

Richard Review of Apprenticeships

Following the Wolf Review (2010), the Government set in motion a review process to answer the question: *What should an apprenticeship be in the future, and how can apprenticeships meet the needs of the changing economy?* As the review author, Doug Richards, explains, “...in truth, given the question, it is not a review at all. It does not look back, it looks forward....rather we are attempting to redefine the shape of the system itself...it is a Strategy.” As such, those who are involved in the training and delivery of apprenticeship frameworks, as well as employers, are advised to consider the recommendations.

Doug Richard has set out a comprehensive vision for the future of apprenticeships. His independent report, [The Richard Review of Apprenticeships](#), calls on the Government to improve the quality of the programme and make them more focused on the needs of employers (click for [summary](#))

Key themes and recommendations include:

- Redefining apprenticeships - Apprenticeships should be targeted only at those who are new to a job or role that requires sustained and substantial training.
- Focusing with greater rigour on the outcome of an apprenticeship - what the apprentice can do when they complete their training – and freeing up the process by which they get there. Trusted, independent assessment is key.
- Recognised industry standards should form the basis of every apprenticeship. Employers and other organisations with relevant industry expertise should be invited to design and develop new apprenticeship qualifications for their sectors.
- All apprentices should reach a good level in English and maths before they can complete their apprenticeship.
- Government funding must create the right incentives for apprenticeship training. The purchasing power for investing in apprenticeship training should lie with the employer.
- Far greater diversity and innovation in training should be encouraged – with employers and government taking a more active role in safeguarding quality.

It has long been BTEG’s view that the numbers of BME young people, in particular, who [access apprenticeships](#) are low and that more need to be done to draw attention to opportunities. However, we recognise that there could be inbuilt barriers to accessing such opportunities and so we welcome the emphasis placed on redefining what apprenticeship is: “...*the apprentice needs to be employed and trained to develop the skills to do the job.*” Most importantly, and many BME young people find themselves in this situation, “...*the welter of qualifications that serves to support the apprentice’s progress*” which does not add to eventually being deemed qualified or competent, “*must change.*” Far too many BME young people are being encouraged to participate in programmes that are promoted as ‘apprenticeships’, and these push them further away from the labour market than those able to access genuine and true apprenticeships.