

Young Apprenticeship
in
Business & Administration

Employer evaluation of C1 & C2

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August 2006

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Introduction

Background

Sector Skills Councils (SSC) and Standard Setting Bodies (SSB) were assigned by the National Office of the Learning Skills Council (LSC) and the Department for Education and Skills (DFES) to undertake an employer evaluation in the summer term of 2006. The evaluation was based on a set of criteria devised by the LSC in discussion with DfES and scripted by the relevant sector body, in this instance the CfA, in accordance with identified sectoral issues.

The evaluation is based on year 2 of cohort 1 of the Young Apprenticeship Programme, and year 1 of cohort 2 of the Young Apprenticeship Programme.

This report contains findings and recommendations from the analysis that will help to identify development needs within the Business & Administration sector. These findings will help to inform the future work of the CfA in their support role to partnerships and employers. It will also inform future policy work around the Young Apprenticeship programme.

There are 24 partnerships delivering the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration in England. Each partnership has an average of 15 pupils participating in this programme.

Methodology

Due to the large number of employers involved in the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration (320), the chosen method for collating data was through telephone interviews.

Facts International Ltd. were contracted by the CfA to carry out the fieldwork and the CfA have analysed the data.

Telephone interviews were carried out between the period of June 12th 2006 – July 19th 2006. These timings enabled employers to be reflective in their views and move away from despondency in their response and more towards a constructive approach to the evaluation of any issues.

130 of the total 320 employers in Cohorts 1 & 2 were contacted for interviews. 77 interviews were completed which represents 24% of all employers involved in the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme.

Executive Summary

Introduction

This report is an evaluation of employers participating in the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme for Cohorts 1 & 2. The report covers 4 themes, support requirements for employers, the work-based programme, the context of the Young Apprenticeship programme and Health and Safety.

Support requirements of employers

1. 88% of employers have expressed a high or moderate level of satisfaction with the support and guidance they receive from partnerships. Communication channels are sound but there are still some incidences that suggest a need for improvement, particularly throughout the induction period and preparation for work programme.
2. 46% of employers have also expressed a need for more support from partnerships in developing relevant activities for the work place and offering pastoral care to Young Apprentices.
3. 87% of employers felt that the existing monitoring and evaluation in place for placements was sufficient. However, some areas for improvement were identified, in particular the approach to assessment.

The work-based programme

1. Early planning of the work placements is the key to their success. 99% of employers felt that there was sufficient time prior to placements beginning to enable a sound work placement.
2. Where possible, employers need to be engaged in the preparation for work programme leading up to placements to enable a suitable match for placements. Having said this, existing practice shows that the preparation for work programme is a good model, with 88% of employers feeling that their Young Apprentice was well or quite prepared.
3. 75% of employers felt sufficiently supported by their partnership throughout the induction.
4. The majority of employers currently give daily routine tasks to Young Apprentices, such as checking and distributing the mail, welcoming visitors, filing and answering the telephone. Employers said that these types of tasks combined with projects in the work place would provide the most valuable experience.

5. 79% of employers stated that they were familiar with the qualifications their Young Apprentice was studying. They particularly felt that the NVQ qualifications helped to enhance the performance of their Young Apprentice.
6. 78% of employers felt that the existing content of the overall programme was fine. However, 22% of employers felt that there was more work to be done in developing the appropriate behaviours and attitudes for work and team working.
7. Employers in the law and finance sector felt there was some scope for creating a more specialist programme of study in the workplace geared towards administration skills required for these sectors.

Context of programme

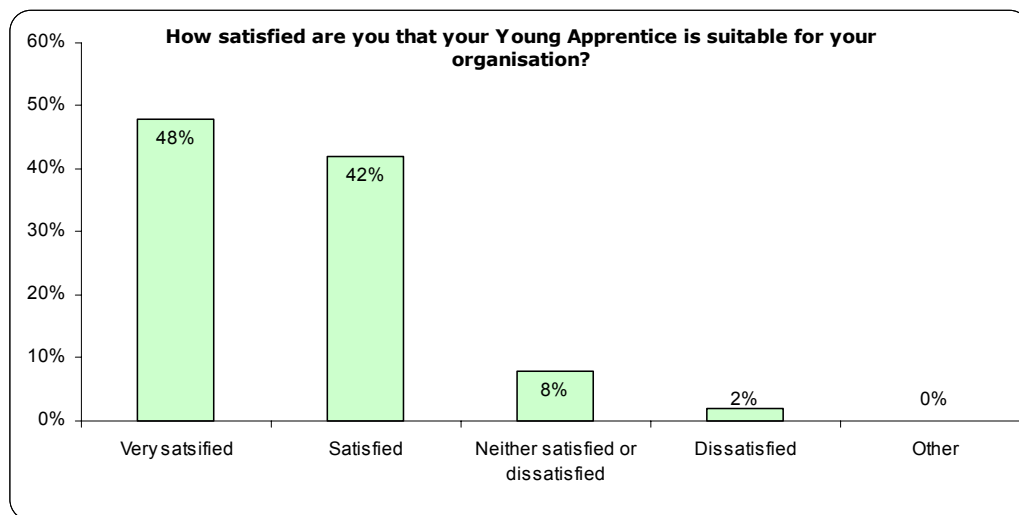
1. 91% of employers felt that the current Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme is fulfilling its responsibility to create skilled employees of the future. 61-87% of employers felt it did this by sufficiently developing skills gaps that have been identified by this sector in ICT, people management, information management, organising and planning and Legislation and regulation knowledge.
2. An average of 80% of employers felt that their reasons for becoming involved in the programme had been satisfied. These included strengthening the link with education, corporate social responsibility, staff development and recruitment.
3. 98% of employers felt their involvement in the programme has had a low to medium impact upon their organisations workload. When balanced alongside the benefits employers receive from their involvement, a very positive platform for future engagement of employers is established.
4. 45% of employers are engaged in offering some form of progression for their Young Apprentices.
5. 36% of employers have offered progression with training and 14% of employers have offered the post-16 Apprenticeship in Business & Administration.

Health and Safety

1. 61% of employers felt that their involvement in this programme had little or no impact on existing health and safety policies within the organisation. Some concerns were raised by this finding as it would suggest a lack of engagement in child protection law and policy.
2. 91% of employers have reported no Health and safety issues during their involvement. This seems to be due to good risk assessment methods from partnerships and the low risk nature of the sector.

Key Findings

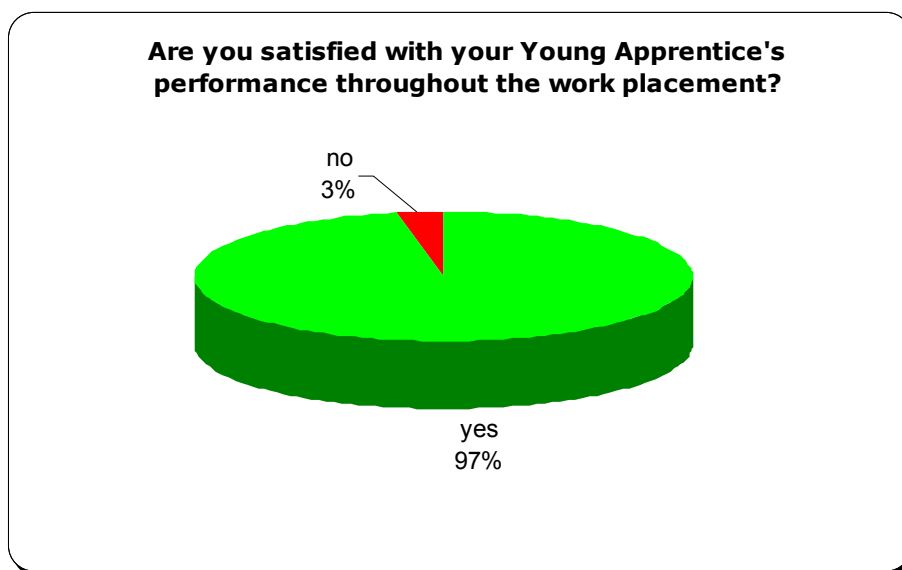
Question 1



90% of all employers interviewed were either very satisfied or satisfied with the suitability of their Young Apprentice to the organisation. Interestingly, under further analysis 87% of employers who were very satisfied or satisfied expressed satisfaction at the partnership support and guidance they had received. Similarly, a large percentage of employers that were either very satisfied or satisfied with the suitability of their Young Apprentice said that their Young Apprentice was well or quite prepared for their placement upon arrival. This highlights the importance of a cohesive preparation for work programme and strong partnership support in matching a young person's suitability to a work placement.

Partnerships would also benefit from working closely with employers throughout the preparation for work programme so that employer expectations can be managed and these findings suggest that the majority are already doing this.

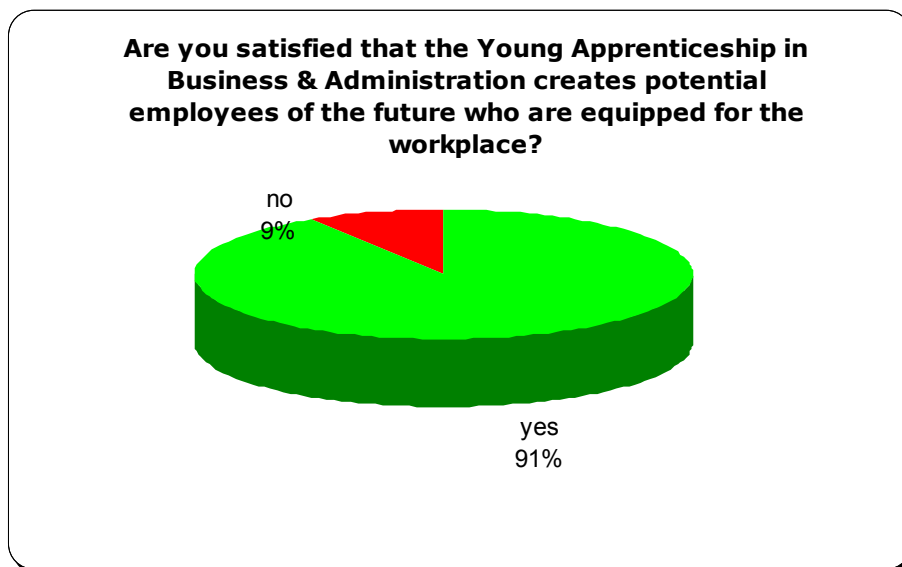
The 2% of employers who expressed dissatisfaction with the suitability of their Young Apprentice gave reasons related to motivation of the young person, poor punctuality and attendance and a lack of interest in the sector of the organisation.

Question 2

97% of employers said 'yes' to being satisfied with the performance of their Young Apprentice throughout the work placement. Under further analysis 79% of employers who responded in this positive way showed a familiarity with the qualifications the Young Apprentice is or has been studying towards. This suggests that these employers were able to tailor the placement towards the qualifications and in consequence maximise the performance of their Young Apprentice.

The 3% of employers who were not satisfied with the performance of their Young Apprentice gave inappropriate behaviour and attitude to work as a reason for the poor performance. This supports the findings in question 12 & 13 (pg. 24) where 39% of employers stated that appropriate behaviours and attitudes were the area in which Young Apprentices were the least prepared.

Question 3



91% of employers felt that the current Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme created potential employees of the future who are equipped for the workplace.

This is supported by the findings in question 4, where over 60% of employers felt that all of the skills gaps identified in the 2006 CfA strategic vision* (identified in question 4) were being sufficiently developed as part of the existing YA programme. This is a positive outcome that can support future engagement of employers. It helps to substantiate and satisfy the primary reasons employers chose to support this programme at the outset. These reasons have been identified in question 9 (Pg.21) and are; to develop the workforce of the future, to strengthen the business and education link and to identify future employees for recruitment. As cohort 1 comes to a close we already have case studies to support the fact that the reasons employers became involved in the programme at the outset have been satisfied.

Employers were asked to give further reasoning behind their response to this question, why do they feel it creates potential employees for the future:

40% said *"It gives a realistic insight as to how businesses work and the office environment."*

35% said *" It enables these young people to gain valuable work experience."*

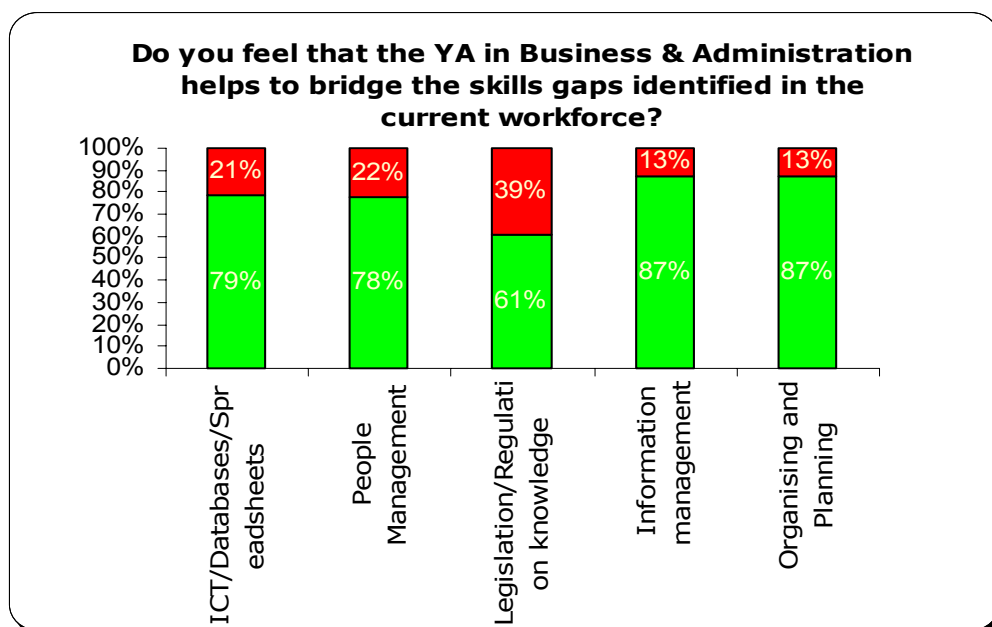
21% said *"It gives a good foundation that could lead to a career in the sector, should they choose to."*

Other reasons given were: *"It creates opportunities for young people to utilize and practice skills they will need in employment."*

"It is important for them to be exposed to mentoring and training from real employees."

"We were able to give them further training whilst they were with us to suit our needs and with the possibility of employment at the end of the programme."

Question 4



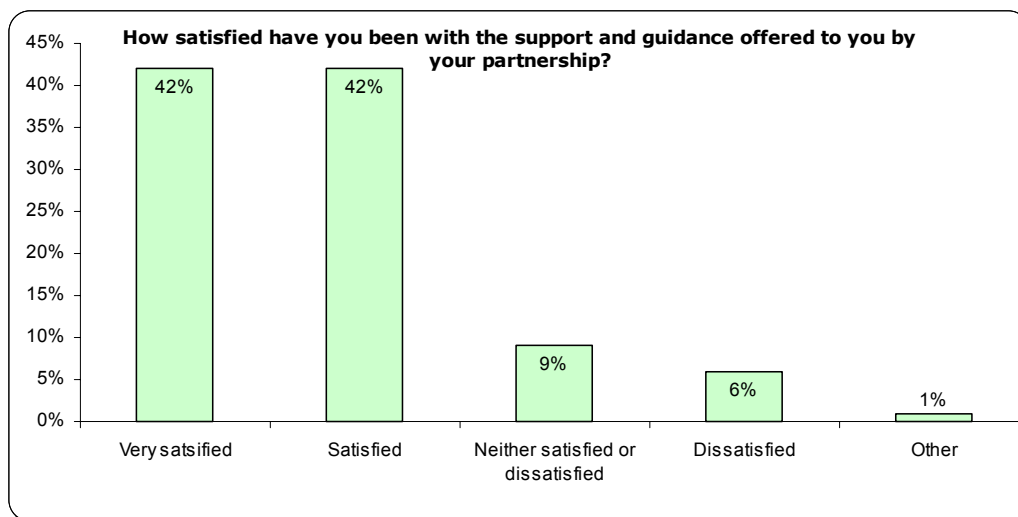
A range of 79 – 87% of employers felt that skills gaps in ICT/databases/spreadsheets, people management*, information management and organising and planning are sufficiently developed on the current programme.

Legislation and Regulation knowledge is comparatively under developed on this programme in the opinion of employers and is an area that partnerships could apply more focus to in their preparation for work programmes.

The CfA would suggest that breadth of knowledge is far more important than depth when it comes to this particular topic of learning. The expectation would be for the learner to discuss this with the placement supervisor when required to use workplace legislation and regulation in its application. However, in order for pupils to do this they must already possess a breadth of knowledge or awareness that certain legislation and regulation exists. It would be the partnership's responsibility to include this within the preparation for work programme and throughout the course of study over the 2 years.

*People Management is managing relationships with colleagues, other teams and managers.

Question 5



84% of employers felt either very satisfied or satisfied with the support and guidance from their local partnership.

When asked what attributed to this satisfaction the following responses were given:

"There is good telephone and email communication with my partnership."

"There are regular visits from my partnership to discuss the progress of the Young Apprentice in their qualifications. We are then able to sustain a relevant work placement."

"We have a relationship which has been consolidated over the years by working closely on other vocational programmes."

"We were given clear guidelines and action plans."

The small percentage of employers (6%) who were dissatisfied with the support and guidance they had received from their partnerships gave the following reasons:

"A lack of clear guidelines and action plans."

"A lack of forward planning."

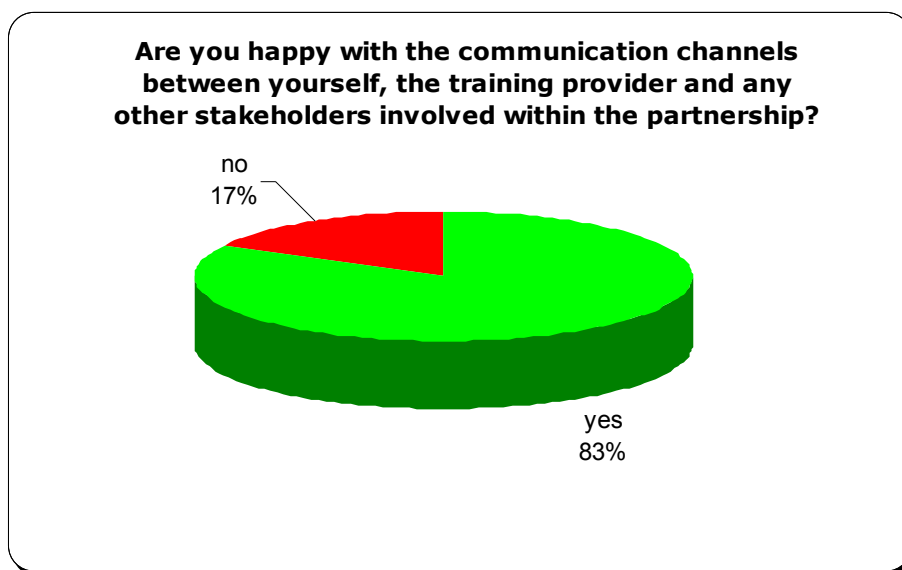
The majority of partnerships clearly have a strong communication link with employers prior to and throughout the work placement. Where partnerships are able to structure the work placement through early planning and regular visits, a cohesive programme is developed and consequently employers feel sufficiently supported. It is important to note that this finding suggests that this is already being practiced by the majority of Business & Administration Young Apprenticeship partnerships.

Question 6

99% of employers felt that there was enough time between agreeing to offer a placement and its commencement to make the necessary arrangements. This clearly suggests that partnerships are making early contact with employers to establish a valuable placement that is relevant to the Young Apprentices course of study and development.

Under further analysis 78% of employers who responded 'yes' showed existing knowledge of the qualifications that their Young Apprentice was studying towards outside of the workplace. This is a credit to partnerships planned approach to the placements. However, findings suggest that employers are only familiar with the work-based qualifications and the CfA would encourage that the work-related qualification content is discussed with employers so that Young Apprentices have the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge in the workplace. For example Level 2 Technical certificate in Business & Administration.

As a result of this planned approach we see that, under further analysis, 70% of employers who responded 'yes' felt that their Young Apprentice made a real impact upon the bottom line of the business during their placement.

Question 7

83% of employers felt happy with the communication channels established within local partnerships.

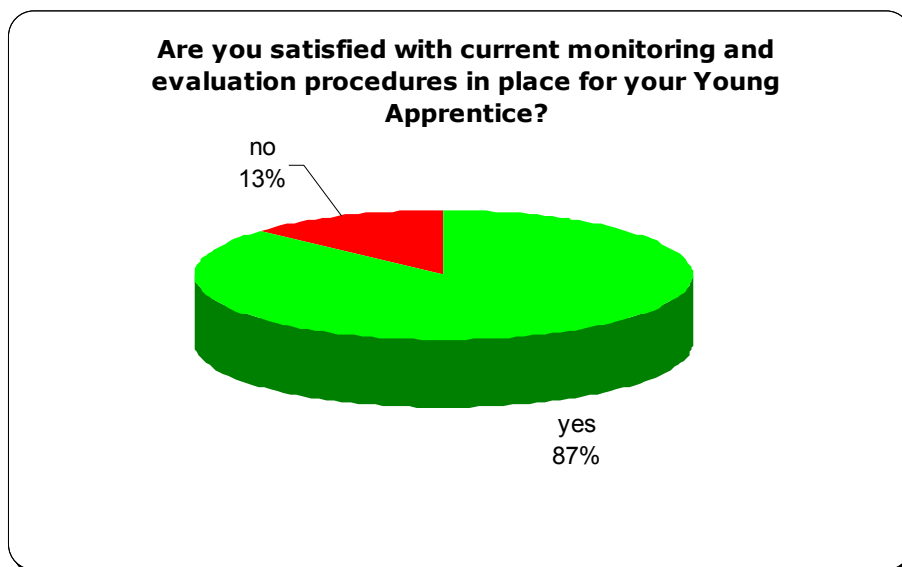
Frequency of communication is usually fortnightly to every three weeks, of course this depends upon the timetable of the placements. For block placements the CfA would suggest once a week contact is sufficient when placements are running smoothly.

Forms of communication:

- Visits
- Email
- Telephone

Partnerships should always bear in mind that over-communication can be disruptive to the placement.

Question 8



87% of employers felt satisfied with the current monitoring and evaluation procedures in place for their Young Apprentice. Under further analysis 91% of those employers who expressed satisfaction in this area also felt satisfied with the level of overall support and guidance they had received from their partnership.

The 13% that responded negatively to this question expressed the following reasons:

"There needs to be a clear structure to work with. In the work place we have no knowledge of the assessments given to the Young Apprentice; we need to be told what areas we need to work at improving."

"I just felt that everything is in place, but the continuity and progression is not in place."

"Too many visits from assessor taking up time which could be used to gain more experienced things in the workplace. The assessment could have been done more imaginatively, less pedantic and less time consuming."

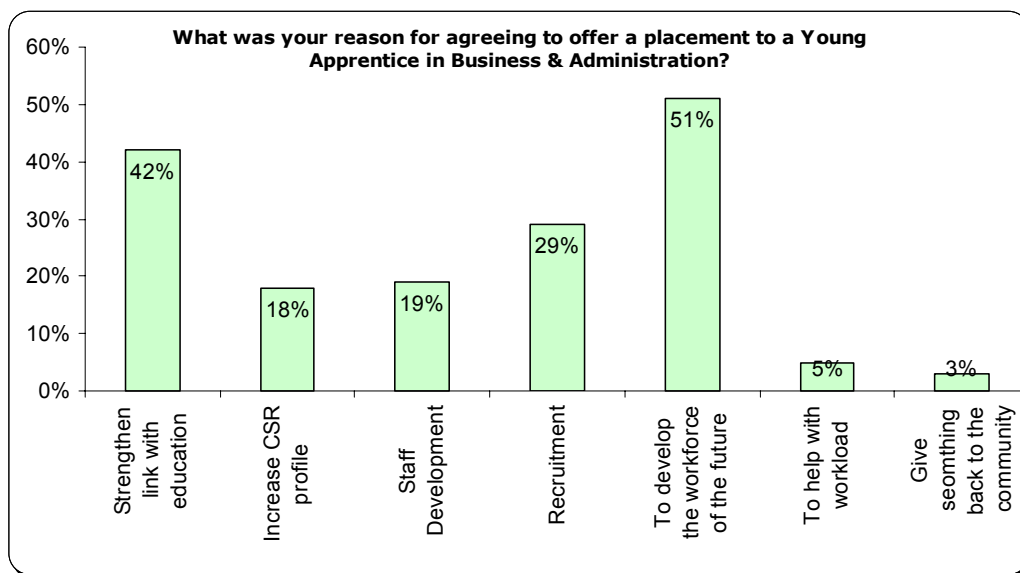
"Communication is the key, the partner group needs to listen to our requests and we need to work together."

"The partners should come and visit more regularly and give them a training plan and career plan and also take a general interest in their welfare."

Smart practices should be used for assessment of the NVQ. Assessment should only occur when competency is reached and should be approached holistically. Therefore visits prior to assessment should be in a mentoring capacity and less time-consuming. Dialogue between mentor, supervisor and assessor can determine when competency is reached.

Please go to http://www.cfa.uk.com/qualifications/standards_05downloads.html for the Cfa's assessment guide.

Question 9

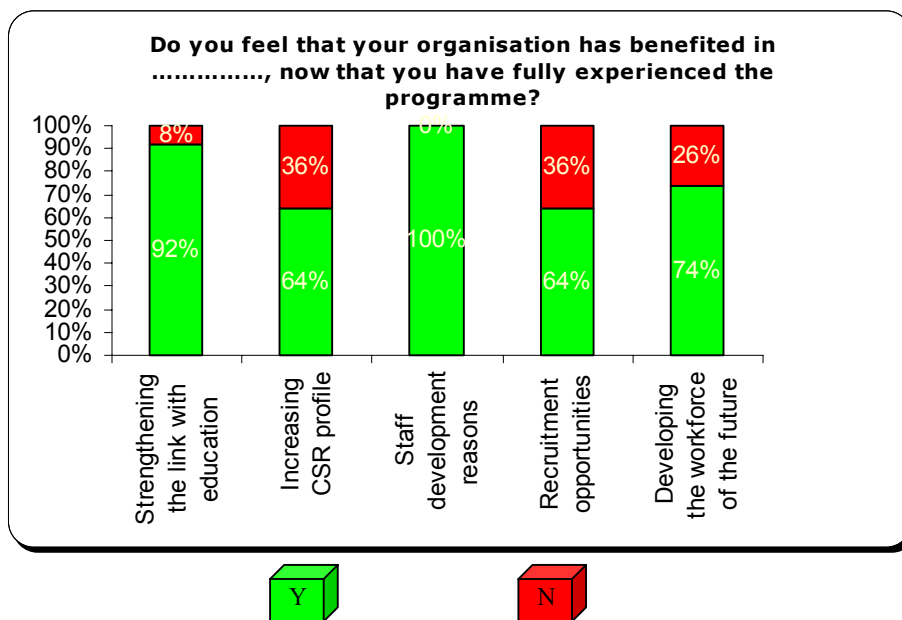


*The percentages will not add to 100 as employers were asked to give two responses.

51% of respondents gave "To develop the workforce of the future" as their primary reason for offering a placement to a Young Apprentice in this sector. Following this 42% offered a placement so as to "Strengthen the link with education." 29% of respondents offered a placement to open up "recruitment opportunities" in the future.

Question 10 focuses on analysing whether or not these expectations of employers were met.

Question 10



This question was designed to evaluate whether the expectations of employers identified in question 9 had been met over the duration of their involvement with the programme.

These findings show that employers who expected to see some benefits in staff development were 100% satisfied after their experience. Supervisors take on management and mentoring responsibilities as part of the programme and this offers staff development opportunities.

The CfA would suggest that partnerships build on this finding in the future and consider subsidising the opportunity for supervisors to register for accredited qualifications/courses/workshops in mentoring and coaching. This will be a strong tool for future employer engagement on to the programme and will ensure a productive and motivated learning environment for the Young Apprentice in the workplace. It is important that partnerships work on maximising the benefits for employers.

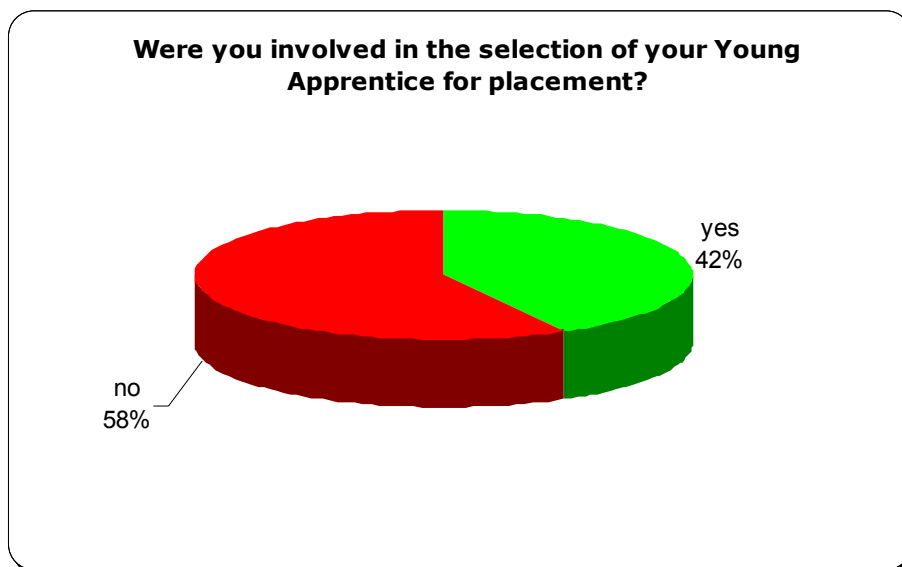
One employer said that *"If there was any benefit for us it was the opportunity for our staff to develop the mentoring skills."*

Overall, 80% of employers' initial expectations were met after their experience of the programme. However, those whose expectations were not met gave the following comments:

"There was no benefit, we feel that our staff put a lot of effort in but there was no recognition for what we have done."

"It was very much one-sided."

"There was not enough communication between various bodies at a local level."

Question 11

58% of employers were not involved in the selection of their Young Apprentice for placement; the remaining 42% were involved.

It is very difficult to establish what is the preferred approach to employers involvement in the selection process for placements. Essentially, employers feel that this indents further on their time.

However, those employers who were involved in their selection gave the following benefits from the experience:

59% said it positively affected the retention of their Young Apprentice. Under further analysis this would suggest that the Young Apprentice take more responsibility for their actions within the placement due to going through a competitive interview process and winning the place.

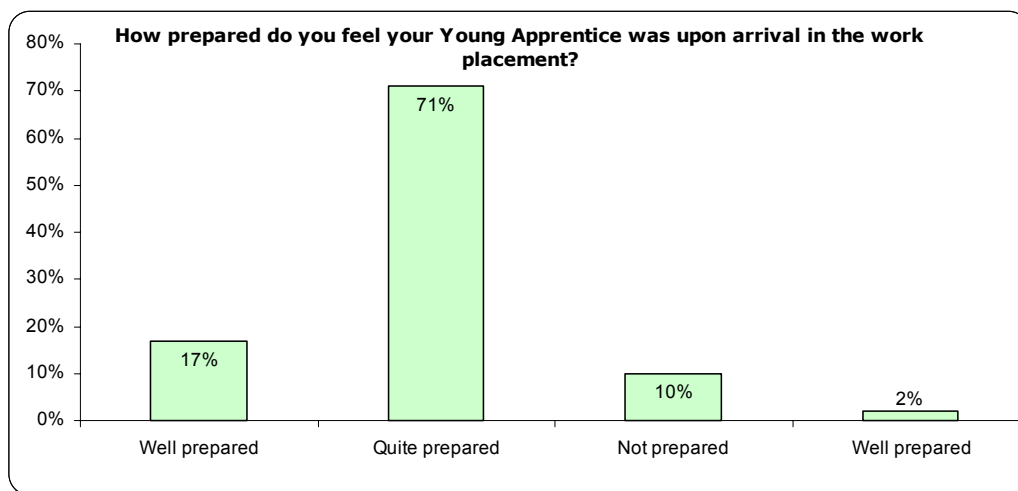
63% said it engaged them further with the programme. Their level of commitment to supporting the Young Apprentice was stronger as a result of their involvement in the selection.

28% said it helped to manage risk throughout the placement. This builds on the other positive responses. Risk is depreciated due to a stronger commitment from the employer and a sense of responsibility from the Young Apprentice.

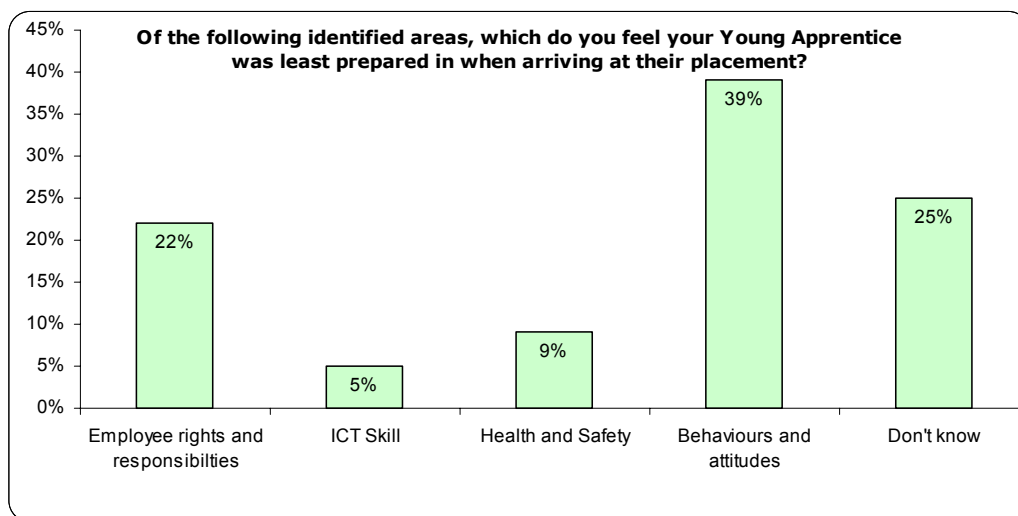
Of the 42% of employers who were not involved in the selection of their Young Apprentice for placement, 51% said that they would prefer to be in the future.

As always, this has to be an individual partnership decision. There are benefits from this practice as we can see from the above responses. However, it is important that we do not over burden employers.

Question 12 & 13

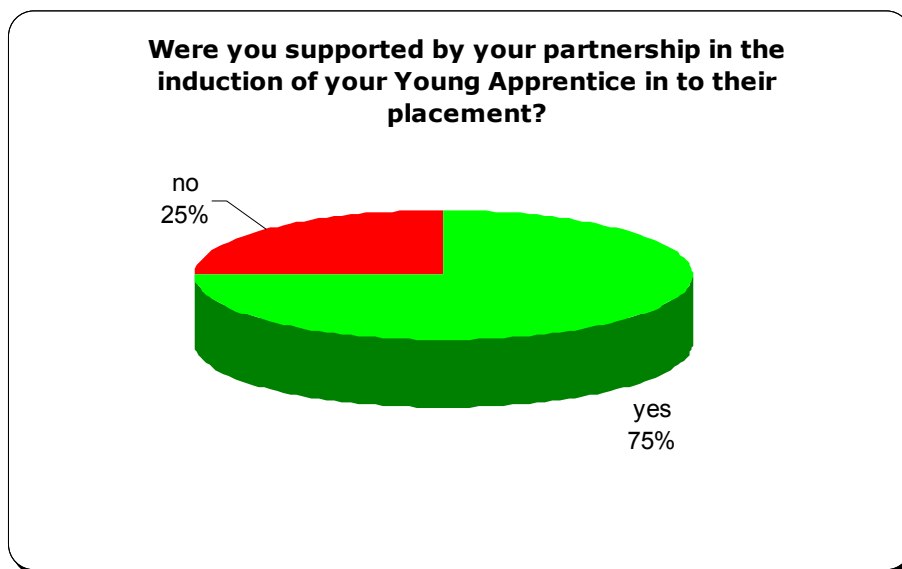


88% of employers felt that their Young Apprentice was either well prepared or quite prepared when arriving at their placement. This is a credit to the existing preparation for work model. The majority of partnerships have a 3 month preparation for work period in college or with the training provider before Young Apprentices commence their placements.



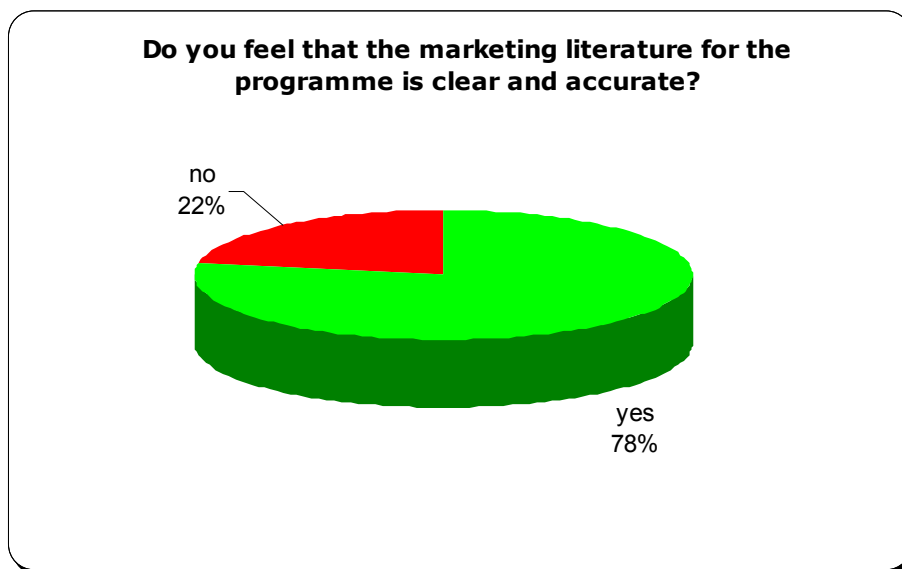
Employers were still able to be critical of their Young Apprentice's even though their satisfaction levels were high on this topic overall. 39% of employers felt their Young Apprentices did not have the appropriate behaviours and attitudes for work, 22% of employers stated that their Young Apprentices lacked the knowledge and application of their rights and responsibilities (ERR) in the workplace.

Partnerships may wish to consider employability workshops as part of the preparation for work period using the Personal, Learning and Thinking skills framework. Details can be found at <http://www.qca.org.uk/17036.html>. Local EBPs may be able to support this development through other streams of funding. The Cfa's ERR workbook will support employees/young apprentices knowledge of ERR and the application of this in the workplace. This can be downloaded from http://www.cfa.uk.com/qualifications/apprenticeships_ewni_05.html

Question 14

75% of employers said that they were supported by their partnership through the induction of their Young Apprentice.

It is essential that partnership work closely with employers in identifying which areas need to be focused on during the induction. Employers will have their own organisational approach and priorities when it comes to induction. However the majority will have had little or no experience in inducting this age group to the workplace. In light of this, more emphasis should be placed on employee rights and responsibilities, introduction to the sector of the organisation, health and safety, child protection and expected behaviours and attitudes.

Question 15

78% of employers were satisfied with the marketing literature produced by the CfA.

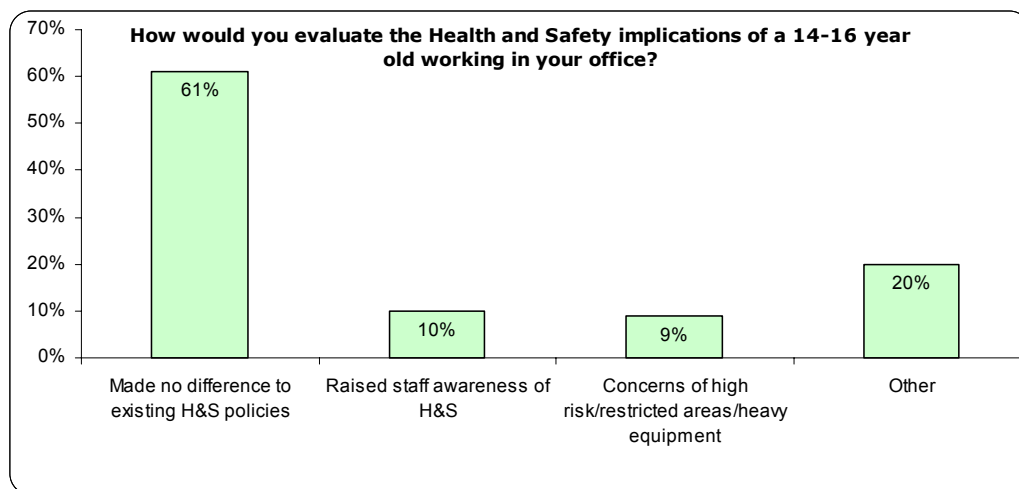
Of the 22% of employers who were not satisfied the following comments were given:

"Did not receive any until after the apprentice had started."

"I can't recall seeing any."

The CfA would encourage the use of YA marketing literature to support engagement with employers. It is seen as beneficial when it is being used. The marketing leaflets are important in keeping a consistent message when promoting and recruiting for the programme. These materials are available from the CfA and LSC websites. <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/partner/downloads.htm> and http://217.160.210.43/lsc_campaignresources

Question 16



61% of employers felt that the introduction of a Young Apprentice did not make a difference to existing policies relating to Health and Safety. This is an expected response as the Business & Administration sector is a particular low risk area in terms of Health and Safety. However, this response does raise some concerns from a Child protection point of view.

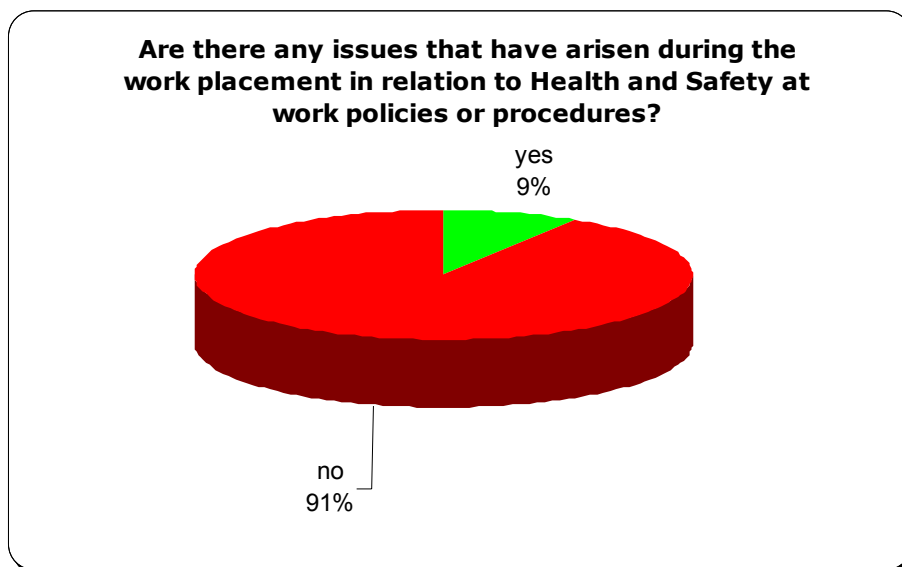
It is important that partnership work closely with employers to ensure that Child protection policies are adhered to for the duration of placements. The CfA has produced some guidance in consultation with the NSPCC and the LSC and would urge partnerships to use this as a focus for discussion with employers. This can be found at <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/partner/downloads.htm>

Other guidance available is:

Work related learning and the law
 LSC Safeguarding pupils.
www.wiseuptowork.co.uk

10% of respondents said that it helped raise their staff's awareness of Health and Safety in the workplace. This can be used as a tool to engage employers in the future under the benefit of staff development. Employers made some of the following comments:

"It makes you think or be more aware of Health and Safety, especially with office equipment. You have the responsibility of making sure they are aware of the possible dangers and then making sure they are supervised."

Question 17

Due to Business & Administration being a low risk area of learning only 9% of employers have reported issues related to health and safety on the Young Apprenticeship programme.

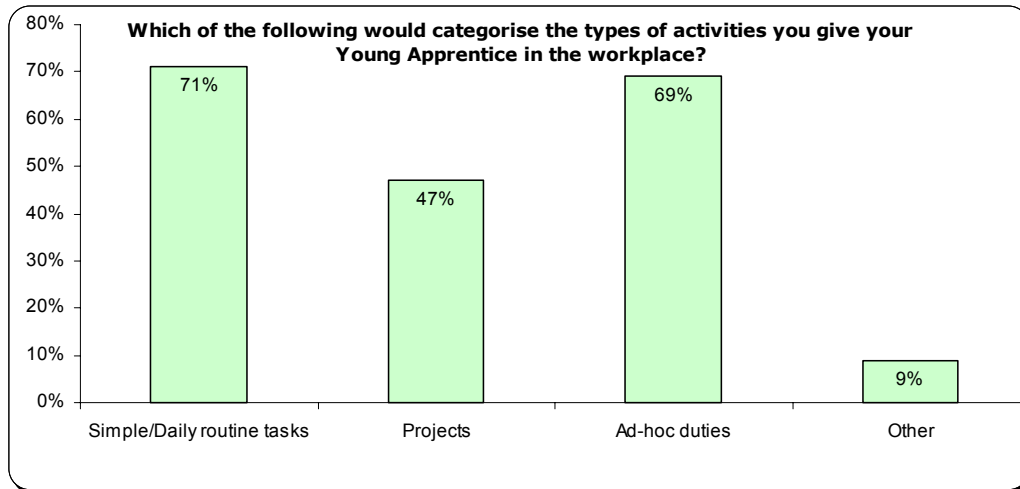
Some of the following issues have been experienced by employers in relation to Health and Safety:

"Work placement stations are set for adults; they are smaller so we have to have work stations reset for them."

"Restricted access to our warehouse due to forklift safety."

Due to the cross sector nature of Business & Administration Health and safety issues can be more prevalent in high risk sectors where there may be a warehouse or a delivery depot. Partnership must bear this mind when undertaking risk assessments and monitoring the induction of the Young Apprentice in to their work placement.

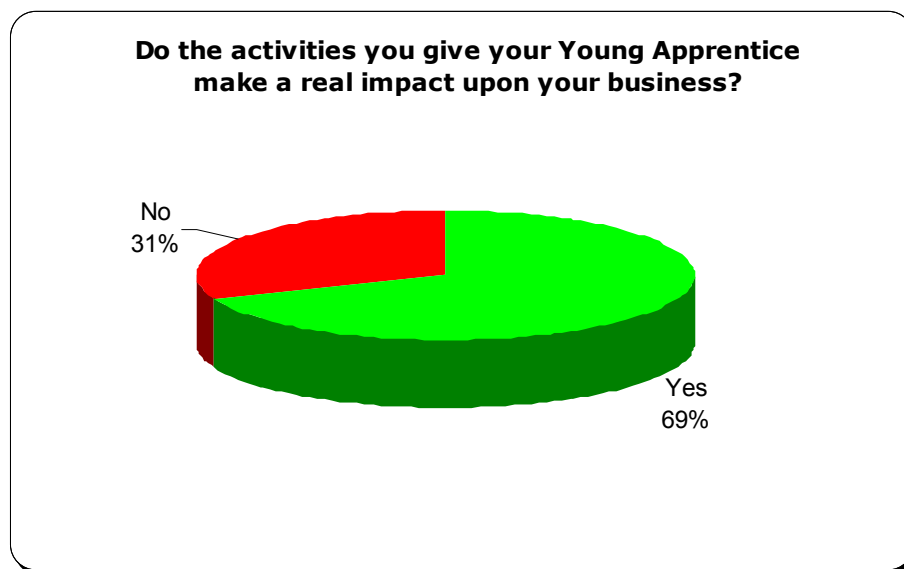
Question 18



*Employers were asked to give 2 responses to this question, therefore % will not add to 100.

71% and 69% of employers stated that simple, daily routine tasks and Ad-hoc duties were given to Young Apprentices throughout their placements. 47% of employers gave their Young Apprentice projects to oversee.

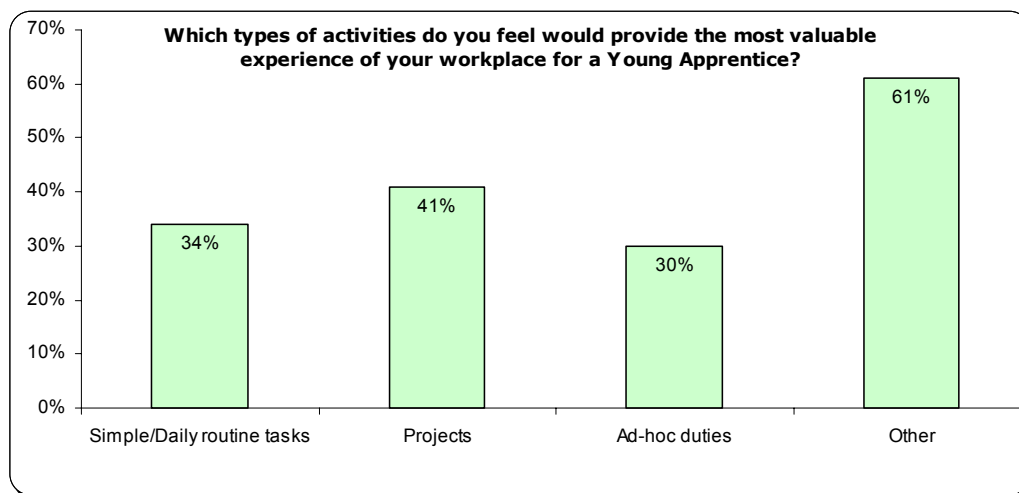
Question 19



69% of employers said that the activities they gave their Young Apprentice made an impact on the business. However, a relatively high percentage are still offering simulated activities, it is important partnerships move away from this where possible and give a real experience to the Young Apprentice and the employer.

"They work and are expected to perform as a member of staff"

Question 20



*Employers were asked to give more than one response and so % will not add to 100

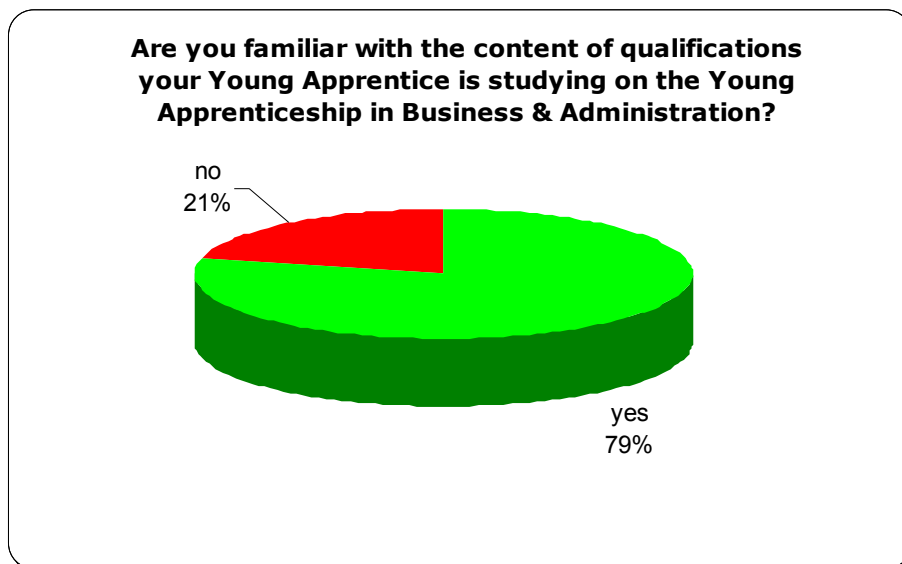
61% of employers felt that Daily routine tasks were the most valuable type of activities, 41% felt that projects were the most valuable.

Essentially, daily routine tasks such as distributing the mail, filing etc represent the reality of the job roles available in this sector and should be a high percentage of the focus of the work placement. However, in terms of skills development projects would be seen as most favourable. Projects in the workplace help to develop:

- Project management
- Time management
- Communication with other teams and members of staff
- Decision-making
- Research and reporting
- Planning and organising
- Application of knowledge
- Autonomous behaviour

Go to <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/partner/downloads.htm> for a full report on work-based projects (milestone report June 2006).

Placements should remain true to the job roles available in the sector whilst looking at developing the above mentioned skills. A combination of daily routine tasks and projects would satisfy this approach.

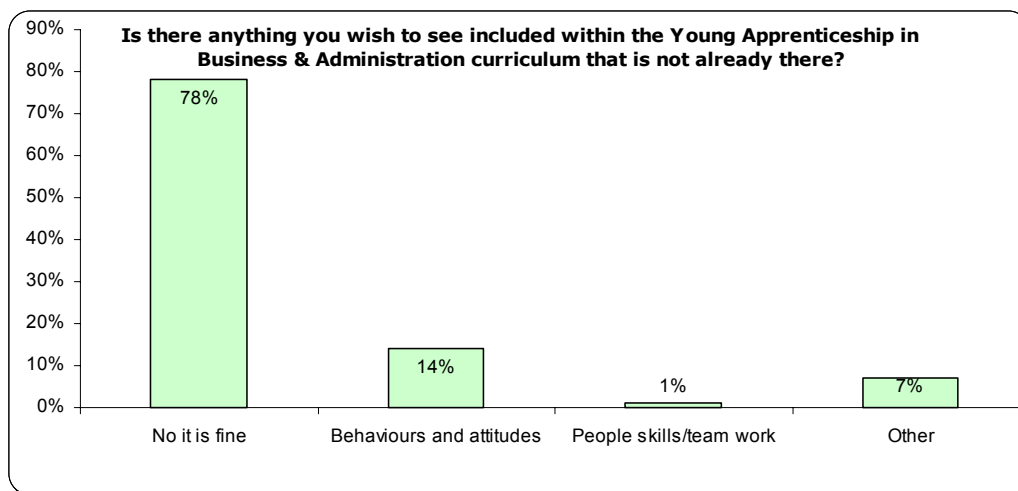
Question 21

79% of employers stated that they were familiar with the content of qualifications.

Familiarity with the work-related qualification and the work-based qualification allows for a coherent work placement. Tasks and activities can build on existing knowledge and competence and together make the placement more relevant to the Young Apprentices course of study.

90% of employers agreed that qualifications, especially the work-based qualification (i.e. NVQ) enhance the performance of the Young Apprentice.

Question 22



78% of employers felt that the existing programme was fine as it is. However, employers identified that where there was a need to make any additions to the existing curriculum, it was related to attitudes and behaviours.

Employers offered the following comments:

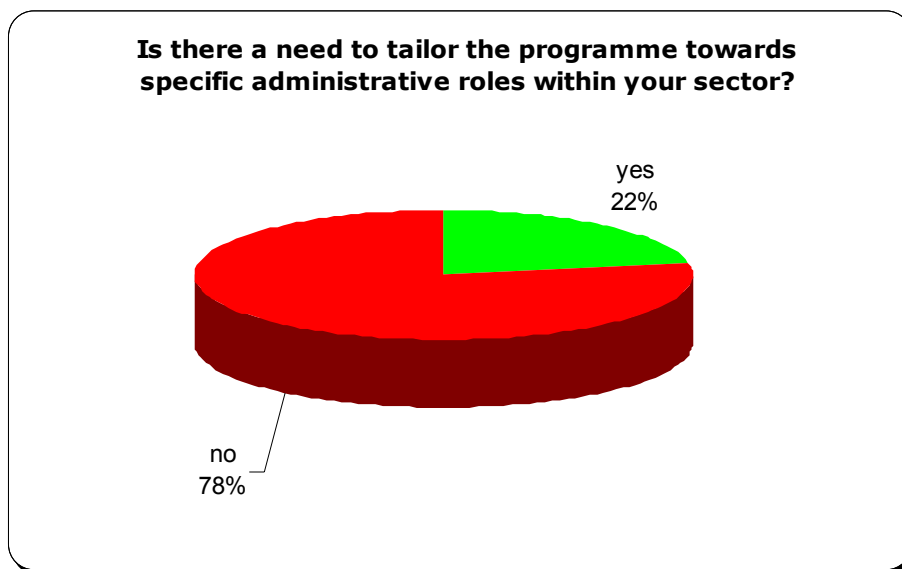
"I think it is a team work building exercise, the necessity to work as a team for both the young apprentice and the workplace is essential. If that breaks down then so does the placement."

"More work on motivation and application – as they are under the age of 16 they need a degree of motivation. There is a general trend of lack of motivation amongst young people these days."

As mentioned previously in question 12 & 13, partnerships may wish to include employability workshops in to their preparation for work programme using the Personal, Learning and Thinking skills framework as a benchmark. This framework looks at the following skills sets:

- Team working
- Independent thinking
- Self managing
- Reflective learning
- Creative thinking
- Effective participating

You may be able to link in with your Local EBP for resources to support this.

Question 23

78% of employers felt that there was no need to tailor the programme towards specific administrative roles.

This is defined by the sector of the organisation. Most sectors do not feel there is enough specialism in the role of their administrators to warrant a specialist programme.

However, employers from legal, finance and hospitality (catering) sectors suggested that their administrators required specialist knowledge and skills.

The CfA has worked on developing specialist standards for administrators in the legal sector. Partnerships may wish to look at these standards and use them as a benchmark for creating a more relevant placement on the Young Apprenticeship programme. These standards are set at Levels 2 & 3. Therefore partnerships may wish to look at them in the context of additional units and/or work-based projects.

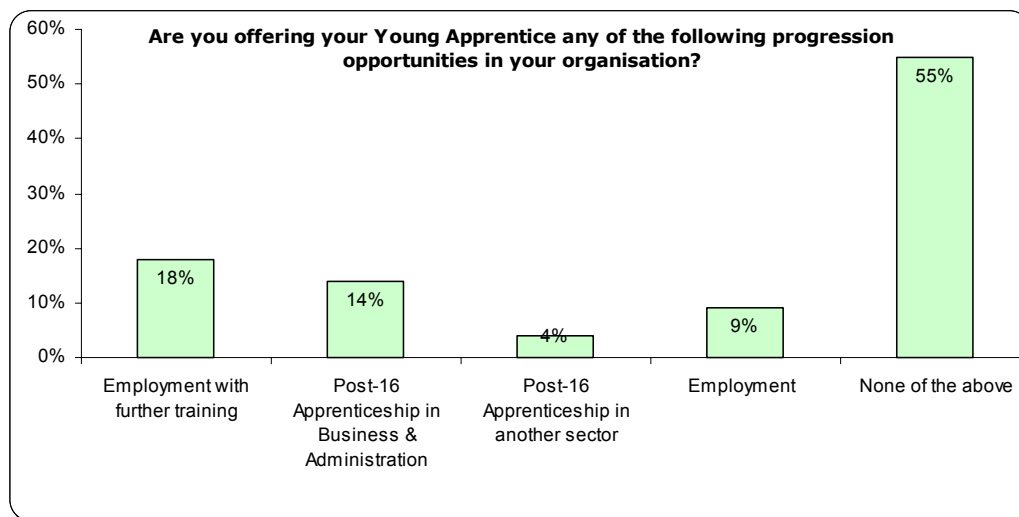
The CfA has also developed standards in the following sectors and will be working closely with awarding bodies to turn these into optional units for the NVQs at Levels 2 & 3:

- Agriculture
- Custodial Care
- Care Workers
- Parking

The CfA is currently working on developing specialist standards in the Education and Health sector also.

In the meantime partnerships may wish to use these standards as a benchmark for creating projects for placements in the sectors mentioned. Partnerships can find more details about these standards on http://www.cfa.uk.com/qualifications/standards_review.html

Question 24



55% of employers are not offering Young Apprentices further opportunities in their organisation on completion of the course at this stage.

At least 50% of these employers have offered placements to Cohort 2 only and therefore were not in a position to comment on progression. The remaining 50% suggest that there are some opportunities for young people wishing to go on to employment or employment with training in this sector.

However through early discussion with partnerships it would seem that the FE college route is the preferred route and so there is less demand for employment and/or employment with training opportunities.

Many employers also gave the following comments which show the limitations employers face:

"We are a small company and we have not got the resources to pay her."

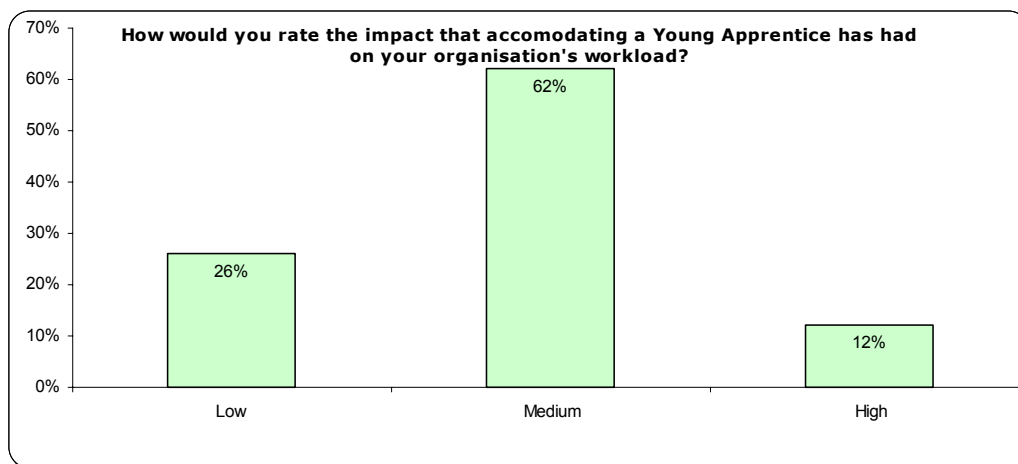
"Because we have no positions for that age group without them gaining any further qualifications."

"We haven't been asked to do this. They could apply and say they have done a work placement here which would stand them in good stead. There are no extended opportunities here unless they seek it."

Young Apprentices may make an informed decision to take a different route:

"Our Young Apprentice has gone in a different direction for their career as a result of their experience."

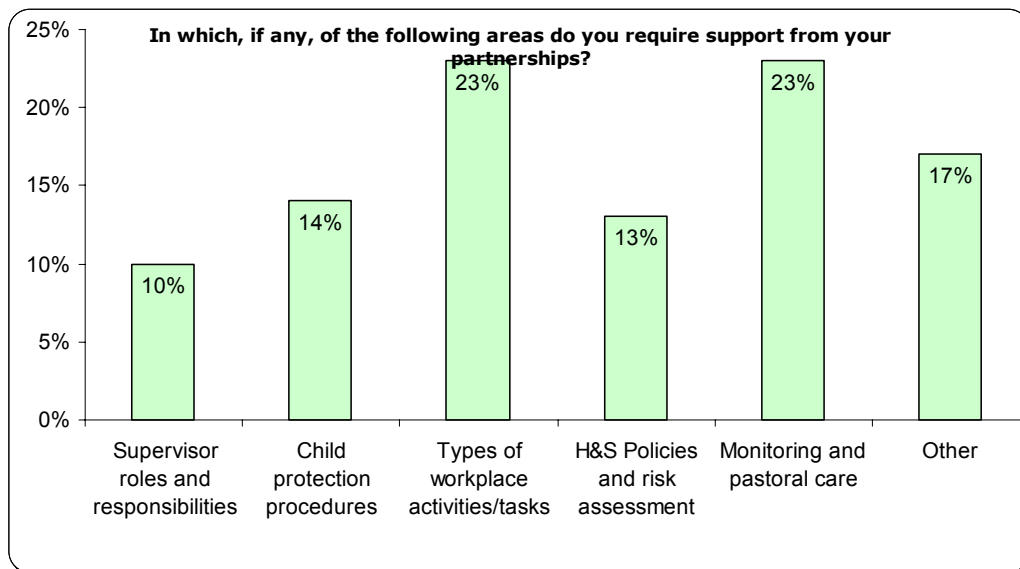
Partnerships should work with employers at the commencement of placements to consider the placement with a view to potential employment with further training at the end. Of course, expectations must be managed and it must be clear to employers that the Young Apprentice may pursue other options. Young Apps should also be encouraged to seek out employment within their placements.

Question 25

88% of employers felt that their involvement in the programme had a low to medium impact on their organisations workload.

There is no avoiding the level of responsibility employers agree to when offering a placement. However, we have seen from findings throughout this report that employers do see the benefits of their involvement when a placement is carefully planned and supported by the partnership.

Question 26



23% of employers felt that they required more support in the types of workplace activities/tasks and how to monitor and mentor their Young Apprentices throughout the placement.

Partnerships may wish to use some of the CfA resources in supporting the workplace activities and tasks. However, it is not recommended to go in to the workplace with a pre-determined set of activities as these may not fit the priorities of the employer or the individual apprentice.

Partnerships should work closely with employers prior to the placement beginning to lay out a set of relevant activities that will suit both the employer and support the qualifications being studied. The CfA has some guidance available on devising work-based projects on <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/partner/downloads.htm> (Milestone report June 2006.)

As earlier findings also suggest, partnerships may wish to look at offering formal qualifications and/or training in mentoring for supervisors. Go to www.ento.co.uk for further information on this or speak with your Local EBP.

Good Practice and Recommendations

This section shows examples of good practice that currently exist within the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration and may be useful for partnership.

Good practice

- Partnerships should continue to work closely with employers throughout the preparation for work programme. Using this period to suitably match each Young Apprentice to a work placement helps to manage and meet employer's expectations of the programme. This research has found that this practice is happening already amongst the majority of partnerships.
- The existing preparation for work model, which is a 3 month period prior to placements beginning has been very successful. Employers have felt that their Young Apprentices have been sufficiently prepared when commencing their placement.
- Employers feel that partnerships are working closely with them prior to and throughout work placements. Early planning enables a structured and cohesive programme of activities for the placement and as a consequence employers feel well supported and fully engaged. This research has found that this is being practiced already amongst the majority of partnerships.
- Employers are sufficiently knowledgeable about the work-based qualification their Young Apprentices are studying due to partnerships keeping them informed. This enables employers and partnerships to work collaboratively and design a coherent and relevant work placement. 90% of employers felt that the work-based qualification (NVQ) improved the performance of their Young Apprentice.
- Employers involved in the selection of Young Apprentices have identified benefits such as a greater commitment, well developed relationships and risk management of their Young Apprentice and the work placement. However, restrictions are recognised and this is a local partnership decision as to whether they wish to involve employers in the selection process.
- Employers are satisfied with the monitoring and evaluation procedures in place at present. Regular visits are appreciated by employers and help to sustain the relevance of the work placement and avoid stagnation.

Recommendations

The CfA have also made some recommendations for partnerships to consider as they continue to develop their practices. These are listed below:

- It has been identified by employers that behaviours and attitudes at work is an area which requires further development with this particular age group. Partnerships may wish to use the Personal Learning and Thinking skills framework to develop half or one day workshops and deliver these as enrichment to the preparation for work programme. This framework looks at generic skills that are essential for any context of life, whether it be work, education or your personal life:
 - Team working
 - Independent enquirers
 - Self managers
 - Reflective learners
 - Creative thinkers
 - Effective participators

Information on this framework can be found at www.qca.org.uk
 You may also be able to link in with your Local EBP for resources to support this.

- Partnerships may wish to work closely with employers on their induction programme. The induction programme needs to place more emphasis on employee's rights and responsibilities, information about the sector and organisation, health and safety and child protection. Employers need to be supported in doing this
- Partnerships should consider using the CfA's child protection guidance to educate employers on the channels of communications and their responsibilities within that. This is available at <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/employer/downloads.htm>. There is also guidance from the LSC and DfES on Child protection.
- When carrying out risk assessments of work placements, partnership must consider the wider environment and not just the office environment where the YA will be working. As Business & Administration is a cross-sector area, each placement will present different risks depending upon the sector of the organisation.
- Employers are less familiar with work-related qualifications such as the Technical certificate, BTECs and GCSEs. The CfA would recommend that progress on these subjects is discussed with employers to provide a wider context for work-based learning.
- Partnerships who do not deliver NVQs in Business & Administration should re-consider this. 90% of employers feel that these qualifications help to enhance the performance of the Young Apprentice in their work placement. Partnerships are able to choose from Level 1 or Level 2, depending upon the opportunities available during the placement period and the Young Apprentices level of competency. The important thing is that the qualification brings some structure to the work placement. The NVQ also supports a fast track progression for the Young Apprentice should they choose to pursue the post-16 Apprenticeship in Business & Administration.

- The CfA would suggest that partnerships look in to subsidising mentoring workshops or qualifications for work placement supervisors. This will help to engage employers and create the preferred learning environment in the workplace. Look at CIPD or ENTO websites for further information. You may also be able to link in to funding streams elsewhere, i.e., train to gain and/or future plus, your local EBP should be able to offer advice or support on this.
- The CfA would recommend use of the information marketing leaflets to engage and recruit employers. These should ideally be used to promote the programme initially as well as throughout.
- The CfA would suggest that placements should combine daily routine tasks and activities with projects. Please see <http://www.cfa.uk.com/ya/employer/downloads.htm> (milestone report June 2006) for further details on projects. These activities should be planned prior to placements beginning and be relevant to the employers business activity as well as the qualifications being studied by the Young Apprentice.
- Use the CfA specialist standards to create projects that are tailored to the sector of the organisation. These standards are available at http://www.cfa.uk.com/qualifications/standards_review.html Please bear in mind that these standards are within the Level 2 & 3 qualification structure.
- Partnerships should encourage Young Apprentices to seek out future employment at their placements, and consequently create their own progression routes.

Annex A

Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration

Employer Evaluation – Cohort 1 & 2 Summer Term

Q1) How satisfied are you that your Young Apprentice is suitable for your organisation?

- Very Satisfied
- Satisfied
- Unsatisfied
- no comment

If unsatisfied please answer question 1a.

Q1a) Why do you feel your Young Apprentice was unsuitable for your organisation?

- Their attitude did not match your organisation's approach to work
- No interest in the sector your organisation works in
- Poor punctuality and attendance
- Other, please specify.....

Q2) Are you satisfied with your Young Apprentice's performance throughout the work placement?

- Yes
- No

If No, please answer 2a.

Q2a) Please state what area needed improvement and make any suggestions of how this area of weakness could be supported by your partnership?

Q3) Are you satisfied that the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration creates potential employees of the future who are equipped for the work place?

- Yes
- No

Please explain your answer.....

Q4) Do you feel that the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration helps to bridge the skills gaps identified below in the current workforce?

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| • IT/databases/spreadsheets, | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • People management * | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Legislation/Regulation knowledge, | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Information management, | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Organising and planning. | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

* People management is managing relationships with colleagues, other teams and managers.

Q5) How satisfied have you been with the support and guidance offered to you by your partnership*?

- Very satisfied,
- Satisfied,
- Not satisfied,
- No comment

Please explain your answer.....

*A partnership is a collaborative set up of lead partners, training providers, schools and employers working together towards one aim of delivering a coherent Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration programme.

Q6) Did you feel you had enough time to make the necessary arrangements between agreeing a placement to the placement beginning?

- Yes
- No

Q7) Are you happy with the communication channels between yourself, the training provider and any other stakeholders involved within the partnership?

- Yes
- No

Q8) Are you satisfied with current monitoring and evaluation procedures in place for your Young Apprentice?

- Yes
- No

If No, please indicate any improvements that could be made in this area:

Q9) What was your reason for agreeing to offer a placement to a Young Apprentice in Business & Administration?

- Strengthen link with education
- Increase CSR profile
- Staff development reasons
- Recruitment opportunities
- To develop the workforce of the future
- Other.....

Q10) Do you feel that your organisation has benefited in the identified area in Q12 now that you have fully experienced the programme?

- Yes
- No

Q11) Were you involved in the selection of your Young Apprentice for placement?

- Yes
- No

If yes, answer 14a. If no, answer 14b.

Q11) Which of the following areas have been positively impacted through your involvement in the selection of your Young Apprentice for placement?

- Retention of your Young Apprentice
- Your commitment to the programme
- Risk management of placement
- Other.....

Q11b) Would you prefer to be involved in the selection of your Young Apprentice for placement in future?

- Yes
- No

Q12) How prepared do you feel your Young Apprentice was upon arrival in the work placement?

- Well prepared
- Quite prepared
- Not prepared
- Don't know

Q13) Of the following identified areas, which do you feel your Young Apprentice was least prepared in when arriving at their placement?

- Employee rights & responsibilities,
- ICT Skills,
- Health and Safety at work,
- Behaviours and attitudes at work.

Q14) Were you supported by your partnership in the induction of your Young Apprentice in to their placement?

- Yes
- No

Q15) Do you feel that the marketing literature for the programme is clear and accurate?

- Yes
- No

If No, please explain what improvements could be made.....

.....
.....

Q16) How would you evaluate the Health and Safety implications of a 14-16 year old working in your office?

- A worthwhile exercise for the organisation
- Makes no difference to our existing H&S policies
- Adjustments are too onerous on the organisation
- any other.....

Q17) Are there any issues that have arisen during the work placement in relation to Health and Safety at work policies or procedures?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain the issues.....

.....
.....

Q18) Which of the following would categorise the types of activities you give you Young Apprentice in the workplace?

- Simple tasks,
- Projects,
- Ad-hoc duties
- Daily routine tasks
- Any other.....

Q19) Do the activities you give your Young Apprentice make a real impact upon your business?

- Yes
- No

Q20) Which types of activities do you feel would provide the most valuable experience of your workplace for a Young Apprentice?

- Simple tasks that have an impact on the business,
- projects which have an impact on the business,
- projects that do not have an impact on the business,
- ad-hoc duties,
- daily routine tasks,
- any other.....

Q21) Are you familiar with the content of qualifications your Young Apprentice is studying on the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration?

- Yes
- No

If yes, answer 25a

Q21a) Do you feel the content of the qualifications enhance the performance of the YA in placement with your organisation?

- Yes
- No

Q22) Is there anything you wish to see included within the Young Apprenticeship in Business & Administration curriculum that is not already included?

.....
.....

Q23) Is there a need to tailor the programme towards specific administrative roles within your sector? i.e. Secretarial etc.

- Yes
- No

If yes, please give an example of a job role in your organisation that the programme could be tailored towards:

.....

Q24) Are you offering your Young Apprentice any of the following progression opportunities in your organisation?

- Employment with further training,
- Post 16 Apprenticeship in Business & Administration,
- Post-16 Apprenticeship in another area,
- Employment,
- none of the above

If none of the above, answer 28a.

Q24a) Please explain why you will not be offering any further opportunities to your Young Apprentice on completion of their work placement.

.....
.....
.....

Q25) How would you rate the impact that accommodating a Young Apprentice has had on your organisation's workload?

- Low
- Medium
- High

Q26) In which, if any, of the following areas do you require more support from your partnerships?

- Supervisory roles & responsibilities
- Child Protection procedures i.e CRB checks
- Types of workplace activities to give YA
- Monitoring & pastoral care of YA
- H&S policies & risk assessment
- Other.....

Annex B

Participating Employers

EMPLOYER	SECTOR
Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs	Public
Elite Security	Security services
Top Copy Image Centre	Printing and Photographic
Trident Trust	Education and Training
Leicestershire VESA Support agency	Education and Training
Leicestershire Primary Health care trust audit group	Health
LSC	Education and Training
Nicholas McClaren GP	Health
Walsall EBP	Education and Training
Ramada Hotel and Resort	Hospitality
Thomas Vale Construction	Construction
Forum Training	Education and Training
Bracknell Borough Forest Council	Public
Step Forward	Publishing
CAS (Lichfield)	
Wyre Forest District Council	Public Sector
Sainsbury	Retail
Bagley's Estate Agents	Property services
St Mary's C of E School	Education and Training
Cookley Sebright First School	Education and Training
Craegmoore Health services	Health
Bramall Construction	Construction
Rexon Ltd	Construction

Dearne Valley Care Centre	Health
Guide Fly Fishing	Leisure and Recreation
Abbey Leisure Centre	Leisure and recreation
Riccall Regen Centre	Public
Selby District Council	Public
Birchall Blackburn	Electrical
Thames Water	Utilities
The New Swindon Co.	Community services
Swindon Council Children's services	Community services
Heath Lambert	Insurance
BMW Plant Swindon	Automotive
ERA	Electrics and technology
PTP	Education and Training
Scarborough Development Group	Construction
Newcastle Utd	Sports
Crutes Law Firm	Legal
Newcastle & Whitley Housing	Public
Stannah Lifts	Construction
TDR	Charity
Rok Build	Construction
The ESH group	Construction
Walsall Housing Group	Public
MG Motors	Automotive
Citizens Advice Bureau	Public
Park Hall School	Education and Training

Evangelos	Photography
MBA Publishing	Publishing
John Smith's brewery	Food and Drink
Knottingley Dequassa	Pharmaceutical
BLF	Health
CfA	Charity
City West	Financial
Family Friends	Community Services
Kennedy Scott	Education and Training
Training for Life	Education and Training
YMCA	Community services
Islington Council	Public
ACRO	IT
Skills active	Education and Training
Lambeth Primary Care Trust	Health
Gani & Co	Legal
Holiday Inn Kings Cross	Hospitality
Church of England	
Ladybird Day Nursery	Health and Social care
Childhood first	Health and Social care
Optim contract	Health
Camden Transport services	Public Sector
Action for Kids	Education and Training
Kingswood School	Education and Training
Rubens at the Palace	Hospitality

SPS Security	Security services
Tyne and Wear LSC	Education and Training
Rolawn	Agriculture
Junction 18	Creative design