only three had used the NAS website and they found it complex and confusing. The SMEs said they could find local providers but locating information on their success rates and quality was more complicated. Six SMEs interviewed did not understand the role of Ofsted in inspecting apprenticeships because they thought that Ofsted was only involved with schools.
28. One employer was impressed with the initial contact by the provider. He had been contacted through a professional telephone call that was followed up by a visit from the provider who already knew a lot about the employer and the work they carried out. The provider explained about apprenticeships, how they worked and the role of both the provider and the employer. The provider presented a win-win situation by offering the SME training for several administrative apprentices in the workplace so they did not need to travel to a training centre. This minimised disruption to the employer and eliminated travel time for learners.
29. However, other SMEs interviewed suggested that they did not have as good an experience. One SME used a provider recommended by their local Chamber of Commerce and had an initial meeting with the provider to discuss traineeships and apprenticeships. The SME contacted the provider a couple of weeks later to follow up and have so far received no reply. Another provider was reluctant to take on apprentices over 18 because of the reduced funding available. This employer only employs older workers and was confused about the reference to funding when all the publicity was about increasing the number of apprentices. Two employers felt that they were being 'sold' a training package by providers and had no opportunity to influence it. They did not understand why the training could not specifically meet their needs. Another of the employers interviewed recruited through an Apprenticeship Training Agency, which employs the apprentice and charges the employer for the service. However, VAT is charged, and as this employer is very small he is not registered for VAT and so bears an extra financial burden. He was not aware of this prior to recruitment.
30. Some of the employers found that the provider took a great deal of care to find out exactly what they wanted and carefully selected young people to attend for interview. One employer reported that the calibre of young people coming for interviews was very high due to vetting and interview preparation by the provider. Since their partnership began in 2007, only one apprentice had not completed their training. However, others found that CVs had spelling mistakes, young people did not know anything about their company and some turned up either late or not at all. One employer reported that they had wasted half a day

interviewing six unsuitable candidates who had been selected for them by a provider.

31. Once apprentices have started, the SMEs reported varied experiences. Some providers were considered excellent and planned training jointly with the employer and visited regularly. However, not all providers were regarded by the employers interviewed as keeping them sufficiently informed about what apprentices did during their off-the-job training. Employers often had to find this out from the apprentice. If they had known what skills apprentices were being taught, they may have been able to arrange opportunities for the apprentices to practise the skills at work. Other employers talked positively about training taking place on their premises where the distance to travel to the provider was too long or complicated. They welcomed this flexible approach that took notice of their needs.
32. The employers interviewed were asked why they had left any previous providers and the responses received were very similar. Poor communication by the provider with the employer, and sometimes with the apprentice, was the main issue, followed by too few visits or visits cancelled with little or no notice. The employers indicated that many of their former providers had a high turnover of staff and did not notify the employer of changes to assessors and trainers. One employer felt that the provider spent too little time with the apprentice and did not individualise the training to take account of both the employer's and apprentice's needs. The assessor's observation and written reports did not reflect the apprentice's actual practice to the point where the employer and others felt that the apprentice would get a qualification without actually demonstrating competency.
33. Hints and tips based on the perspectives and experiences of the 15 SMEs interviewed can be found in Annex 2.

Notes

34. During the summer term 2014, four Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) from Ofsted's further education and skills team in London worked with the London Association of Colleges (AoC) and the London Work Based Learning Alliance (LWBLA) to identify examples of good practice and successful approaches to overcoming the challenges of working with SMEs.
35. Questionnaires developed jointly by the AoC, LWBLA and Ofsted were distributed to all members of the AoC and LWBLA. These aimed to identify the factors that enable and hinder effective practice. Response rates were low, at 30% for AoC members and 10% for LWBLA members, with 24 completed questionnaires received.

36. The questionnaires explored the following key themes:
 - How do you find/make contact with SMEs?
 - What are the challenges in finding SMEs to provide quality work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships?
 - How do you prepare your SMEs for work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships?
 - How do you prepare your learners for work experience, traineeships and apprenticeships?
37. The questionnaire responses were used to identify 14 providers that demonstrated successful practice in engaging with SMEs. HMI worked with these successful providers to produce a series of case studies that explain the effective and often good practice that these providers had developed.
38. The questionnaires, along with established contacts with outstanding and good providers and the Federation of Small Businesses, were used to identify London SMEs who would be willing to take part in the project. HMI interviewed the owners of 15 SMEs by telephone to discuss their experiences and involvement in work experience and apprenticeships, what worked well and what they would like improved.
39. HMI also talked to other organisations (listed in Annex 1), carried out a desktop review of inspection reports published in 2013/14 and reviewed other relevant publications and research.

Annex 1. Organisations that have contributed to the project

We would like to thank the following organisations for their involvement in this project.

Colleges

Barking and Dagenham College
Bromley College of Further and Higher Education
The College of North West London
Ealing, Hammersmith & West London College
Havering College of Further and Higher Education
Kensington and Chelsea College
Lambeth College
Newham College of Further Education
Redbridge College
Sir George Monoux College
St Dominic's Sixth Form College
Uxbridge College
West Thames College
Westminster Kingsway College

Independent learning providers

Academy Education Limited trading as Alan D Hairdressing Education
Bexley Youth Training Group trading as Skills for Growth
Chelmer Training Limited
DV8 Ltd
First Rung Limited
Hawk Management (UK) Ltd

Jobwise Training Limited

KEITS Training Services Ltd

Mardell Associates trading as SMART Training

Middletonmurray Ltd

Skillnet Limited

The JGA Group

SMEs

Agua Fabrics Ltd

Appa Me Limited

Central London Translations Limited

Duradiamond Healthcare Ltd

GPS Marine

Grace Neighbourhood Nursery

Green Acres Childcare

My Nametags

New Foundation Day Nursery (Sidcup)

Says Sugarcraft

Small Business Solutions Ltd

Tailor Made London

The Hair Advice Centre

The Little Art Room

Trepisphere Limited

Zeeba Daycare Nursery

One other SME

Other organisations

Association of Colleges (AoC)

2nd Chance Education

Education Funding Agency (EFA)

Federation of Small Businesses

Livery Companies Apprenticeship Scheme

London Work Based Learning Alliance (LWBLA)

Skills Funding Agency (SFA)

Annex 2. Resource pack

Hints and tips

These hints and tips are taken from the questionnaire responses and interviews undertaken on this project.

General

- Have you tried speed dating interviews to enable SMEs to meet your learners? (See case study two.)
- Have you tried running a Dragons' Den session to enable SMEs to meet your learners? (See case study three.)
- Do you make best use of your local networks such as business networks, Chamber of Commerce, trade organisations, personal contacts of staff, governors and parents? One provider has used the Education Business Partnership database to find employers. (See case study one.) Another church-based provider put a notice up on the church noticeboard.
- Approach subcontractors and suppliers to see if they can offer work experience or apprenticeships.
- Be honest about what you can offer employers. There has to be something in it for them. (See case study four.)
- Have you thought about putting testimonials from SMEs on your website? These could either be written or video. Also, do you have examples of successful learners talking about how much working with an employer has helped them progress? This is particularly useful for work experience. This short video shows one project working:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdKtxDT8FEc.
- If a learner has shown initiative at school, been a volunteer or set up a small business such as washing cars or walking dogs, they may have more understanding about working in a small business.
- Ensure learners' CVs are of an appropriate standard with no spelling mistakes and that their email addresses are appropriate and do not use silly or offensive names.
- When you conduct mock interviews for learners, always include someone that the learners do not know such as a senior member of staff or, preferably, an employer. This gives the learners the opportunity to talk with an employer and ask questions on how they could improve their interview techniques.
- When you preselect learners for interview with employers, ensure that they have appropriate interests, skills and potential to work in that small business. Make sure the learner prepares for the interview and turns up.

- Bring employers together to provide updates and give them the opportunity to network.
- Arrange for your staff to do short periods of work experience. Not only is this good for their own development but it will also enable them to get to know an employer really well and for the employers to get to know about your organisation.
- Work with employers to develop assignments for both work experience and apprenticeships. (See case studies seven and eight.)
- Some SMEs think that work experience placements and apprenticeships involve too much bureaucracy for them. Have you identified what you can do to reduce this bureaucracy and are you able to present it to the employer in a user-friendly way?
- SMEs often have restricted space for meetings. Offering them the opportunity to come into your organisation and use your space enables them to see how training happens and meet learners.

Work experience

- Introduce a session on work experience during learners' induction periods. Use this to not only explain the purposes of work experience but also to find out from learners what they would like to do and identify how ready they are for employer-based work experience.
- The majority of providers have some form of work experience diary that includes feedback from the employer. You could change this feedback into a reference that can then be useful for the learner in future. (See case study six.)
- During employability sessions, work with the learner to complete a work experience questionnaire that helps identify the type of work they might be interested in and the type of work experience that might be useful. This should also contain background information about the learner. Using this document, the learner can then develop a CV to use when they are ready to go out on work experience.
- Can your learners take responsibility for finding their own work experience placements with your support? It is much more personal if a young person talks with an employer about how they would like to find out more about working in that aspect of business.
- Encourage learners to take part in voluntary opportunities such as supporting events, both internally and externally, to broaden their experience and enable them to meet employers.
- If you have an apprentice that comes into your training provision on day or block release, have you thought about asking that employer if they would take a work experience learner to fill in for the time that the apprentice is away?

- Work shadowing and work tasters are a good way to enable SMEs to get to know a learner. If these go well, they may turn into a work experience placement or an apprenticeship.
- Always make sure potential work experience learners are fully briefed before undertaking an interview with an employer and understand the context in which they will be working.
- How do you know when a learner is ready to go out on an employer-based work experience? Why not assess attitude, aptitude and attendance to ensure that a learner is ready to work with an employer?
- Give learners real practical skills that they can use when they are with an employer. One provider, working in the motor industry, teaches their learners how to change and check tyres so that there are some tasks they can carry out immediately.
- Have you thought about using extended work experience for learners on Jobseeker's Allowance who already have level 2 qualifications? (See case study nine.)

Apprenticeships

- Identify niche areas that you specialise in and find employers who work in those areas. (See case study five.)
- Do you use the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) apprenticeship guide for employers? Some providers have a link to it on their website: www.cipd.co.uk/publicpolicy/policy-reports/apprenticeships-work.aspx.
- Many SMEs employ part-time staff. If your SME can only employ a part-time apprentice, you could still offer an apprenticeship as long as it is for a minimum of 16 hours a week and the overall time is extended. However, these arrangements are approved on a case-by-case basis and you would need to apply to your regional SFA team.
- Talk with employers about the importance of mentoring the apprentice and provide them with training and support for this.
- Do you know that you can add additional units to meet business needs in businesses with fewer than 10 employees? The SFA recognises that in these micro businesses, a productive worker is frequently expected to be more flexible in their work and undertake a wider range of business activities. You can apply for this through your regional SFA team. See <http://nas.apprenticeships.org.uk/employers/steps-to-make-it-happen/units-for-micro-enterprises.aspx>. Each request is decided on a case-by-case basis.

Hints and tips from SMEs for providers

- It is important for providers to maintain regular contact and clear communication with the employer and always answer emails and phone calls promptly.
- Providers should arrange appropriate handovers when there are staff changes.
- Providers should ensure that employers are aware of the learners' actual progress and not just how the learner thinks they are doing. Accurate reporting and sharing of information is essential. Give copies of the learners' reviews or email them, depending on the employer's preference.
- Learners need to fully understand the responsibilities of working in a small business. They also need to understand the benefits and opportunities that it can offer.
- Small employers find it difficult to take time away from their businesses so providers should consider different approaches. In hairdressing, many salon owners are also assessors and trainers. They find it difficult to manage time away from the business to attend standardisation meetings. These could take place via videoconferencing or Skype so that they can remain in the salon but take part in the meetings with the others. Alternatively, an email link to an edited video and/or detailed notes or one-to-one briefings ensure that small business owners do not miss out on important information sharing.

Hints and tips from SMEs for SMEs

- For work experience, make sure there is an agreement on the number of learners, and dates and times they will attend. The provider must inform the employer immediately if there are any changes to plans.
- When interviewing for apprentices, make sure you have a two-stage interview. Let the appropriate person in the company interview them first to check their CV to make sure they have the interest and ability for the work role. Then follow up with the director to ensure that the interviewee will fit in with the culture of a small business.
- Before agreeing to work with a provider, always discuss where and when the training will take place and discuss alternatives if required in terms of location, type of work or hours.
- Give regular feedback to the provider on the learner or apprentice and discuss what needs to be done, what you can do and what you expect the provider to do.

Case studies

Case study one

Finding SMEs: using your local Education Business Partnership – Skills for Growth

Skills for Growth is still evaluating how its new arrangements for finding SMEs have worked. Since August 2013, it has used its local Education Business Partnerships (EBP) to source work placements through the EBP's core databases in two of the three London boroughs it operates in (Greenwich and Bexley). The EBPs are very well established in this work. Their preparation is extensive and ensures health and safety checks and the development of a job description for each employer. Learners are expected to call the employer and arrange their own interview and, in the case of childcare settings, they must usually have Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks in progress. The EBP supplied the work experience paperwork in a suite of documents that included arrangements for learners who have secured their own placements. Skills for Growth has also prepared a diary for learners to use. Other employer vacancies are secured through the work of the employer business support team at Skills for Growth and further supplemented by the assessor teams working face to face with employers on existing programmes.

Case study two

Speed dating interviews – Barking and Dagenham College

Speed dating involves local employers who have a long and well-established working relationship with the college. It gives employers the opportunity to see a range of learners and offer work experience opportunities and potential employment for apprenticeships. For learners, it gives interview practice with real employers and they receive feedback on how well they have done and get hints and tips for improvement. In childcare, several employers use speed dating and other employer events at the college to recruit apprentices.

However, events have to be planned carefully and require preparation from both employers and learners. Learners have CV preparation sessions and practice interviews. They research the companies that are involved in the event. Learners can meet different employers and apply to be interviewed. They can have up to eight interviews in three hours.

Employers give a short presentation and then interview individual learners for 10 minutes. Learners receive individual feedback at the end of the event.

Interview sessions are paused after about half an hour and an employer will give overall impressions so all the learners can hear about areas such as quality of CVs, confidence, body language, handshakes and overall presentation.

Case study three

Dragons' Den – Jobwise Training Limited

Many training providers involve their learners in a Dragons' Den type experience but Jobwise Training is now using it to introduce employers to learners as possible future trainees, apprentices or employees. The learners work in teams of four to develop a business concept/idea. They divide the roles up between them, carry out all the research, develop marketing materials and then prepare a presentation to deliver to a panel of four people. The learners receive feedback not only on their business idea but also on their individual presentation skills, eye contact with the panel, confidence and potential.

'We have attended a number of Dragons' Dens with Jobwise Training. We find the process a really innovative and enjoyable way of recruiting apprentices and trainees. The business concepts, marketing strategies and financial planning really demonstrate the capability and level of commitment the students are prepared to give to the project or task. After seeing a few Den pitches, it is clear the students are given free rein in developing the concepts, deciding what needs to be included in the pitch and how they are going to present it. I would very much recommend this process to anyone who wants to see the natural confidence and creativity many young people possess.'

John Buni, Director – Tailor Made London

A future development is that the teams will present to more than one panel and employers will be aware that there may be competition for the learners. Jobwise is about to start a marketing campaign for Dragon's Den and distribute handouts at London stations asking employers if they would like to be a Dragon.

Case study four

Helping SMEs to see the benefit in working with young people – Uxbridge College

If employers are able to see the direct benefit of working with young people, particularly through work experience and with the college, there is a greater likelihood of them becoming more involved. With this in mind,

the college introduced an Employer Champion scheme to acknowledge those employers who demonstrate a commitment towards training and progression opportunities for young people: www.uxbridge.ac.uk/college-information/employers.html.

This creates a number of public relations opportunities for the employers through the college website, the award ceremony the college holds and the general marketing materials it uses. The employers are proud to hold this accolade. The college has specific employer-related award categories included in the annual college awards ceremony to acknowledge certain employers every year. The college has a '3D' display of all the Employer Champion company logos in its reception area.

Case study five

Making experience work in a specialist sector – Newham College of Further Education

One reason why SMEs do not access apprenticeships is because often there is not a provider who can deliver training that meets their specific needs. Newham College is a specialist in the fashion and tailoring area and owns and runs the Fashion and Textile Museum in London. This sector has a history of micro-employer activity with a history of graduate intake and unpaid internships. At the same time, the sector also has some historical links and understanding of apprenticeships in the form of tailoring and the traditional master/apprentice approach.

Learners on study programmes in fashion and tailoring will be working towards level 1, 2 or 3. The generic course is about garment construction and pattern cutting and this can then apply to a wide range of diverse employment opportunities, including quilt or umbrella making. When they complete their courses, learners will be looking for either employment or an apprenticeship. SMEs in London know about the college because of its specialism and the museum. Word of mouth is very strong in this sector and peer recommendations work well.

The college targets sector-specific SMEs and works with them to map their existing training to an apprenticeship framework. This then works around everything the employer does. This is an area where young people expect to work on unpaid internships, so the college is actively encouraging both young people and employers to show how affordable apprenticeships can be. Employers are incentivised to move away from unpaid internships. The year 2014 was the first year the college has been targeting apprenticeships in this sector and by the end of the year it had started 20 apprenticeships.

The college encouraged Savile Row to start apprenticeships by mapping the Savile Row bespoke training against the apprenticeship framework. The existing specialist craftsmen in Savile Row still carry on with their training and the college is able to offer additional resources such as assessors, coaches and mentors. This means that not only does the college start to have SMEs taking on apprentices, but it also gains the kudos and promotional power of working with a named brand.

Case study six

Adapting a generic work experience pack – Uxbridge College

The college has a core skeleton work experience pack that is mandatory for all learners. It includes a diary in which they record what they have learnt and how well the placement went, and reflect on what they need to improve on following their work experience. It also includes a record of attendance. The employer feedback section now has a new name. It is set out as an employer's reference and learners can attach this to their CV. The work experience curriculum teams individualise the packs. For example, in business, there are particular questions that help the learners to see how the work they are doing links to units and assignments. This year, they have differentiated between different levels of qualification: lower levels have simple questions to answer while higher levels have more complex questions.

Case study seven

Linking assignments to the workplace – Uxbridge College

The curriculum teams in the college work closely with employers to brand the learner assignments. This not only benefits the learners but also empowers local employers to contribute to the curriculum. Work experience is often directly related to the briefs within the assignments. These assignments can be either a real case study developed with the employer and agreed with the curriculum team or an existing assignment that the curriculum team has developed and the employer agrees fits their work. A good example is in the health and social care sector with an employer who has both work placements and apprentices. The work placements were for level 1 building services students working alongside the maintenance team, as well as health and social care work placements and some apprentices. One of the employer's patients was a local lady who had spent all her life in the area and was beginning to have dementia. This was therefore a real background for this health and social care case study and an opportunity for local research. It was adapted for

levels 1, 2 and 3 students. The level 1 students also created historical pictures of the area.

Case study eight

Project-based work experience with SMEs – Barking and Dagenham College

The college accepts commissions from SMEs as 'real live' briefs for the learners to work on. This includes bidding for work in a competitive process and then liaising with the SME to fulfil the brief. These are paid commissions and the college has set up a separate subsidiary company, Aspire, to deal with these opportunities. Similarly, if SMEs, large companies or individuals are seeking work to be undertaken, they can contact Aspire and it will broker a meeting between the client and a learner or group of learners to provide a quote and secure paid work. These opportunities give learners a taste of real work experience with an employer.

Case study nine

Extended work experience for learners aged 19 and above – Havering College of Further and Higher Education

The college is working with a local SME, GPS Marine (GPS). GPS wanted to work with learners aged 19 and above because of the work they carry out on boats and on the river and because they felt older learners would be more reliable. They also wanted learners to have good GCSEs. This can preclude learners from traineeships if they have level 2 qualifications. However, they did need to complete the functional skills.

The college worked with GPS and the Job Centre to develop a period of six weeks' work experience. (Adults on Jobseeker's Allowance can undertake up to eight weeks' work experience without affecting their benefit.) The College calls these six weeks 'a working interview'. In partnership with GPS, the college set up a recruitment day that included a tour of the company, a series of tests, an introduction to one of the boats and then questions on what they had seen. There was also a practical team activity to show teamwork skills. The learners were then interviewed in groups of three by the college and GPS, with the Job Centre observing. Out of the group of 30, 15 were chosen for work experience. For the first two weeks, the group remained at the docks and stayed on land. Then they were split into three different groups doing different things. At the end of the six weeks, 14 of the 15 were offered apprenticeships.

Advice for providers on gaining work placements for learners – 2nd Chance Education

1. Employers are more likely to engage with providers if:

<p>a) The provider knows what employers want, and seems able to support the learner effectively.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Do some background research on the industries you are looking into. Is the market growing or shrinking in your area? Have there been any interesting items in the news recently? ■ Make a list of organisations to target and begin calling them. Use the first few calls as an opportunity to find out about the industry. ■ You can ask questions like: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What challenges are you facing at the moment? – Is your organisation growing or shrinking? – How does your business flow over the year? Are there times when you need a spare pair of hands or have more entry-level work? – What kind of projects could a young person engage in? ■ By the fourth or fifth call you make, you will know so much about the industry that you will be able to strike up an intelligent conversation with employers and make clear suggestions of how your learners can be of benefit to them. You will also be better prepared to suggest what learners can do at the company and monitor their performance.
<p>b) Employers see the work placement as an opportunity for them to gain something, not just as an act of charity.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Present the work placement as a work trial or extended interview. ■ Make sure you know the strengths of each individual learner and match these to the needs of the employers you engage with. During initial phone calls, focus on selling these strengths to employers. Don't say that the learner has to go on a work placement or needs experience. Instead, say that the learner is ready to begin working and has lots of valuable abilities to contribute. ■ Where possible, organise your procurement to recognise employers who contribute work placements and other forms of engagement. This can also be included formally in tenders, subject to legislation. Also, let employers know that they will be better regarded if they take on learners. ■ Employers like to know that others have validated your process. Mention the names of other employers in their industry or location who have engaged with you. ■ Throughout the conversation, ask the employer open questions such as 'how does that sound to you?' or 'what do you think of that?' Give them a chance to feed back to

	<p>you and then try to address their concerns. During your early calls, you might not be able to do this straight away but your knowledge will develop as you make further calls.</p>
<p>c) Employers understand clearly what learners will do during the work placement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Find some examples of entry-level job descriptions, or speak to someone who manages junior employees. This will help you find out what kind of work the learner might be able to do for employers. During calls with the employers, you can then persuade them that the learner will be a useful addition to their team.
<p>d) The learner is enthusiastic.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make sure learners are well informed about the industry and the kinds of work they will perform. ■ Ensure learners see placements as linked to your organisation's overall provision and incentive structure, rather than time out of college. Sell the experience to the learner as an opportunity to prove themselves to others and achieve their own personal aims. ■ Get learners to write out the kind of reference they would like to receive and then think through the specific skills and behaviours they will need to demonstrate to gain this reference. ■ Don't try to shoe-horn learners into placements they won't enjoy, as this could damage your reputation. ■ Design task-oriented placement handbooks, to help learners gain a sense of ownership and responsibility for their placement. Encourage them take the initiative, for instance by setting challenges for themselves in quiet periods <p>Case study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Akilah,²² a 2nd Chance learner, had a placement at a clothing retailer. She reported to her college careers coach that she became bored and distracted during the quieter morning periods at the store. Her coach suggested that Akilah spend time thinking about ways the business could improve profits or save time and then pitch these to her manager. Her coach also made a visit to the store to help Akilah think this through. Akilah eventually suggested that her manager move some of the more popular clothing racks closer to the front. Sales increased dramatically, Akilah's boss was incredibly impressed and Akilah gained a valuable example to put on her CV.

²² Not her real name.

2. What to do when things go wrong

Before the placement	During the placement
<p>Once you have got an employer on board, try to manage their expectations about what the placement will be like.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take the employers on a journey. Ask them to remember what it was like when they were young and think about the issues they faced during their first few roles. ■ Get them in the mindset of someone taking first steps into work. This can help make employers sympathetic and build a relationship. After employers have shared their own stories, you can also share your own. ■ Suggest that there may be occasions when the young person is late or makes mistakes. But assure them that the young person will be coached and supported throughout to try to overcome these problems. ■ Give employers realistic expectations regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the individual learner. Present weaknesses as areas that you and the learner will work on to improve during the placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arrange review points where you can engage with the employer without the young person and allow them to share their concerns. Try to tackle problems before they escalate. ■ When you speak with employers, try to remain positive and upbeat. Ask questions such as 'tell me how well it's going', rather than 'are there any concerns?' ■ Let employers know you empathise with them, before suggesting solutions. Use the formula 'feel, felt, found': <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 'I understand how you feel.' – 'Others have felt that way as well.' – 'In that situation, those others have taken the following actions...'

3. Useful hints and tips

- It's normal to have to call several employers to place each young person. Set yourself the target of learning something new about the industry during each call so that you become better prepared each time.
- Let employers meet and interview learners before the placement. Making placements competitive can help ensure that both the employer and the learner buy into the process.
- Present school-based experience as though it were project-based, rather than listing qualifications. List the outcomes learners have achieved, the challenges they have faced and the skills they demonstrated in the process.

Good practice examples from Ofsted

Good practice resource – Effective work experience on Foundation

Learning: Community Training Services Limited (130158), 30 May 2013, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/effective-work-experience-for-young-people.

Good practice resource – Effective work experience on Foundation

Learning: Economic Solutions Limited (Skills Solutions) (130162), 30 May 2013, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/effective-work-experience-on-foundation-learning.

Good practice resource – Improving employability skills:

The Bassetlaw Training Agency Limited (130163), 30 May 2013, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-employability-skills.

Good practice resource – Outstanding support for disadvantaged learners:

Roots and Shoots Limited (120177), 19 Jul 2012, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/outstanding-support-for-disadvantaged-learners.

Good practice resource – Collaborative curriculum design providing clear line of sight to work:

Leeds City College (140007), 28 Jan 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/collaborative-curriculum-design.

Good practice resource – Learning from the best: Excellence in hospitality and catering

at Exeter College (130259), 28 Jan 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/excellent-training-for-hospitality-and-catering-professionals.

Good practice resource – Engaging employers in designing a vocational curriculum:

Bridgwater College (140005), 28 Jan 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/engaging-employers-in-designing-a-vocational-curriculum.

Good practice resource – Developing high-level skills in upholstery and soft furnishings

– Wendy Shorter Interiors (140010), 28 Jan 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-high-level-skills-in-upholstery-and-soft-furnishings.

Good practice resource – Helping disabled young people achieve well through effective work-placement schemes:

Whizz-Kidz (120398), 31 Jan 2013 Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-disabled-young-people-through-work-placement-schemes.

Good practice resource – Developing employability skills in a realistic environment: Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Chamber of Commerce, 9 Feb 2012, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/developing-employability-skills-in-a-realistic-environment

Ofsted survey reports that may be of interest

Transforming 16 to 19 education and training: the early implementation of 16 to 19 study programmes (140129), 10 Sept 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/transforming-16-to-19-education-and-training-the-early-implementation-of-16-to-19-study-programmes.

Supporting young people to participate in education and training (140039), 28 Feb 2014, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-young-people-to-participate-in-education-and-training.

Lessons from the Foundation Learning provision for the new 16 to 19 study programmes (130115), 3 Jun 2013, Ofsted; www.gov.uk/government/publications/lessons-from-the-foundation-learning-provision-for-the-new-16-to-19-study-programmes.

Skills for employment (110178), 12 Jul 2012, Ofsted; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141124154759/http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/skills-for-employment>.