# Integrated strategy Initiative for

**Strengthening the supply of**

**APPrenticeships in TEXtile sector TEXAPP – WP3.2, WP3.3 & WP3.4**

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| **TASK** | * 1. **– Company Assessment Tool**   2. **– Piloting of the Company Assessment Tool**   3. **– Report on piloting of the**   **Company Assessment Tool** |

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| **Work**  **Package:** | WP3.3 – 3.4 |
| **Date:** | 29-01-2018 |

## The pilot phase of the Company Assessment Tool

Following the development of or ‘Standard’ in December 2017 and January 2018 we worked with 10 companies to pilot the Company Assessment Tool (CAT) – 5 of the companies are new to apprenticeship training.

Our CAT is based on our working ‘Standard’ and the CAT is designed to allow companies to self-assess their needs and priorities and help them identify any areas where development is required, and apprenticeships will be part of the key to address these developments.

We are aware that in the UK there are strict guidelines and rules governing apprenticeships and our CAT and Standard reflect these national arrangements.

## Report on piloting of the Company Assessment Tool Aim of the CAT:

To gain a better understanding of the needs and priorities of SME companies who are interested in or currently involved with apprenticeship training. Gaining a better understanding of how apprenticeships and a Standard will help to meet these needs and priorities.

## Sample group:

Ten SME’s, all of whom are TCoE partner companies are. Five have little or no recent experience of apprenticeship training and five have extensive experience.

## Methodology:

We used a combination of face to face interviews, telephone calls and email correspondences to plan and implement and complete the survey assessment task.

## Main findings and action points:

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| **Assessment Tool Survey Questions** | **Main Findings** | **Action Points and Impact** |
| Q1. Do you have to meet any legal requirements to ensure a safe working | * All ten companies replied yes to this. There are strict UK employment laws that require companies to have key arrangements in place   to secure the safety, and | * To ensure that companies meet the 1st key principle of our ‘Standard’ our qualified training centre staff will continue to monitor that these arrangements have been met by all companies before an apprenticeship starts   their learning programme |

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| environment for your employees? | | wellbeing of employees. | their | |  | |
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|  | | APP |  | NON-APP |
|  | |  | YES | NO |
| Q2. Do you respond quickly to recruit the right person when a job vacancy occurs? | | * Four out of the ten companies said no to this and three of these were new companies. Their reasons included – staff shortages or poor human resource planning. | | | * Our Standard requires all companies to demonstrate a timely response time to agreed vacancy and new learner recruitment and all employers now sign up to this commitment as a feature of the Standard. * This has had a strong impact on the companies who are new to apprenticeship training and has significantly improved the responsiveness of companies when job vacancies occur (it is worth noting here that   TCoE provides a recruitment and selection service for its member employers) | |
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|  |  | YES | NO |
| Q3. Do you have a company succession plan to ensure you have the right person in the right job role? | | * Six of the ten companies said no to this, including four companies new to apprenticeships. Their comments included – we are working to establish better succession planning   – we sort of do this, but it could be more structured – we know we need to  consider this area of work moving forward | | | * Our Standard requires all companies who work with us to plan for progression and succession within the company for their apprentices. This feature of our standard has been influential in building this capacity and has helped companies focus on this as a feature of the apprenticeship training programme | |
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|  | |  | YES | NO |
| Q4. Is there a plan to attract new young people into the company moving forward? | | * This question was answered positively by most companies. However, many still feel that their abilities to recruit   and attract the right young | | | * One feature of a company meeting the requirements and commitments of our standard is that they receive the support to recruit new staff. TCoE also work closely with local and regional schools and career   services to promote and attract more | |

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|  | | | people into the Textile sector is still a challenge | | | informed and interested young people into this sector   * At TCoE the impact of this work and the employer’s commitment to our standard has significantly reduced the early leaver rates for apprentices from 45% early leavers in 2015 to   5% in 2017/18 | | |
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|  | |  | YES | NO | |
| Q5. Would your company benefit from the supply of trained young people? | | | * 100% positive responses to this question – with some comments around the needs to meet their business growth plans   being critically linked to the supply of trained staff | | | * Our standard commits all registered employers to establish effective arrangements to train and develop their staff and the apprenticeship programmes are proving to be the most effective way to build this capacity with companies | | |
|  |  | 100% | |  |  | |  | |
| 0% | |  |  | |
|  | | APP | NON-APP | |
|  | |  | YES | NO |
| Q6. Do you have people in your company who can provide training? | | | * Most said yes to this question – some companies have supervisors who have training as a feature of their job description - they all said how the standard and the requirements to have apprenticeship company learning plans in place has helped them focus on company based skills and knowledge development and important changes in behaviour | | | * Our standard has clear guidance for supervisors and senior staff mentors to ensure that supervisors/trainers/apprentices have sufficient time built into both their job description and their working week to provide well supported training and development * The standard also requires the companies to prepare a Company Learning Plan that is a separate set of teaching aims and learning objective from any external qualifications of awards being taken as part of the apprenticeship * The impact of this is very positive and all the registered companies now have these in place and the supervisors are responsible for working with the apprentice to complete these   objectives | | |
|  |  | 100% | |  |  | |  | |
| 0% | |  |  | |
|  | | APP | NON-APP | |
|  | |  | YES | NO |
| Q7. Do you have an induction | | | * Eight of the ten companies have induction | | | * The AES initiative encourages and requires all companies to have a structured induction | | |

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| programme for new employees? | | arrangements, and these vary from very basic employment considerations to full training programmes with objectives etc. The two companies that do not have these established  include one who little or no apprenticeship experience | | | | and follow up Company Learning Plan in place. We see this as an essential feature of good apprenticeship recruitment and training | |
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|  |  | YES | NO | |
| Q8. Do you | | * The response to this question caused most variation across the sample group – most had plans in place for at least two of the options but most recognised that there is a need to plan more effectively to ensure current professional practice is developed for   all employees | | | | * Our Standard requires all companies who are registered to have a succession and personal training plan for each apprentice. We also request (at the time of their AES inspection) information about ‘whole company’ training * We also have a professional discussion about the need (due to an ageing workforce) clear succession planning linked to a company performance management system * The apprenticeship programme and Standard has been effective in raising this issue | |
| have training | |
| plans in place | |
| for; | |
| 1. Managers? | |
| 2. Production | |
| staff? | |
| 3. Others? | |
|  | | * The main area where there are variable levels of training planning consideration is for ‘managers’ and ‘others’ (i.e. office administrators – specialist technicians –   marketing and sales etc | | | | * As a group training organisation, we provide a company skills gap/shortage and progression planning service, and this is promoted as part of the training course content to ensure the supervisors are aware of this service | |
| Q9. Is there a strong company commitment to training and skills development? | | * Generally, the answer to this was positive for all companies – taking account of the consideration above | | | | * The AES standard revisits this commitment and the apprenticeship programmes are a good catalyst for this type of activity to be secured | |
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|  |  | YES | NO | |
| Q10. Are the company training needs and priorities for skilled staff | | * Four (three from non- apprenticeship training   companies) said this is not in place now. | | | | * The Standard is helping companies (through the training – support and registration   process) focus more on this area, including future planning, skills mapping etc. | |

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| being met currently? | |  | | | |  | |
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|  | |  | YES | NO | |
| Q11. Do you plan for time off work to allow for training and skills development? | | * This question provided a mixed response – all the apprenticeship training companies said yes to this and 4 of the 5 non-training companies said while we do not plan we are happy to allow time off where   needed. | | | | * The apprenticeship programmes and the AES registration will support a more structured approach by companies to this question. As seen with all our apprenticeship training companies who said yes to this. | |
|  |  | 100% |  |  |  | |  |
| 0% |  |  |  | |
|  | APP |  | NON-APP | |
|  |  | YES | NO | |
| Q12. Do you have people in the company that could support a new apprentice? For example, a supervisor/ charge- hand/mentor? | | * All ten companies said yes to this question. The smaller companies will have a supervisor only while the larger companies also identified a mentor role to support the supervisor | | | | * The Standard has worked well to ensure that all participating companies must provide at least a supervisor who must be trained and is responsible for the day to day support and monitoring of the apprentice. | |
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| 0% | |  |  |  | |
|  | | APP |  | NON-APP | |
|  | |  | YES | NO | |
| Q13. Would your company benefit from having staff trained to support apprentices to be successful? | | * All the responses said yes to this. This included the companies who, at this moment, do not have apprentices in learning and have not attended the   company training course. | | | | * This response suggests a strong awareness of the need for training staff to support the apprenticeship role (this is a well-established theme in the UK apprenticeship sector) | |

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|  | 100%  0% | | APP | YES | NON-APP NO | |  |
| Q14. Would your company benefit from having a ‘Standard’/Framew ork that would provide a structure for an apprenticeship training plan? | | * All companies said yes to this question. Four of the 5 larger companies who currently train apprentices also have their own training programmes in place to complement the framework provided by the Standard. | | | | * The Standard has proven to be well accepted by companies to help them clarify their role and provide a framework and structure for them to more confidently engage in apprenticeship training. | |
|  |  | 100% |  |  |  | |  |
| 0% |  |  |  | |
|  | APP |  | NON-APP | |
|  |  | YES | NO | |
| **Summary of main findings:**  **Risk ratings:**  **Low – requires little or further support or attention**  **Medium – some support needed to help improve consistency or structure**  **High – important need for intervention and/or additional advice and support to improve**   * All are aware of their legal obligations for safety and welfare (**Low** risk) * Nearly all are quick to respond when an apprenticeship vacancy arises (**Low** to medium risk) * Most companies have some form of succession plan in place and some have a plan to attract young people into the sector (**Medium** risk some support is advisable) * All companies agreed that they would benefit from a supply of young people (**Low** risk area) * Nearly all said that they have people who can train but the Standard helps to add structure to this role (**Low** risk area) * All the apprentice training companies have induction arrangements in place (**Low** risk area) however, the non-app’s companies need some support and the standard can help this. (**High** risk for non-app’s companies – support through the standard needed) * There is a strong commitment to company training but there are some areas of staff training that needs more planning (**Medium** risk some support is advisable) * For apprenticeship training companies their current training needs and priorities for staff are being met generally well. However, for non-apprenticeship training companies 3 of the 5 said this was an issue for them (**High** risk for non-app’s companies – support through the standard needed) * Nearly all companies show a strong commitment to allowing time off work for training and skills development where needed (**Low** risk area) * All companies could identify a member of staff to support a new apprentice (**Low** risk area) | | | | | | | |

* All ten companies said they would benefit from having staff trained to support apprentices to be successful (**Low** risk area)
* All ten companies said they would benefit form having a Standard/Framework to help them structure an apprenticeship programme at work (**Low** risk area)