



Lord Agnew Kt DL

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the School System
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Lord Pendry

Via email: pendryt@parliament.uk

3rd September 2019

Dear Lord Pendry,

Further to your letter to Viscount Younger of Leckie, and following his appointment as a Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, I am pleased to be able to expand on the information provided in his letter to Peers dated 18 July 2019.

We recognise that some employers are concerned that Ofsted may not be familiar with the needs of business when inspecting apprenticeship training.

However, Ofsted has extensive experience of inspecting apprenticeship training and visits hundreds of providers every year. We are confident that their inspection judgements create transparency, enabling employers, apprentices and the Department to know where the quality of training falls short of what is expected.

To achieve this, Ofsted has a dedicated, knowledgeable inspector workforce which is well-trained in inspecting apprenticeship training. Many part-time Ofsted inspectors are current training managers and bring their up-to-date experience of training to inspections. Employers play an important role in Ofsted inspections of apprenticeship training providers too: their views and experiences, together with those of apprentices themselves, form an important part of the evidence which informs judgements about the quality of training.

Ofsted does not operate in isolation: it collaborates with other quality assurance organisations, including the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, to work towards the common goal of high-quality apprenticeship training and assessment.

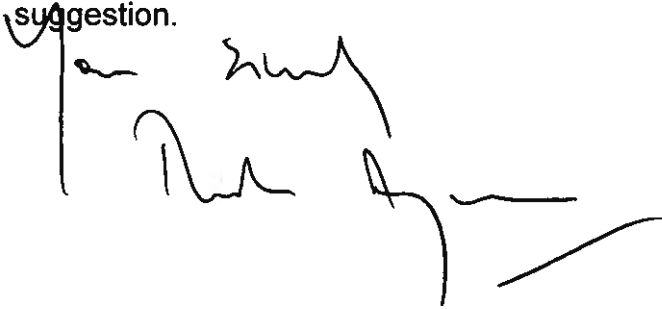
We understand that realising the benefits of apprenticeships can sometimes be challenging for those employers with a high proportion of temporary staff.

We recognise that temporary or seasonal work is widely used in some industries, and that many people find that temporary work can fit with their personal circumstances. As a result, we know that there can be difficulties for

some employers in meeting the core apprenticeship requirement of sustained training over a minimum of 12 months. There is a range of other training opportunities available to employers – including some which are government-funded – which may be more appropriate than apprenticeships.

Some employers are already successfully using Apprenticeship Training Agencies (ATAs) to utilise their levy funds and develop the skills they need to grow. ATAs can offer opportunities for apprentices and employers where employers are not able to offer a minimum of 12 months continuous employment by working with multiple suitable employers to offer continuous employment throughout an apprenticeship. We are working with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to support a pilot project for Film and TV apprenticeships which will enable around 25 apprentices to benefit from hands-on experience on the sets of major film and TV productions through short placements.

I hope this information has been of use to you. I will place a copy of this letter in the House library and arrange for it to be sent to Lord Aberdare as per your suggestion.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lord Agnew of Oulton'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

LORD AGNEW OF OULTON