

# Heritage 2020

## Apprenticeship Reform: opportunities and challenges for the cultural heritage sector in England

Summary of workshop held 15 March 2017, Royal College of Surgeons, London

### Introduction

The [Heritage 2020 Capacity Building working group](#) initiated a one-day workshop designed to take the mystery out of Apprenticeship Reform for the cultural heritage sector. ‘Apprenticeship reform’ had been identified by the group as one of its first areas for action, to address the strategic priority for sector collaboration of ‘a more integrated and focused approach to education, training and continuing development of heritage professionals’<sup>1</sup>.

The one-day event combined informal presentations and discussions. The aims of the day were to:

- update participants on the Apprenticeship Levy and Apprenticeship reform in England, including the Trailblazer process, to ensure a shared level of knowledge and understanding;
- share experience and practice in developing new Apprenticeship standards to date;
- and establish next steps and priorities for the cultural heritage sectors.

Mike Brown, Chair of the Heritage 2020 Capacity Building working group welcomed the 42 participants. He introduced the Heritage 2020 initiative as a mechanism for shared working on common priorities in the historic environment sector in England and encouraged participants to share their experience of Apprenticeship Reform throughout the day. He thanked the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic England for supporting the day’s event.

### Session 1: Presentations on Apprenticeship Reform followed by plenary discussion

*Chair – Jo Reilly, Heritage Lottery Fund*

In her introduction to the first session, Jo Reilly thanked all attendees for taking part and acknowledged that people would have different levels of understanding of the day’s topic. There were experts in the room willing to share their knowledge and experience as well as people at a much earlier stage of engagement with the issues. Language, process, legislation and recent changes to Government departments all made for a challenging context and there was a need to acknowledge this; but by coming together the sector could share its experience and identify areas for further action.

Giles Smith, Deputy Director of Heritage, Tourism and Cultural Diplomacy at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) had sent context for the sector’s thinking about Apprenticeship reform that Jo Reilly relayed to attendees. Key points included:

- The emphasis in the [Culture White Paper](#) on increasing diversity and driving participation by under-represented groups in the sector.
- The continuing priority for the sector to increase participation and engagement in heritage for young people in particular.
- The need for the heritage sector to have a more diverse workforce, and for there to be additional pathways into the sector to draw in new talent.

Giles suggested that Apprenticeships provide opportunities for the sector. They offer a way of building on other work that is being done to ensure that the benefits of engaging with heritage are widely available.

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<sup>1</sup> Heritage 2020: strategic priorities for England’s historic environment 2015-2020 (<http://www.heritage2020.net/2020-framework/>)

Apprenticeships can not only be a means of diversifying the workforce but also a means of addressing skills shortages and supporting heritage protection work.

Jo referenced the announcement by HLF earlier in the week of a further £10.1 million [Skills for the Future](#) investment to deliver high quality, paid, work-based training opportunities, as an example of parallel activity to increase the diversity of the workforce and address skills shortages.

### **Engaging with new Apprenticeship reforms**

*Samantha Hanna, Relationship Manager, Department for Education*

Presentation slides available online: [Engaging with new Apprenticeship reforms](#)

Samantha Hanna explained that Relationship Managers are assigned to different 'routes'. Her area of responsibility is Construction, whilst her colleague Neil Bunch is responsible for the Creative route. As Relationship Managers, their role is to provide a point of contact into government and advise the sector of policy in developing standards and advise on the development of Standards themselves.

Samantha's comprehensive presentation set out the benefits of Apprenticeships and government's commitment to Apprenticeship reform. It summarised progress to date by Trailblazer groups (of which there are over 215) on the number of Standards approved for delivery and those under development. It outlined the Trailblazer process including Trailblazer stages (known as Gateways).

Turning to Apprenticeship funding, Samantha explained the Apprenticeship Levy and who pays it and the 'funding bands' that Apprenticeship standards fall within (some are more expensive to deliver than others). The system is designed to enable employers to choose the training they require, though training and assessments can only be provided by organisations on a new government-approved register.

Samantha outlined the functions of the Institute for Apprenticeships, the new organisation that will operate from 6 April 2017 to develop and maintain quality criteria, support the development of Standards and Assessment Plans, publish approved Standards and Assessment Plans and advise employers on the maximum Government funding that can be drawn down for individual Apprenticeship Standards.

Her slides include online references to key sources of information: Trailblazer guidance, quick reference guide to Standards developed and in development, a list of Standards that are approved for delivery, copies of all standards and assessment plans approved to date, and Standards funding rules for 2016-17. Since the event the Institute has published a ['How To' guide](#) to Trailblazers.

### **Apprenticeship Reforms in England**

*Sara Whybrew, Apprenticeship Service Director, Creative & Cultural Skills*

Presentation slides available online: [Apprenticeship Reforms in England](#)

Creative & Cultural Skills is a champion for the creative and cultural industries, a national charity working to open up entry routes and bring new talent into the sector. Also providing an overview of Apprenticeship Reform, Sara's presentation provided complementary detail to the first presentation including:

- Clarification of what constitutes an Apprenticeship (a job that allows training while earning) and Apprenticeship levels (from GCSE-equivalent level to PhD-equivalent level).
- Alerting participants to the timescale for change: that existing apprenticeship *frameworks* will be withdrawn by 2020 and replaced by the new employer-led Standards.
- The scale of reform – the Government is committed to achieving 3 million Apprenticeship 'starts' in England by 2020.
- The process for developing Apprenticeship Standards.
- Who is involved in delivering an Apprenticeship.
- The Apprenticeship Levy, and how it will be collected and turned into digital vouchers.
- The process for purchasing training (from registered providers).

Sara made specific reference to cultural heritage-related Standards; some have been approved for development, whilst some have been published but the assessment plans are yet to be approved. And she put forward a 'best practice approach' to creating an Apprenticeship, strongly encouraging people to start with the job that's needed and then align to existing available Standards, **only developing a new Standard if one is not already available.**

Creative & Cultural Skills provides best practice guidance on apprenticeships, internships and volunteering; information on Trailblazers; and works with Training Providers to shape unique sector-led apprenticeship training: [www.ccskills.org.uk](http://www.ccskills.org.uk).

## Q & A

*What's the minimum uptake required for development of a Standard?*

When developing a standard, you need to outline how many employers are likely to use it. The standard will also go out for sector consultation (at which point there may be further interest). A minimum of ten employers need to be interested in the standard and all ten are asked to commit to create apprenticeships. Whilst there is no stated minimum number of apprenticeship starts per year, the numbers will need to be big enough to ensure delivery is viable for training providers and assessors.

*When choosing training providers, can the employer choose to spend some of its vouchers with one provider and some with other providers to get a mix/match to needs?*

Yes, this can be done. Some training providers will log [on the register] the training they provide for a specific apprenticeship standard, but will also sub-contract to specialist providers.

*The old-style apprenticeships could be difficult for sole traders and self-employed single operators to use. Getting ten together, particularly ten who employ people, for the new Apprenticeships is likely to also be difficult. This may be an issue for certain niche skills areas.*

Sometimes Apprenticeships are not the right route for organisations and sections of the economy. They are not the only route – it is still possible to create paid job opportunities that include off-the-job training. Creative & Cultural Skills can talk to explore whether Apprenticeships are the right route.

*How can Apprenticeships have parity with people coming through other qualification routes (when Apprenticeships do not have qualifications attached, only training)?*

The Government's technical education reforms seek to create clear routes for technical education that work in parallel with academic routes so that people can study to the same level through either route. The goal of an Apprenticeship is that, at the end, the person is competent (as defined in the Standard). How individuals reach that level of competence is determined by the employer – it *can* involve qualifications, but it doesn't have to in the new system; the Assessment is based on competence.

*Is the duration of the Apprenticeship established by the Standard?*

Typically, yes. By law it is a minimum of 12 months employment. The Apprenticeship Standard states how long it will normally take for the Apprentice to become competent at a particular level.

## Historic England and Apprenticeships

*Barney Sloane, Head of Strategic Planning and Management, Historic England*

The Heritage Apprenticeships web page on the Historic England website will go live early June

<https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/training-skills/workbasedtraining/>

Barney Sloane's presentation was a valuable sharing of experience to date by an organisation that is engaging with Apprenticeships in three different ways. Historic England is subject to the Apprenticeship Levy and public sector targets for Apprenticeships, and it has a role to play in delivering the Culture White Paper requirements for heritage Apprenticeships (recruiting Historic England Apprentices, developing strategies for the best application of standards in the sector, and developing a mechanism for counting grant applicants' Apprentices).

As an organisation planning for the Apprenticeship Levy and public sector targets, Barney highlighted some concerns (such as the drive to quantity not quality because of the required 'number of starts' per year; the aggregated numbers [more staff – because of the number of Apprentices – in turn, increases the numbers of starters required], feasibility in terms of cost and space), however, he was keen to explore the opportunities presented by Apprenticeship Reform (such as for up-skilling, re-skilling and the potential to share Apprenticeships with other organisations).

In its strategic role, Barney spoke of Historic England's involvement in the Trailblazer group developing Historic Environment Apprenticeship Standards, an example of the sector and Historic England working well together to develop the right Standards and Assessment processes.

His challenge to the sector was to mainstream heritage, i.e. get heritage into mainstream standards, not developing distinct 'heritage' routes. To be successful here, the sector needs to know what is being developed in other areas to see how heritage can be integrated, for example, working with CITB on Standards being developed for construction skills. He put forward a number of suggestions for 'where next?' including:

- collaborating rather than competing in Standards development;
- developing shared Apprenticeships;
- working together on training and assessment frameworks;
- and ensuring coherence with relevant professional standards.

He asked whether a consortium of heritage Apprenticeship employers or Trailblazer members could work together, acting as a single voice for any future concerns, in conversations with DCMS and DfE.

### **The Historic Environment Practitioner Standard: Trailblazer work to date and lessons learnt**

*Bill Moffat, Wessex Archaeology*

Bill Moffat spoke as someone who has been part of an employer group that has developed a Standard approved for development. Reflecting on that experience, Bill's over-arching recommendation was that the sector should move away from the 'cult of exceptionalism' and realise that every workforce in every industry exists on about five levels (technician/operative, team leader, project manager, senior manager and executive leadership) and that these correspond to academic levels 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. When developing an Apprenticeship Standard, he encouraged employer groups to look at what already exists before seeking to develop a new Standard. And when designing an Apprenticeship, he argued that it will be more successful to focus on these cross-industry levels rather than focus on industry-specific areas.

### **Session 2 – Q & A**

*Shared Apprenticeships – how will these work in terms of how they are paid for, how the Levy is applied etc?*

There was a suggestion to use the carousel model, though not asking the Apprenticeship to work across more than 2-3 organisations (because it gives the Apprentice too much to learn about each organisation). Could use an Apprenticeship training agency – assign vouchers to the agency (which becomes the legal employer) and the agency manages the voucher on behalf of the organisation (see DfE guidance). One delegate cautioned ensuring any Apprenticeship opportunity was indeed a job that needed doing and offered progression, a concept that *could be* undermined by the carousel model.

Action: seek information on whether this model has been successfully used by organisations outside heritage.

Post workshop note – it has been clarified that it will not be possible to assign vouchers to an Apprentice Training Agency until 2018 and even at that point it will only be possible to transfer up to 10% of the value of the vouchers (making this model unlikely to be viable). However, shared apprenticeships in which apprentices are employed directly through one organisation, but can gain experience working at more than one organisation remains an option.

*Referring back to the earlier question about parity of the Apprenticeship experience to formal qualification, it was suggested that there is a risk of creating a lower-paid workforce as many recruitment systems link qualifications to pay structures. How can a two-tier system be avoided?*

There needs to be a cultural shift in thinking differently about recruitment practices. Think about the job that needs to be done and how someone can be competent in that job. It was noted there is a certificate awarded by the independent assessment body at the end of the Apprenticeship process.

Participants queried whether this cultural shift would occur and also raised the need to attract under-represented audiences coming through academic routes. Degree apprenticeships (standard and integrated) were flagged as opportunities.

## **Session 2: Presentation from David Wilkins (previously an apprentice at the National Trust), followed by group working to address discussion questions and consider next steps**

*Chair – Jan Wills, Vice Chair, Heritage 2020 Capacity Building working group*

David's presentation gave an insight into his experience as an apprentice (under the old system) with the National Trust, as part of a project supported by HLF. His personal reflection highlighted the value to him of qualifications gained and the reputation of the provider of the scheme. When asked whether he would have done the apprenticeship if there had not been the option to gain qualifications (in this case NVQs) he said that whilst he valued the NVQs, he perceived learning on the job to be more important.

### **Discussion questions**

For the discussion session, participants were divided amongst five tables. Each table was asked to consider two of the following four questions and to record notes of their conversations. The facilitator from each table then provided feedback to the wider group, as a basis for further questions and answers.

#### ***1. If you work for a Levy paying organisation, what plans are there in place to deliver new Apprentice jobs over the coming two years, if any? Is there an appetite to develop shared apprenticeships?***

Group A – Facilitator, Amanda Feather (Historic England)

Feedback from the group indicated that very few plans exist at present, even from those organisations that have done quite a lot of thinking and preparation in connection with Apprenticeship reform. Within the group, there was no one who had yet recruited an Apprentice on the new model.

Group E – Facilitator, Nick Randell (Heritage Lottery Fund)

There was enthusiasm in this group for the idea of shared Apprenticeships, most likely using the model of one employer but several experiences (as an opportunity to the Apprentice to gain different skills and experience). It was thought that commercial contracts might not be suitable (in terms of length) for a 12 month Apprenticeship, but that there might be the possibility to link several shorter commercial contracts together.

#### ***2. Which of the current Apprenticeship frameworks should be adapted as standards? How will this happen? Are completely new heritage-related standards necessary and if so, which ones?***

Group B – Facilitator, Graham Lee (National Heritage Training Group)

The group discussed the need to map existing frameworks and success rates (uptake) to the current Standards being developed, and then to undertake gaps analysis to see where the existing frameworks might be translated across into Standards. The group referred to work by 'Tasty Careers in food and drink' (<http://tastycareers.org.uk/>) as an example of effective mapping.

The heritage landscape covers vocational, craft, conservation, archaeological and investigation skills, as well as professional advice and management. It was felt that mapping of existing Standards and those under development against current information such as the ICOMOS standards and guidelines could be useful. Work undertaken to date by the Historic Environment Trailblazer group and the HEF skills supply task group

could also be used. New Standards will also need to be mapped to existing work (competencies) by professional bodies.

Group E – Facilitator, Nick Randell (Heritage Lottery Fund)

The group identified lack of knowledge of expressions of interest for Standards or those that have been rejected as a barrier to identifying any new heritage-related standards necessary. It suggested that the sector should share this information and that Institute for Apprenticeship Relationship Managers would also have a role to play in ensuring good information-sharing. The group discussed the importance of thinking about the Assessment Plan at the same time as developing the Standard. It identified problems with use of the word ‘conservation’ in Standards work to date; it means different things to different distinct professions (which has not been recognised by IFA).

**3. As referenced in the Culture White Paper, with the introduction of the levy, DCMS expects its large cultural organisations to take on Apprentices and promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. How can we make this happen?**

Group A – Facilitator, Amanda Feather (Historic England)

The group agreed a need for pragmatism and to embrace Apprenticeship reform as a learning opportunity and the Levy as protection of training budgets, with the opportunity to spend it in a positive way. The group felt the Apprenticeship route could help to improve diversity if there is little/no debt whilst training; however, the lack of associated qualifications could be a barrier to improving diversity amongst some groups.

The group discussed the need to consider the geography of Apprenticeships and how it can be more difficult to increase diversity in rural environments.

Group D – Facilitator, Jo Reilly (Heritage Lottery Fund)

The group saw Apprenticeship reform as a ‘golden opportunity for all organisations’ to see how they could encourage more individuals to enter the heritage industries. It identified engagement with schools as a valuable route to reaching potential Apprentices (e.g. people who do not want to travel far from home) and careers fairs as another opportunity. The group discussed marketing Apprenticeships and the importance of using job titles and language relevant to the people the sector is seeking to attract. Peer ambassadors also work well. There is a need to reach school leavers (16-18) and job centre clients post-18.

Discussions around barriers to people entering the sector referred to unconscious bias (recruiting people we like/who are like us). The group identified the importance of empowering the people doing the recruitment to make decisions based on aspects such as passion and motivation, and not just qualifications.

It noted the sector’s workforce data (with the exception of archaeology) is poor (i.e. there is little data).

The group also suggested looking to the food industry as a model for how people can enter the sector and grow within it.

**4. We need a map for cultural heritage apprenticeships that specific standards can fit into without overlapping. How can we design an overarching standards map that delivers what the heritage sector needs?**

Group B – Facilitator, Graham Lee (National Heritage Training Group)

The group felt that it would be important to do a sweep of a range of job descriptions to ensure that niche work is not missed from the mapping and is included in the Standards. It raised the importance of getting a balance in the Standards to ensure that they are not too broad to cover people satisfactorily nor too niche that they will not get uptake.

### Group C – Facilitator, Liz Long (Historic England)

The group felt that Standards had been developed organically and bottom-up. To create an over-arching map, the group felt that it would be important to understand the role/responsibility of the Institute for Apprenticeships and understand which Standards are to be developed by other sectors. In order to avoid future overlaps, the group identified the need to encourage the IFA to take a role in instructing which sector should develop which Standard. The group suggested that IFA relationship managers could work with different Trailblazer groups to understand job roles in organisations and the sector more widely.

### **Issues to follow up and outstanding questions**

Participants were encouraged to note down issues that they felt needed further investigation or any outstanding questions they had; these were:

- We'd like to know more about the remit, responsibility and forward plan of the Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA).
- Do Relationship Managers flag similar standards under development by different Trailblazer groups?
- Do Trailblazer groups change over time? Are they inclusive?
- Industry Trailblazers have their own Relationship Managers, but we don't have the bigger picture (and so don't know whether different industries are facing similar problems). There seems to be a missing 'Trailblazers Leads' group who can see the bigger picture. It would help to have a way of gaining an overview so that there can be a strategic response back to IFA and DfE when needed. A model exists in the consortium of Independent Research Organisations (IROs).
- There is a need to involve training providers in Trailblazer groups at an early stage, while Standards are being developed. (It was noted that there were very few universities and colleges represented at the workshop.)
- Where are the training providers going to come from? Will colleges employ specialist staff to deliver courses? Could these staff come from Apprenticeship employers? Is there sufficient expertise and critical mass?
- Could professional bodies provide assessors?
- Can it be confirmed that only 10% of the Levy can be redirected towards Apprentice Training Agencies?
- Can Apprenticeships be for seasonal workers or part-time workers? More flexible working helps attract more diverse applicants.
- There needs to be more work to understand the mechanics of administering shared Apprenticeships under the new system.
- There is a question about whether the sector has the right structures in place. The Historic Environment Trailblazer group grew from a pre-existing group and has focused on archaeology. The group needs to be broader to ensure it is inclusive. Whilst this Trailblazer group needs to make progress with developing the historic environment Standards, there does need to be 'space' for these bigger discussions and for wider debates around overlaps or use of words such as 'conservation'. Perhaps we need a group wider than individual Trailblazers to join up our conversations?
- Previous work by the Sector Skills Councils (when doing qualifications strategies) identified the career paths that people follow to get into the sector. A similar piece of work is needed post Apprenticeship reform. Can Creative & Cultural Skills revisit their previous work (The Footprint, <http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/the-footprint>) and show where Apprenticeships have value and can be used?
- Apprenticeship reform includes the requirement to develop skills in Maths, English and ICT. Has the Institute assessed the impact of this requirement on those who are practically excellent but don't have these skills?
- There is concern about Standards without qualifications (and how the heritage sector is then valued).
- There is concern that 'heritage' could be seen as a minority sector, despite the thousands of jobs we create each year. While there may be support for the development of Apprenticeships while

the government is providing the funding, what happens in, say, five years' time when it is passed on to the private sector and the private organisation decides such minority sectors aren't viable?

### **Next steps**

There was broad support for the development of a 'consortium' to gain the overview of cultural heritage-related Trailblazer activity and Standards. It was suggested that Heritage 2020, which exists as a mechanism for bringing organisations together, could be the appropriate means of taking this forward. Capacity Building Working Group (CBWG) attendees at this Apprenticeship Reform workshop will report back to the full CBWG which will consider the work in the light of its action plan. It will discuss whether the CBWG, or some other grouping of organisations, is best placed to take the work forward.

It was suggested that a similar meeting be held, in six months or a year's time, at which representatives of key cultural heritage bodies could meet and share Apprentice recruitment successes, what issues organisations are facing in terms of shared Apprenticeships, how the Levy and funding is working and what success has been achieved in bringing together the heritage-related Trailblazer groups.

In the short-term, the organisers of the current workshop will seek to find answers to the outstanding issues and questions and report back to those who have taken part in the event.

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