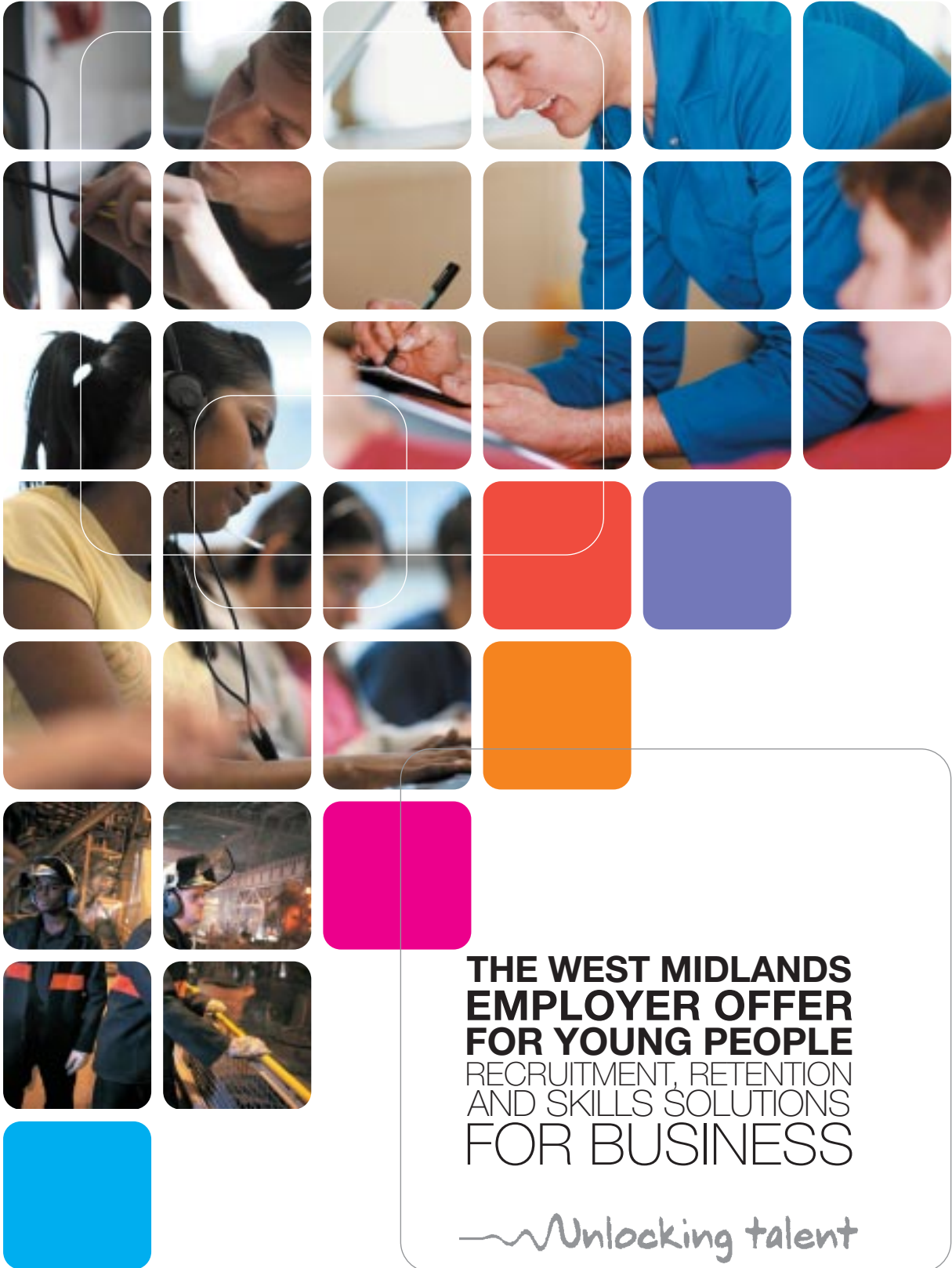


backing
young
Britain



**THE WEST MIDLANDS
EMPLOYER OFFER
FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**
RECRUITMENT, RETENTION
AND SKILLS SOLUTIONS
FOR BUSINESS

Unlocking talent

Personal Message from Barrie Williams

Chairman Business Voice WM



Dear Members,

I am writing to urge you to join with other business leaders across the region to support this 'Business Voice WM campaign', aimed at equipping young people with the skills needed for work and indeed helping them secure employment.

Business Voice WM is an organisation made up of employers and their representative bodies such as the Chambers of Commerce and the CBI. Collectively, it is working alongside public bodies such as Jobcentre Plus and the National Apprenticeship Service to improve the employment chances of the region's young people.

There are a number of ways you can get involved. These are detailed in this document, all of which will have positive outcomes for your business and deliver advantages, both immediately and in the future.

As Chairman of Business Voice WM, I am delighted to offer my personal support for this work and I urge you to spare some time to consider the range of options for your business.

Barrie Williams



Business Voice is an umbrella organisation that represents the West Midland's business community - to see a full list of members visit www.businessvoicewm.org.uk

WHY YOUNG PEOPLE ARE VITAL TO YOUR BUSINESS

It's never been easier to benefit from employing a young person and doing so will bring untold enthusiasm, innovation and rewards for both of you. This leaflet provides information on the range of ways your business can take advantage of support available and get involved. Young people are the future life-blood of our regional economy.

THE REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

The West Midlands economy has been hit hard by the economic downturn with the rate of unemployment higher than other regions in the UK. Young people have been particularly affected and currently make up 30% of the total number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance.

In terms of skills, the proportion of young people in the West Midlands attaining a Level 2 qualification is rising, but still remains below the national average of 77%. Employers frequently report a general lack of 'life skills' or work experience as an issue preventing them from recruiting young people.

This of course represents a Catch-22 situation as young people cannot gain the work experience needed to meet employers' expectations and employers cannot recruit the young people they desire.

Within the region, a range of support measures for employers is available to address these issues. Employers can get help in recruiting young people, support for training them prior to work and in the workplace with access to funds to assist this. There is also a range of options available to employers who may wish to offer internships for graduates and non-graduates as well as work experience opportunities. Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) are all able to support employers with their recruitment and skills needs.



**EMPLOYERS CAN GET
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ENSURING THAT THE
VALUABLE SKILLS AND
EXPERIENCES
OF YOUNG PEOPLE
AREN'T BEING WASTED

The call to employers for support

Backing Young Britain

Backing Young Britain is a national campaign that is bringing businesses and public and voluntary sectors together to ensure that the valuable skills and experience of our young people aren't being wasted. With the right support, there are hundreds of young people out there who can make a positive contribution to your business. The support of employers is vital in providing opportunities for young people and you can back young Britain in three different ways:

1. Offer an Apprenticeship
2. Give a young person a job
3. Provide experience of work for a young person

To find out more about what you can do for young people and what they can do for your business, go to www.hmg.gov.uk/backingyoungbritain

SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

We want employers in the West Midlands to make the most of the support available to provide opportunities for young people within the Backing Young Britain campaign. Jobcentre Plus, LSC and their partners can provide a gateway to the range of services available. The information below represents an introduction to the help available. More details are available via the contact telephone numbers and website details listed.

National Apprenticeship Service

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) delivers an end-to-end service to employers wishing to take on apprentices. Apprenticeships provide an optimal way of training and developing skilled staff, both for existing employees and new recruits. It represents a cost efficient way for employers to save on their training budget.

Business benefits

Over 130,000 organisations offer Apprenticeship places because they understand the benefits apprentices bring to their business:

- 83% of employers rely on their Apprenticeship programme to provide the skilled workers they need for the future.
- 77% believe Apprenticeships make them more competitive.
- 80% find that Apprenticeships reduce staff turnover.

- 57% report that a high proportion of their apprentices go on to management positions within the company.
- 59% report that training apprentices is more cost effective than hiring skilled staff.
- 59% believe that Apprenticeships lead to lower overall training costs.

Source: Populus Research conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council, February 2008

What can employers expect from the NAS?

The NAS is making it easier for you to start an Apprenticeship programme in your workplace and includes a free web-based service - Apprenticeship Vacancies, that enables you to advertise your vacancies online and find candidates who match your criteria. The Service also enables employers who have not previously taken on apprentices to access advice and practical support from the dedicated employer services team who can help in finding a training provider your business can work with. The provider will work closely with you to identify your business needs and ensure you find the perfect match for each Apprenticeship opportunity you advertise.

The funding for training is paid directly to the training provider. The funding guidance is as follows:

- 16 to 18yrs - fully-funded
- 19+yrs - funded to 50%
- 25+yrs - funded subject to available budget

If you would like to offer Apprenticeship opportunities, you should discuss your exact training requirements with an employer representative.

To do this you can register your interest on the employer section of apprenticeships.org.uk or call 08000 150 600.

The call to employers for support

Backing Young Britain

Graduate Internships

Graduate Talent Pool, a new government initiative, aims to help employers create and offer graduate internships. To complement the national initiative, universities, the Institute of Directors, Jobcentre Plus and Advantage West Midlands have collaborated to set up the West Midlands Graduate Internship Programme. The programme is the first of its kind in the country and will provide up to 1,000 extra new placements and training places for graduates. A key element is that it enables graduates to receive Jobseeker's Allowance whilst attending a placement up to 26 weeks.

For more information visit

www.westmidlandsgraduateinternships.co.uk

Local Employment Partnerships

Jobcentre Plus works in partnership with employers to provide access to a range of services designed to support recruitment. Services include:

Tailored recruitment with pre-employment training and Work Trials to meet business needs.

A recruitment subsidy of £1,000, payable where employers recruit a person who has been claiming Jobseeker's Allowance for between six and 12 months.

Routes into Work

Finding the right employees with the right attitude and skills can be a real challenge for many businesses. Jobcentre Plus has joined forces with several key sectors to help employers get access to the best young people. Sector Skills Councils have supported the development of pre-employment training programmes that focus on the core skills demanded by employers within a number of employment sectors. Jobcentre Plus can provide access to these programmes along with young people who may have already benefited from this training.

Future Jobs Fund

Employers, who could offer an 18-24 year-old person work of a community or environmental benefit, will be partnered with a Future Jobs Fund lead organisation in their area who can discuss how the initiative works. If the job is suitable it attracts a payment of £6,500, which means a young person can be paid a wage and gain valuable work experience for six months.

www.campaigns.dwp.gov.uk/campaigns/futurejobsfund/index.asp

Help and more information on how Local Employment Partnerships, Routes into Work and Future Jobs Fund can provide cost effective recruitment solutions for employers can be accessed through **Jobcentre Plus** according to where your business is based:

Birmingham and Solihull T: 0121 255 8200 and 0121 255 8206

Black Country (Sandwell, Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall) T: 0121 480 2545

Coventry and Warwickshire T: 02476 391057

Staffordshire T: 01782 382012

Marches (Shropshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire) T: 01432 363672 and 01432 363670

Alternatively, you can find out more information at

www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk

Train to Gain

The national Train to Gain service, delivered by Business Link West Midlands, offers impartial independent advice to businesses on their skills needs including a free business needs analysis. A trained skills broker will provide signposting to provision that will meet an individual employer's needs.

For more information call 0845 113 1234 or visit

www.traintogain.gov.uk

Further Education Offer

Individual Further Education Colleges provide a range of training provision to meet the needs of business. The national Careers Advice Service can help identify providers in a particular area.

For more information call 0800 100 900 or visit

www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk

Redundancy Support

If you are restructuring your business, help is available from Jobcentre Plus (see the contact numbers under 'Local Employment Partnerships') or through the Better West Midlands programme delivered by the trade union Unity.

For more information call 01782 266 775

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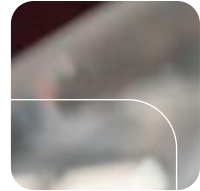
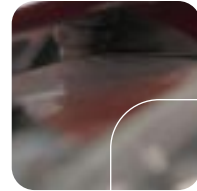


HELPING YOU TO
FIND THE RIGHT
EMPLOYEES
WITH THE RIGHT
ATTITUDE



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For more information or to access a large print version of this leaflet,
please visit www.businessvoicewm.org.uk