

Welcome to the latest edition of the WBTC quarterly newsletter



Following the departure of Craig Mincher earlier this month I have the privilege of stepping into the role of Interim Managing Director, having worked at WBTC for almost twelve years. I look forward to meeting with some of you over the coming weeks and months.

There is currently a lot in the news about future apprenticeship funding with the launch of the Skills & Growth Levy in April 26 and the introduction of apprenticeship units. We are working towards launching these and will be sending out details soon. Below is an explanation of what they are and how they are funded.

What is an apprenticeship unit?

Apprenticeship units are designed to allow learners to complete a segment of an apprenticeship programme, rather than the full curriculum. Every apprenticeship unit is fully accredited and taken directly from approved apprenticeship standards. They offer a shorter and more flexible alternative to full apprenticeship programmes. Unlike a full apprenticeship, learners do not need to complete the full apprenticeship standard. Each unit covers a specific skill set, allowing learners and businesses to focus on skills that matter most to them and they are fully accredited in the same way as apprenticeship standards. The biggest benefit is that they take significantly less time to complete than a full apprenticeship. This will allow learners to pick up new skills and apply them in weeks and months rather than years. The initial roll out will be in priority areas such as artificial intelligence, digital and engineering and will be expanded over time to other critical skills needs.

How are apprenticeship units funded?

Apprenticeship units will be funded through the Growth and Skills Levy, in the same way that apprenticeship programmes are currently. The big difference is in the flexibility, apprenticeship units give businesses greater control over how long their teams are training for, what skills they are learning and how they use their levy budget.

Helen Lloyd-Hole, Interim Managing Director

A Landmark Achievement

Our First Multi-Channel Marketing Distinction

Tara's journey has been defined by incredible dedication and proactive spirit. Starting her apprenticeship with a focus on growth, she blossomed in personal confidence and professional presence from her very first day. Consistently organised, Tara built a high-quality portfolio that her tutor described as 'heads above' the required level for gateway submission. She sets exceptionally high standards for herself, ensuring every piece of work showcased her commitment to marketing excellence.

After dedicated preparation for her End Point Assessment, Tara overcame her nerves to truly shine during her final evaluation. We are thrilled to announce she achieved Distinction. This marks a historic milestone as the first distinction received on this new standard for WBTC.

Congratulations Tara!



Fundamental British Values

Shaping Future Leaders Through Shared Values



Democracy



Rule of Law



Individual Liberty



Mutual Respect



Tolerance of Different faiths

Spotlight on: Democracy

“ Democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of state, typically through elected representatives. ”

In the UK, democracy is not just a political concept, it's a way of life that ensures everyone has a voice.

How it works in practice:

- ✓ **Fair Elections:** Leaders are elected, and all parties have a equal chance of success.
- ✓ **Freedom of Expression:** Citizens have the right to free speech and free press.
- ✓ **Healthy Debate:** Cabinet Ministers may oppose and make suggestions in debates.
- ✓ **Active Participation:** Citizens are permitted to participate in demonstrations and sign petitions.

Did you know?

- **Global Influence:** 190 of the 195 countries in the world have some form of parliament and it all started in the UK.
- **The Original:** We have the oldest parliament in the world, famously known as the 'Mother of All Parliaments'.
- **The Houses of Parliament:** Remains perhaps the most famous symbol of all democracy in the world.

LEARNER CELEBRATION

A Great Start Success!



Huge congratulations to Jack, the well-deserved winner of our Learner of the Quarter Award! Jack's journey with WBTC is a masterclass in perseverance beginning with our Great Start programme where he successfully completed his Level 1 & 2 Worksills. After proving his incredible work ethic by braving long hours outdoors in the winter during placement at River Sand & Gravel, he was offered a full-time Customer Service Apprenticeship.

While the transition to full-time work brought its challenges, Jack's resilience truly shone through; he transformed from a shy student into a confident professional who recently managed the Newbury site independently and even took the lead in training new staff. We are immensely proud of Jack's growth and his dedication to his career - a truly inspiring success story.

National Apprenticeship Week 2026

Celebrating National Apprenticeship Week: 40 Years of New Beginnings and Growth



National Apprenticeship Week is the perfect moment to celebrate the incredible journey of our learners. It's a time to see how much they have achieved through their hard work and to watch their potential truly flourish, as a result of great employer mentoring, high quality training and support.

During this year's National Apprenticeship Week, our Training Consultants hit the road to surprise many of our valued employer partners and apprentices with a special token of appreciation. In recognition of WBTC providing over 40 years of support for local business growth and personal development, we gifted hand-potted daffodil bulbs to our partners.

These gifts were carefully prepared by our talented Great Start Study programme learners, who threw themselves into the task with incredible community spirit. These flowers represent the deep-rooted relationships we have nurtured over four decades, serving as a vibrant symbol of new beginnings, opportunity and growth. Much like an apprenticeship, these bulbs require the right environment and steady support to truly bloom.

To see these "blossoming" careers in action, visit our social media platforms. We've shared a series of inspiring videos featuring past and current apprentices reflecting on their personal experiences and the impact of their training with us.

The success of collaboration between learners, employers and WBTC speaks for itself, WBTC achievement rate is a phenomenal 78.1%, soaring above the national average of 60.5%, clearly, we are delighted!

As well as our employers and learners, thanks also go to the whole team at WBTC across our Apprenticeships, Great Start and Commercial training programmes, for engaging training, creative mentorship and the team behind the scenes, who work their magic, keeping everything running smoothly.

We look forward to delivering high quality training for another 40 years!

 West Berkshire Training Consortium

 WBTCNewbury

 West Berkshire Training Consortium

**NATIONAL
APPRENTICESHIP
WEEK #NAW2026**



Safeguarding Focus

Building Resilience: More Than Just 'Bouncing Back'

In the fast paced world of vocational training and professional development, we often talk about resilience. But what does it actually mean in a safeguarding context? While often defined as the ability to bounce back from adversity, true resilience is more like a muscle - it's something we proactively build to protect our mental wellbeing and stay safe during challenging times.

Practical Steps to Build your Shield

Resilience isn't a fixed trait: you can develop it through intentional habits:

- **Cultivate Connection:** Strong relationships are the foundation of resilience. Stay connected with your tutors, peers, and support networks. Isolation is often where safeguarding risks grow.
- **Practice Self-Regulation:** Learn to recognise your stress triggers. Taking five minutes to breathe or step away from a screen can prevent burnout.
- **Focus on Growth:** View challenges as opportunities to learn rather than personal failures. This 'growth mindset' reduces the emotional toll of difficult days.

Our Commitment to You

Safeguarding is not just about responding to crises; it's about prevention and empowerment. We are committed to providing a learning environment where you feel supported to grow.

If you ever feel that your resilience is wearing thin, or if you are concerned about your safety or the well-being of a peer, please reach out to our designated safeguarding lead. Seeking support is not a sign of weakness - it is the ultimate act of resilience.

Why Resilience Matters in Training

For many learners, balancing studies with work and personal commitments can be overwhelming. When stress levels peak, our ability to assess risks and make safe decisions can diminish. Resilience reacts as a protective factor. A resilient learner is better equipped to:

- Recognise when they are struggling and ask for help early.
- Navigate professional setbacks without losing self worth.
- Maintain clear boundaries, both online and in the workplace



Volunteering in Local Schools: A Seed for Future Recruitment

In today's competitive landscape, business are constantly seeking innovative ways to attract and secure top talent for the future. One often overlooked strategy is fostering relationships with schools through employee volunteering. By investing time and resources in educational initiatives, companies not only contribute to their communities and CSR, but also cultivate a pipeline of future recruits by growing awareness of their company and highlighting careers in their industries.

WBTC are proud to partner with Education Business Partnership who annually supports in excess of 20,000 students across the Thames Valley through business volunteering opportunities in schools. From mock interviews to spotlighting your industry, the opportunities to get involved are very varied. To find out more contact CEO Kate Barrow at KateB@ebp.org.uk





Specialist Teaching Assistant

Do you have a Teaching Assistant ready to take the next step in their career?

Support their progression with the Specialist Teaching Assistant Level 5 Apprenticeship - an excellent development route for experienced Teaching Assistants and a strong pathway into Teacher Training for those who wish to achieve Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).

Apprentices will develop advanced knowledge and skills through a set core competencies alongside a specialist pathway tailored to their role.

Core Competencies

<p>All apprentices will cover:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Regulation & Guidance 2. Advanced Learning 3. Planning & Assessment 4. Professionalism 5. Communication 	<p>Specialist Pathways:</p> <p>Apprentices choose one of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Specialist Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 2. Social & Emotional Well-being 3. Curriculum Provision
<p>Delivery Model:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Delivery • Monthly Sessions • Mon or Tues Afternoons • 12:30pm - 3:30pm 	<p>Duration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically 18 months, including End Point Assessment (EPA)

We also offer an option to work towards the HTLA L4 alongside this apprenticeship.

Invest in your future—or the future of your school. Contact us to find out more.

wbtc-uk.com | 01635 35975

SAVE THE DATE



20th May 2026
Arlington Arts Centre

An afternoon recognising exceptional achievement, celebrating our rising stars, and honouring the employers who help them shine.

Nominations now open!

[Click here to nominate](#)

Congratulations to Last Quarter's Achievers:

Juan Sebastian Aberg
Luca Allen
Zeyad Ashraf
Julia Barnard
Elspeth Biggs
Daniel Burton
Rachael Butcher
Poppy Calow
Max Chaplin
Georgia Clarke
Caitlin Clinick
William Cornwell
Eleanor Dance
Aimee Doyle

Anna Edwards
Jake Finkel
Rosemary Flower
Zachary Flynn
Molly Gorman
Amy Gower
Mia Hiscock
Ethan Hooper
Olivia Leedham
Sophie Lucas
Ngan Ki Luk
Jennifer Millis
Lisa Purdy
Peter Rainthorpe

Ruby Rose
Jenny Scott
Basil Seeber
Maisie Selwood
Matthew Shailes
Tara Smith
Lucy Summerton
Heather Sutcliffe
Emma Symons
Esmee Theodore-Webb
Daniel Toogood
Alan Venables
Siobhan Walter
Ashleigh Wilson

Choose WBTC for high quality apprenticeships that ensures for your business and workforce.



Training Consultant in the Spotlight

Andrea Wood



What is your job at WBTC?

I am a Senior Training Consultant at WBTC, responsible for supporting learners throughout their apprenticeship programmes. The apprenticeship standards I deliver include Customer Service, Business Admin and Team Leader. Additionally, I provide support for apprentices on the Level 3 Multi-Channel Marketer programme. I also assess learners in achieving the Assessor Award and Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) Award. I am part of the apprentice onboarding team and act as an Internal Quality Assurer (IQA) for several qualifications at WBTC.

What do you find most enjoyable about your job?

The most rewarding aspect of my role is witnessing the growth and development of learners throughout their apprenticeship journey. Many begin with limited confidence, but they gradually progress and succeed.

The highlight is when they successfully complete their apprenticeship. There is no greater satisfaction than seeing my learners achieve their goals and knowing I have been part of their journey. I particularly enjoy witnessing the pride and happiness on their faces during our annual graduation celebrations, as well as seeing how proud their families are.

And the hardest part?

There are two parts of the job that are challenging. Firstly, as apprenticeships are Government funded the amount of paperwork, 'dotting the i and crossing the Ts is huge'. Having to complete the paperwork to meet funding requirements is important, but this often reduces the time available for directly supporting apprentices in their development, which I find especially difficult as my passion lies in guiding and mentoring apprentices. The hardest part is when I have to let a learner know they have been unsuccessful with their End Point Assessment, but luckily this doesn't happen often.

What advice would you give someone thinking about doing an apprenticeship?

Just do it, you won't regret it, and you will be well supported by WBTC through your apprenticeship journey. Once you have achieved your apprenticeship it will open up new opportunities for career development.

And when not working?

My husband and I have two children in secondary education, one of whom will be sitting GCSEs this year and my son is in Year 8. As I work full-time, any leisure time is dedicated to family outings. Nothing compares to quality family time.

What might surprise you about me?

I lived in Belgium for 6 years from when I was 6 months old, living in a village about 30 minutes away from Brussels. I attended a French speaking school, when we returned to England my mum tried to encourage my sister and I to continue to develop our French language skills, but we refused saying "we now live in England". I wish this hadn't been the case as I would love to be able to speak fluently in another language.

Another surprise, my dad worked in Saudi Arabia for a number of years, on our first trip to visit him when I was 8 years old, my mum, sister and I were detained by armed guards, and none of the guards spoke English. The issue was my sister and I weren't on the visa, my mum had no idea as it was all in Arabic and assumed all our names had been added. The poor people who we had been chatting to on the plane, had to find my dad in the airport, and explain we had been detained. After what seemed a lifetime, my dad had to confirm we were his children and then our holiday could start!

DATES FOR THE DIARY

As a WBTC Partner you have access to a range of Professional Development workshops for you and your staff. Every one of our employers is a WBTC Partner which means you can send any of your staff on our workshops either for free or for a subsidised cost. Each course is run by one of our skilled trainers, all of whom have years of experience in their subjects. Understandably, our Professional Development workshops are very popular so if you are thinking of attending one, we advise you book as early as possible. To secure a place please email Janet@wbtc-uk.com.

Virtual delivery will be carried out either via Teams or Google Classroom and links will be sent out with joining instructions nearer the date. Courses may be rearranged depending on numbers booked on. If this is the case we will aim to inform you as soon as possible.

Health & Safety in the Workplace (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 26/03/2026

Presentation Skills (Full Day - Face to Face)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £100

Course dates: 10/06/2026, 16/09/2026

Healthy Relationships, Citizenship and Wellbeing (Full Day - Face to Face)

Price: Free for everyone

Course dates: 21/05/2026,

Emergency First Aid at Work Level 3 (Full Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £100

Course dates: 08/06/2026, 12/10/2026

Getting to Grips with Excel (Half-day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 09/03/2026, 01/06/2026

More Excel Formatting & Functions (Half-day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 16/03/2026, 08/06/2026

Mentoring an Apprentice (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Free for everyone

Course dates: 19/03/2026, 22/10/2026

Neurodivergence in the Workplace (2 Half-Days - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £150

Course dates: To be confirmed

Intro to Excel Data Analysis (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 23/03/2026, 15/06/2026

Resilience & Growth Mindset (Half-day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 08/07/2026

Coaching and Mentoring (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 23/04/2026, 24/09/2026

AI for the Workplace (Full Day - Face to Face)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 09/03/2026, 24/06/2026

Safeguarding (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75 (+ Qualification)

Course dates: 30/03/2026, 19/10/2026

IT: Intelligent Time Savers (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 18/05/2026,

Courageous Conversations (Half-Day - Virtual)

Price: Apprentice: Free

Partner: £75

Course dates: 17/06/2026, 11/11/2026

For more information please visit our website wbtc-uk.com



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