



**Rt Hon Anne Milton MP**

Minister of State for Apprenticeships and Skills  
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Amanda Towers  
Senior Manager, Learning & Skills  
Cumbria County Council

11 December 2018

Dear Amanda

As one of the top performing apprenticeship employers in the country, I wanted to write to thank you personally for your commitment, enthusiasm and drive for apprenticeships.

You have clearly taken advantage of the reforms by growing high quality apprenticeship programmes over the past year, benefitting your company, your apprentices, and indeed the economy as a whole. I know from talking to employers that building large scale, high quality apprenticeship programmes is a significant investment. I have met hundreds of apprentices over the last year, and they all speak incredibly highly of the employers that have given them this opportunity. I know that they more than repay the investment you have made with their loyalty, enthusiasm and skills they bring to your business.

We continue to listen to you individually and collectively. At the recent budget, the Chancellor announced a package of reforms to strengthen the role of employers and increase flexibility in the apprenticeship programme, in response to your requests. Included in that was confirmation that from April 2019, employers that pay the apprenticeship levy will be able to transfer up to 25% of their levy funds to other employers to help pay for apprenticeship training (up from 10% now). We will also provide additional funding to the Institute for Apprenticeships and the National Apprenticeship Service to identify gaps in the training provider market and increase the number of employer-designed apprenticeship standards. New apprentices will all start on these new, higher-quality apprenticeship standards from September 2020. I hope that you take advantage of the increase in transfers and welcome our continuing focus on ensuring that you get more choice of quality standards to meet your needs.

At the One Year On Celebration event you attended at the House of Commons during the summer we launched the Vacancy Snapshot website. The site (<https://vacancies.amazingapprenticeships.com/>) was commissioned to promote vacancies and help students and teachers to understand the recruitment cycle of apprenticeship employers in England. By bringing businesses together with some specially selected Teacher Champions (a network created by the National Apprenticeship Service) from across England,

we can share understanding on employer recruitment methods. We can also help teachers better prepare students for apprenticeship opportunities. I believe it is important to raise awareness of the kind of opportunities you are creating. I urge you to use the opportunity to get involved.

I hope you enjoyed the event. Please do consider joining the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network (ADCN) and the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (AAN). I would also encourage your apprentices to join the Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (YAAN). Your involvement in these groups will undoubtedly help spread the word about the huge benefits apprenticeships can bring.

Once again, thank you for your continued support. I know that building apprenticeship programmes into your workforce planning takes time and investment. My grateful thanks for all you have done and continue to do in helping us grow the skilled workforce we need.

With my best wishes,

Best wishes  
Anne Milton

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