**Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Strategy 2016 – 2021**

**Foreword**

Apprenticeships are undergoing an unprecedented period of reform with the Government setting out stretching targets for growth whilst new funding mechanisms and Apprenticeship Standards are implemented.

Within the Greater Manchester Strategy – *Stronger Together[[1]](#footnote-1)* - objectives are set out for both Growth and Reform. Within an inclusive Growth agenda, skills developments and considerations are woven throughout the key objectives. At the same time, on the Reform side, Apprenticeships are explicitly mentioned in relation to preventing and reducing youth unemployment but also offer a solution to many of the issues identified. Both Growth and Reform are addressed within this strategy, recognising the role Apprenticeships can play, not only as the starting point for a future career, but also as the key to developing many of the higher level skills required to increase productivity and develop the economy.

Going forward, we must be ambitious about the future of our integrated work and skills system in Greater Manchester and about the role that Apprenticeships play within it if we are to seize the opportunities that Devolution offers and to place Greater Manchester at the economic heart of the Northern Powerhouse. We need to ensure that further Devolution linked to Apprenticeships and skills allows Greater Manchester to have greater control and influence over the Apprenticeship budgets, allows us to stimulate growth and Apprenticeship opportunities in areas of priority need, and enables us to tailor careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) services to ensure that the needs and aspirations of people are matched with business productivity and growth. Devolution must not, however, create a barrier to employers who work across city region boundaries or for people who travel in and out of Greater Manchester to achieve their aspirations.

Employer engagement in and ownership of the skills agenda is critical to progress moving forward to ensure skills provision meets the needs of the future GM labour market. Young people starting their careers need to understand fully the role that Apprenticeships and Traineeships could play within their opportunities for learning and progression to give them the best start in their careers, particularly in light of the opportunities presented by the Post-16 Skills Plan. Apprenticeships are also an opportunity for adults (of all ages and skills levels) to gain further training and support to develop their careers, offering opportunities for re-skilling and up-skilling the existing workforce to support in-work progression. Higher levels skills often link to higher pay and, as such, apprenticeships can also contribute towards social mobility. Drawing together the references to Apprenticeships from a range of skills and sector-based strategies will allow a cohesive approach to be taken by all stakeholders going forward.

This strategy aims to set out ambitions, targets and approaches for Apprenticeships in Greater Manchester in the context of the changing landscape both nationally and in GM, whilst maintaining an emphasis on quality, apprentice experience and opportunity, and employer workforce development. It will be a focus for future funding applications linked to Apprentice activity and ensure the right measures are in place for monitoring success and impact.

We look forward to working together with our partners to put this Strategy into practice, positioning Apprenticeships as a central feature of an integrated work and skills system for Greater Manchester which truly meets the needs of our residents and employers.

**Executive Summary**

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| **“If we can build an apprentice nation, we can reach three million quality apprentices, transform our skills base and, as a result, change the future...”**  *Robert Halfon MP, Minister for Skills and Apprenticeships* |

**Building an Apprentice Nation**

Apprenticeships are at the heart of Government skills policy, viewed as a key vehicle for boosting social justice, economic productivity, and the nation’s skills base.

To that end, the Government has set a target of achieving 3 million Apprenticeship starts over the life of the current parliament. For Greater Manchester, this translates to a cumulative total of approximately 184,000 Apprenticeship starts by 2020 (approximately 20% growth on current numbers).

Against that backdrop and to support achievement of those targets, the Apprenticeship landscape is currently going through a period of significant national reform, with new standards being developed by employers describing the knowledge, skills and behaviours that apprentices must achieve, alongside major reforms to the way Apprenticeships are funded through the Apprenticeship Levy and digital voucher system.

This strategy sets out how Greater Manchester will respond to the challenges and opportunities posed by the national programme of Apprenticeship reform, whilst maintaining a focus on quality at the heart of all delivery in achieving our share of the 3 million target.

The strategy is aimed at all the stakeholders in the GM Apprenticeship landscape, whether provider, employer or key partner, and it sets out a roadmap for increasing both the quality and the quantity of apprenticeship opportunities available within the Greater Manchester city region.

**Apprenticeships: the policy commitment**

The activity is set within a rapidly evolving national and Greater Manchester policy context and takes into account a comprehensive raft of strategies and initiatives.

Greater Manchester’s response to the skills and apprenticeships challenge must help to build a robust and responsive workforce and talent pipeline that truly meets the needs of our residents and employers, particularly in Greater Manchester’s priority growth sectors and linked to major infrastructure developments such as HS2 and the GM spatial framework. It must also be flexible enough to meet changing employment patterns and skills requirements which may emerge associated with Brexit, as well as the Government’s Industrial Strategy[[2]](#footnote-2).

The Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Strategy will:

* form a key strand of the GM Work and Skills Strategy
* draw together the multitude of apprenticeship-related policy commitments and give rise to a high level activity plan
* maximise GM apprenticeship numbers while emphasising quality for both apprentices and employers
* place Apprenticeships at the heart of business growth and productivity through workforce skills planning.

**Greater Manchester’s Apprenticeship Ambition**

At the core of this strategy is our ambition for Greater Manchester to become an exemplar of Apprenticeship employment. We are already ahead of the curve in terms of the proportion of apprenticeships compared to England as a whole but we want to go further. We want more of our employers than ever before to understand how high quality, sustainable Apprenticeships can help their businesses to thrive and grow, and to benefit from Apprenticeships as a key element of their workforce development planning and talent management.

We also want Greater Manchester’s residents to have access to more - and better - apprenticeship opportunities, together with the careers inspiration and guidance they need to make informed decisions about their futures. We must help both young people and adults understand the part that an apprenticeship could play in their personal and professional development within Greater Manchester’s labour market now and in the future, and provide them with the support they need to achieve their goals.

This Strategy therefore focuses on objectives and outcomes for the three ‘pillars’ of Apprenticeships – apprentices/potential apprentices, employers, and providers – in order to ensure that Apprenticeships truly meet all their needs as a central part of GM’s integrated and inclusive work and skills system:

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| **Apprentices and  Potential Apprentices** | **Employers** | **Providers** |
| Prospective apprentices will have access to high quality CEIAG, ensuring that they fully understand Apprenticeship opportunities and pathways available to them in GM and the benefits of undertaking an Apprenticeship route.  Apprentices will be assured of a high quality Apprenticeship experience, leading to career progression opportunities that form the basis of their future working lives. | Employers will be fully engaged with GM’s skills system at all levels: supporting CEIAG activities, creating high quality Apprenticeship vacancies and engaging with/contributing to education at all levels. They will understand the value of Apprenticeships as a workforce development tool, and we will help to ensure that the skills system is responsive to their business needs. | Providers will be of the highest quality, offering quality training and assessment for apprentices, alongside support for employers that ensures successful achievement of programmes. |

**Delivering the Ambition**

This strategy identifies nine cross-cutting themes which are central to achieving Greater Manchester’s Apprenticeship ambitions. It also sets out a comprehensive high level activity plan under each of those themes, which will form the strategic basis of GM-wide activity and projects to enhance the Apprenticeship landscape over the next 5 to 10 years:

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| **1. Influencing Government**  We must work with Government, building on current Devolution deals, to influence future Apprenticeship policy direction and funding models. | |
| *This year:*  Engage with and influence the Institute for Apprenticeships through its expert panels, around the design, quality and funding of Apprenticeship Standards and Post-16 technical education routes. | *By 2020:*  Continue building an evidence base to support our dialogue with Government around what works, ensuring local intelligence and learning around the Apprenticeship agenda is taken into account when presenting a case for greater local autonomy. |
| **2. Maximising the Levy investment made in Greater Manchester**  We must ensure that the Levy paid by GM’s large employers, both in the public and private sectors, delivers maximum impact through planned workforce development. | |
| *This year:*  Develop and deliver a high quality GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme for GM’s Local Authorities, Health Trusts, Police, Fire and other GM public services. | *By 2020:*  Work with employers and SFA to develop mechanisms to influence GM’s supply chain ‘gifting’ of Levy vouchers from 2018, including embedding social value and corporate social responsibility principles. |
| **3. Supporting SME (non-levy paying) employers**  We must help non-Levy paying employers to navigate apprenticeship reforms, and broker more effective links between employers and schools, colleges and providers to join up the creation of apprenticeship/traineeship opportunities with careers inspiration. | |
| *This year:*  Facilitate business support services and networks that support SMEs across GM to provide clear and consistent messaging, support and advice about Apprenticeships. | *By 2020:*  Support significant growth in the number of Apprenticeship and Traineeship opportunities being offered by GM’s small and micro employers, particularly within our priority sectors. |
| **4. Removing Barriers**  We must tackle barriers to Apprenticeships – both real and perceived – for individuals and employers alike. Positive action is needed to understand and remove barriers, simplify processes, and continue the overall shift in perceptions of Apprenticeships. | |
| *This year:*  Develop a transport offer for Apprentices, based on TfGM pilot activity, to address the barrier of travel costs. | *By 2020:*  Tackle issues around equality within GM’s Apprentice cohort and underrepresentation of, for example, young people in/leaving care, the BAME community and those with education, health and care plans (EHCP). |
| **5. Ensuring a level playing field for Apprenticeship routes**  We must help all GM residents, particularly young people, understand how a high quality Apprenticeship could help them to achieve their career goals, and equip them with the information, advice, guidance and work-related experiences to make informed decisions about the part an Apprenticeship could play | |
| *This year:*  Continue to build upon the cultural shift within schools around perceptions of Apprenticeships (developed through the Apprenticeship Hub CEIAG activity). | *By 2020:*  Support development and implementation of a simple application system which places Apprenticeships on the same footing as academic options. |
| **6. Developing progression pathways at all levels**  Ensure clear ‘line of sight’ into and through Apprenticeship job roles, from pre-Apprenticeships for those entering Greater Manchester’s labour market, to Higher / Degree Apprenticeships for those wishing to progress within it. | |
| *This year:*  Through all-age CEIAG activity, ensure that the opportunities and progression routes available through Traineeships and Apprenticeships are clearly understood by potential apprentices as well as their parents/carers and advisors. | *By 2020:*  Develop appropriate ‘bridging provision’ between academic and technical pathways at every level in support of technical education reform. A key focus for this will include in-work progression via Higher/Degree Apprenticeships in GM’s priority sectors. |
| **7. Improving quality and achievements**  Quality is key to all Apprenticeship activity, for employers, providers and apprentices, so a range of measures have been identified to ensure achievement rates continue to improve. | |
| *This year:*  Define and implement a GM Quality Standard for Apprentice Employers that recognises high quality Apprenticeship roles and ‘apprentice-friendly’ employment practice. | *By 2020:*  Develop a place-based approach to our discussions with colleges and providers, ensuring that the GM offer meets the needs of the local labour market and that business models respond positively and flexibly to shifting needs. |
| **8. Harnessing the opportunities arising from Apprenticeship reforms**  We must maintain and improve Apprenticeship numbers and quality in Greater Manchester during the transition period associated with the national reform programme, particularly within our priority sectors. | |
| *This year:*  Work with employers and intermediary bodies/business development agencies to ensure that they understand and actively seek out the new employer-led Apprenticeship Standards, as well as contributing to their development where relevant standards are not currently available. | *By 2020:*  Establish mechanisms to support key cornerstones of reform (including the public sector apprenticeship target and the shift to funding all apprenticeships through DAS) and support seamless transition ahead of the withdrawal of all frameworks by 2020. |
| **9. Meeting the numbers challenge**  All activity must underpin an overall growth in starts by 20% over five years in order to deliver the cumulative 184,000 starts, while maintaining the focus on quality and achievement. | |
| *This year:*  Continue to promote Apprenticeships as a key to organisational and workforce development for career entry and up-skilling all ages, leveraging the value of the digital vouchers and top-up to levy payers. | *By 2020:*  Establish Apprenticeship activity at the core of wider technical education offer in GM as new technical routes are rolled out from 2019/20 and beyond, as well as supporting achievement of the 2.3% public sector apprenticeship target. |

**Measuring Success**

In order to measure the impact of the strategy, detailed analysis has been undertaken of current Apprenticeship activity within GM, across priority occupational areas, considering levels, demographic factors and growth opportunities. (Key data and skills considerations pertaining to apprenticeships are annexed to the strategy.) Using this evidence-led approach, quantitative and qualitative targets have been developed, which we believe will deliver the requisite growth in numbers while achieving the crucial balance between growth and quality.

Key targets for the strategy include:

* A 45% increase in the number of Apprenticeship starts from 2014 to 2020, of which 10% will be at Higher or Degree level, and a 64% increase in the number of apprentices aged 16-24 years
* A 5% increase in achievement rates by 2020
* The proportion of BAME starts will reach 16% (proportionate to GM’s post-16 population)
* There will be 50% increase in Apprenticeships within GM’s priority sectors
* 13% of Key stage 4 and 15% of key stage 5 leavers will progress directly into an Apprenticeship
* Tripling the number of Traineeship starts in GM
* The 50 largest Apprenticeship providers in GM will all be rated Good or Outstanding for their Apprenticeship provision by Ofsted
* 300 employers will have achieved the GM Quality Award for Apprentice Employers.

**Shared ambition, collective action**

The Greater Manchester ambition can become one of the foundation blocks of the ‘apprentice nation’ described by ministers. To deliver this will require partnership working across GM’s education, skills and employment sector, including employer bodies. We look to the full range of partners to bring their expertise and commitment to the table and seek agreement from them to both endorse the principles set out in this strategy and commit to working together on its implementation.

Contents

[1 Introduction 10](#_Toc482780041)

[2 Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Ambition 12](#_Toc482780042)

[3 The 3 Apprenticeship Pillars 12](#_Toc482780043)

[3.1 Apprentices and Potential Apprentices 12](#_Toc482780044)

[3.2 Employers and Occupational Areas 15](#_Toc482780045)

[3.3 Apprenticeship Provider Base 23](#_Toc482780046)

[4 Cross Cutting Themes 25](#_Toc482780047)

[5 Key Targets and measures 27](#_Toc482780048)

[6 Strategy Monitoring and Governance 28](#_Toc482780049)

[7 High Level Activity Plan 29](#_Toc482780050)

[8 Appendix 1 - Apprenticeship Growth Targets (based on GM starts) 38](#_Toc482780051)

[9 Appendix 2 – Measures and targets 39](#_Toc482780052)

[10 Appendix 3 – Key partners 42](#_Toc482780053)

# Introduction

We have a vision that, by 2035, the Greater Manchester city region will be one of the world’s leading regions, driving sustainable growth across a thriving North of England. It will be ever more productive, innovative, creative, and known for the excellent quality of life enjoyed by our residents who are able to contribute to and benefit from the prosperity that growth brings.

To deliver that vision, young people must leave the education system with the knowledge, skills, and attributes needed to succeed in the labour market. Working age adults who are out of work and /or who have low levels of skills, must have access to the skills and wider support needed to enter and sustain employment, and there must be an offer for all adults to up-skill and progress their careers. There is a step-change needed to ensure that the GM skills demand and supply systems are more engaged; with the leadership and capacity to co-produce and co-fund the higher level and technical skills, needed to increase productivity, improve skills utilisation and grow the economy. Recognising that globalisation, technological change and an ageing population and workforce will continue to impact on the sectors and occupations that are likely to grow, the GM skills system will need to be flexible, adaptable and resilient in the long-term.

Apprenticeships are key to that skills system and to growing Greater Manchester’s economy. In 2013, a 10% year on year growth target for Apprenticeship starts amongst 16 – 24 year olds was set by Greater Manchester’s Skills and Employment Partnership (SEP), but although some individual local authorities have developed Apprenticeship strategies and action plans, no comprehensive direction of travel has been laid out for Greater Manchester in order to support the achievement of that target.

Since then, the Government has announced plans to create 3 million Apprenticeship starts across England over the 5 year life of the current parliament, a commitment which was reiterated within the Chancellor’s Productivity Plan unveiled in 2015[[3]](#footnote-3). That plan recognised that employer-led Apprenticeships are at the heart of some of the most successful skills systems around the world and will be crucial to achieving the high numbers and quality of technical and professional skilled workers needed within our labour market in the coming years.

Greater Manchester’s contribution to that national target of 3 million Apprenticeships (which supersedes the 2013 SEP target) equates to approximately 184,000 Apprenticeship starts – an additional 34,000 cumulatively over five years based on Apprenticeship levels at the start of that period. We are moving in the right direction but, against the backdrop of a challenging period of reform, it will be more important than ever to ensure that Apprenticeships meet the needs of employers and individuals, characterised by a drive for higher quality, greater completion/achievement and improved progression. Whilst plans can be put in place to grow the numbers, quality must be at the heart of any growth and the priorities for high quality Apprenticeship opportunities and an increase in achievement rates sit over and above a numbers game. This is why growing the quality and quantity of Apprenticeships is one of ten priorities set out within the *Greater Manchester Work and Skills Strategy, 2016 to 2019*.

Despite recognition of the value and importance of Apprenticeships to growing the GM economy, penetration is low in the key sectors that are critical to the future job growth and few young people currently learn at level 3+ via an Apprenticeship, which is where the bulk of our future labour demand will be. It is critical that the Apprenticeship offer within GM includes roles at levels that meet the needs of potential apprentices and our local economy.

Within Greater Manchester, employers are working with a multitude of Apprenticeship and Traineeship providers to provide opportunities for our residents across a wide range of levels and employment sectors. During 2015/16 GM had just over 30,000 Apprenticeship starts in GM workplaces and, in 2014/15 approximately 70% of those expecting to achieve their apprenticeships completed their programmes; however, there were also significant numbers of unfilled Apprenticeship vacancies.

From evidence based on patterns of growth and change in recent years and analysis of future workforce requirements, this Apprenticeship Strategy aims to direct future investment in GM’s Apprenticeship development, whilst addressing the barriers that exist for apprentices around pay, reputation, progression and job sustainability. The Strategy builds around three central pillars: employers, apprentices/potential apprentices, and providers:

* **Employer engagement** in and ownership of the skills agenda is critical to progress moving forward to ensure skills provision meets the needs of the future GM labour market. Apprenticeships placed at the heart of any workforce development plan have been demonstrated to increase organisations’ productivity and can provide a business with a stable workforce and succession plan. Therefore local alignment of employers, schools, colleges and Apprenticeship provision is critical in delivering high quality, labour market relevant provision and Apprenticeship opportunities but also ensuring the supply of people is available. Currently there is a mismatch within this process which this Strategy aims to address.
* **Apprenticeships** provide a route for people of a range of abilities to enter a professional workforce with the guarantee of not only employment but skills training and knowledge development to enhance their employability and develop their career. Young people need to understand their opportunities for learning and progression fully to give them the best start. Recruitment of Apprentices is, however, demand-led by employers, so people need to be given the right support to meet the requirements set by employers and to compete in the job market through comprehensive programmes during and after compulsory education. Apprenticeships are also an opportunity for adults (of all ages) to gain training and support to develop whether as an individual returning to work after a break due to ill health, women returners or other reasons, as an opportunity to re-skill / re-train for new professions or a change in career direction or progress to higher levels within a career pathway.
* **Apprenticeship** **training providers** and assessment bodies, alongside government and other funding sources, are enablers of Apprenticeships – service providers to employers and their employees. They need to offer and deliver high quality provision that responds to the current and future labour market needs in Greater Manchester. This is reflected in this strategy in such a way that it enables them to grow and improve their delivery whilst meeting customer needs in an increasingly demand-led environment.

This Strategy identifies future development needs and aims to be a vehicle to set directions of travel for the Apprenticeship and Traineeship providers delivering in Greater Manchester, whilst guiding other key partners in their local activity. It aims to achieve a balance between supporting, guiding and growing the mainstream ‘everybody’ Apprenticeship offer, whilst identifying additional support requirements for those employers and young people that require it. It also sets out a high level activity plan, setting out a number of strands of activity required to implement the Strategy and achieve Greater Manchester’s Apprenticeship ambitions.

# Greater Manchester Apprenticeship Ambition

Core to the strategy is the ambition we have for Apprenticeships in Greater Manchester. The ambition is designed to have a 10 year horizon with objectives set over a 5 year period taking into account future devolution asks and Apprenticeship reform.

Greater Manchester will become an exemplar of Apprenticeship employment, with more of our employers than ever before recognising and benefiting from the contribution that high quality, sustainable Apprenticeships can make to providing the skills that will help businesses thrive and grow as part of their ongoing workforce development planning and talent management.

Greater Manchester’s residents will have access to more and better apprenticeship opportunities than ever before, together with the inspiration and guidance they need to make informed decisions about the part an apprenticeship could play in their personal and professional development, and the support they need to achieve their goals.

# The 3 Apprenticeship Pillars

To achieve the Ambition, partners across GM will need to work collectively to achieve a series of objectives. Crosscutting all the objectives will be outcomes for employers, providers, apprentices and potential apprentices (and their supporters / advisors) to ensure that Apprenticeships truly meet all their needs as a central part of GM’s integrated work and skills system.

## Apprentices and Potential Apprentices

**Outcomes**

Apprentices will be assured of a high quality Apprenticeship experience leading to career progression opportunities that form the basis of their future working lives

Potential apprentices will have access to high quality CEIAG ensuring that they fully understand Apprenticeship opportunities available to them and the benefits of an Apprenticeship route

Apprentices and potential apprentices have a range of characteristics, all of which may face barriers that need to be addressed to ensure they have the best opportunity to start and progress in their future careers.

Although Apprentices and potential apprentices have traditionally been characterised by age group, it is recognised that this can mask substantial variations in the issues and barriers that people may face in choosing to undertake an Apprenticeship.

Barriers can be practical such as the complexity of and therefore confusion in applying for an Apprenticeship (as opposed to the single and established process to apply for university) or meeting the required eligibility criteria of employers or providers. They may also be linked to income levels of the individual and the cost of transport, childcare or other household expenditure not being met with a salary at the Apprenticeship minimum wage. Family incomes are also affected as Child Benefit is lost when a 16 – 18 year old starts an Apprenticeship.

Set out below are a different set of characteristics for GM that will enable targeted activity to take place to ensure all potential apprentices have the opportunity to understand and apply to become an apprentice:

* **Direct education leavers** with little or no work experience, coming directly out of school or college at 16, 17 or 18
* **Education switchers (FE & HE)** who decide their initial post 16 or 18 choice was not right for them and choose to switch direction. In the future, following implementation of the Post-16 Skills Plan, this may encompass individuals who have transferred between academic and technical routes, including via bridging provision where appropriate
* **Existing workforce** looking to develop new skills and progress within their careers
* **Unemployed people** looking to return to the workforce at any age, whether young people characterised as NEET (not in education, employment or training) or adults who have been unemployed for a period of time. Within this there are sub-categories relating to short and long term unemployed and the different barriers they may face.
* **18-21 year olds who are out of work and claiming unemployment benefits** who will be required to undertake an intensive six month package of diagnosis and intervention under the Youth Obligation, after which they may be referred to mandatory activity including a Traineeship and / or applying for Apprenticeships.
* **Returners to work** after a period away from the labour market and requiring new skills / re-skilling such as those coming out of custody or women returners
* **Career changers** making conscious decisions to retrain for a new career pathway
* **At risk groups** such as care leavers or those with an Education Health and Care plan that may require additional support to become Apprenticeship-ready

New Apprenticeship standards are tending to describe Apprenticeships at Level 3 and above meeting employer needs but creating a bigger potential gap for young people through tougher entry criteria. Current GM Apprenticeship Hub research is considering best practice and the most successful routes into Apprenticeship where direct progression from school or college is not an option. Outcomes of this research will inform requirements across GM for different cohorts of young people.

Maths and English attainment (GCSE Grade C or above) at age 16 is poor across Greater Manchester and work defined in the Careers and Participation strategy needs to underpin this concern to ensure young people starting Apprenticeships are not delayed or held back whilst (often repeatedly) trying to meet this educational standard.

To ensure we meet our Apprenticeship targets, we need to ensure that pathways to Apprenticeships (including Traineeships, study programmes and employment programmes, as well as the technical education pathways and bridging provision outlined in the Post-16 Skills Plan)are mapped, supported and delivered whether through nationally funded routes or other employer led / sector specific alternatives.

Traineeships, although slow to be taken up by employers, providers and young people initially, are beginning to build momentum in Greater Manchester with positive case studies around progression in to Apprenticeships. In 2014/15 there were 1639 Traineeship starts across GM, increasing to 2339 in 2015/16 a significant increase however this needs to increase further. Traineeships can and do provide a valuable route for young people who are not quite ready to begin a full Apprenticeship, and therefore current support towards their ongoing increase in volume and quality needs to be encouraged.

Progression through Apprenticeship levels as well as direct entry into higher levels (both for individuals looking for in-work progression and for young people changing between academic and technical education routes) is essential to meet Greater Manchester’s higher skills needs and should be encouraged. There is also an issue around retention of apprentices in the workplace. We need to ensure Apprenticeships form the start of a sustainable career pathway rather than become a stop / start process, particularly for young people, therefore a real chance to gain a foothold on the career ladder.

We welcome the proposal within the funding reforms to allow Apprenticeships to be funded at the same or lower level than an individual’s existing qualifications where significant new knowledge and skills will be gained. This will offer opportunities to people who are considering career changes or returning to work after a period of absence from the labour market as well as to individuals who, despite having achieved qualifications previously, require practical work-based skills and knowledge to pursue career opportunities in other occupational areas.

In 2015/16 there were 30,379 Apprenticeship starts in Greater Manchester across 155 Apprenticeship Frameworks and Standards (increased from 139 in 2014/15). Of those, 57% were at intermediate level, 37% at advanced and 6% at higher level showing a slight shift towards the delivery of more advanced and higher apprenticeships. Only 194 of the Apprenticeship starts were on the new standards, although an increase is anticipated in 2016/17. Following a downward trajectory in start numbers between 2011/12 and 2013/14, subsequent years have shown a gradual increase in numbers although not yet matching the 2011/12 figure.

Figure 1: Greater Manchester Apprenticeship starts and levels since 2011

In 2014/15 there were 21,260 apprentices expected to achieve across all age groups and Apprenticeship levels. Of this cohort, 70.3% achieved, with 19 – 23 year olds and Advanced Apprentices having the highest success rates.

A significant proportion of Apprenticeships are undertaken by learners over the age of 25 (46%) including the majority of higher apprenticeships and accounting for the increase in starts in 2015/16. The proportions of starts in the 16 – 18 and 19 – 24 age groups have both decreased since the previous year (4% and 1% respectively).

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2015/16 | Intermediate |  | Advanced |  | Higher |  | Total |  |
| 16-18 | 5059 | 17% | 2425 | 8% | 128 | 0% | 7612 | 25% |
| 19-24 | 4769 | 16% | 3585 | 12% | 368 | 1% | 8722 | 29% |
| 25+ | 7573 | 25% | 5263 | 17% | 1209 | 4% | 14045 | 46% |
| Grand Total | 17401 | 57% | 11273 | 37% | 1705 | 6% | 30379 | 100% |

54% of Apprenticeships are undertaken by women, with them being the majority at each Apprenticeship level. This proportion is slightly higher than the GM gender balance across the whole post 16 population.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2015/16 | Intermediate |  | Advanced |  | Higher |  | Total |  | GM Post 16 population |
| Female | 8901 | 29% | 6386 | 21% | 1100 | 4% | 16387 | 54% | 50.80% |
| Male | 8500 | 28% | 4887 | 16% | 605 | 2% | 13992 | 46% | 49.20% |
| Grand Total | 17401 | 57% | 11273 | 37% | 1705 | 6% | 30379 | 100% |  |

In total, 89% of GM Apprentices identify their ethnicity as white. People from black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) backgrounds are disproportionately under-represented within the Apprenticeship cohort both at a GM level and nationally, which has led to a Government commitment to increase the proportion of apprentices from BAME backgrounds by 20% during the life of this Parliament:

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| --- | --- | --- |
|  | GM  Apprentices | GM General population (all ages) |
| Asian/ Asian British | 5% | 10% |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British | 3% | 3% |
| Mixed/ Multiple Ethnic Group | 2% | 2% |
| Not App/Known | 1% | - |
| Other Ethnic Group | 1% | 1% |
| White | 89% | 84% |

Key objectives for Apprentices and Potential Apprentices:

* A wider reach of the CEIAG activity to ensure all people (pre and post 16) are given the best advice and opportunity to understand their future career options and pathway to achieve them
* Systems and approaches that make applying for Apprenticeships as straight forward as possible for all, including a common application process, initial assessment and follow up support
* Support for mapped progression routes into and through Apprenticeships including Traineeships and other pathways
* Barriers that prevent (particularly) young people such as wage levels, cost of living and family impact are addressed and lessened as much as possible
* Increase the number of high quality Apprentice opportunities in priority sectors and at higher levels
* Increase the percentage of Achievements within any given years cohort

## Employers and Occupational Areas

**Outcome**

Employers are fully engaged with the skills system at all levels, supporting CEIAG activities, creating high quality Apprenticeship opportunities engaging and contributing to education at all levels, valuing Apprenticeships as a workforce development tool and ensuring the skills system is responsive to their business needs

Future-proofing Greater Manchester’s employers and workforce is a key priority. Greater Manchester has a significant in-work productivity challenge and we know that employers report difficulties in finding the skills and aptitudes they need, particularly at higher levels. In conjunction with this, there is mixed awareness and take-up of Apprenticeships in the private sector. In addition to the skills challenges within today’s workforce, the Greater Manchester Forecasting Model indicates that there is likely to be a total replacement demand of 921,000 jobs in the years to 2022, half of which will require skills at least to NVQ level 3, and a quarter to Level 4.

Central to the employer challenge within this strategy is ensuring that those employers, regardless of size or sector, can attract and develop the skills they need to thrive, grow and compete. There needs to be a better connection and synergy between the demand and supply sides to develop a common understanding of employers’ needs, as well as a shared language between business and the providers of education/training, and a high quality, responsive education, skills and employment offer which meets those needs.

Apprenticeships need to be seen as an embedded element of workforce development planning, with GM shaping high quality provision which meets employers’ needs and which contributes to the development of the workforce through quality training and assessment provision, and therefore to economic growth and productivity for both large and small organisations.

This needs to be supported by a talent pipeline of apprenticeship ready people at the right level of work-readiness to begin an Apprenticeship. To ensure this exists, employers need to engage with education and employment support providers (both pre and post 16) to inspire people about the opportunities, support educators in understanding 21st century job roles and encourage people to apply.

In the future, all employers will purchase Apprenticeship training via the digital account system. Although GMCA and the LEP will have little control over the way GM private sector employers spend their digital vouchers (beyond specifying linked KPIs in public sector procurement activity), there are opportunities to advise and influence through the development of, and engagement with, existing networks (such as GM Chamber of Commerce, Business Growth Hub, Federation of Small Business and the NW Business Leaders) to create a GM support framework which meets employers' needs.

**SMEs and non-Levy paying employers**

Within Greater Manchester there are around 90,000 businesses, of which 60,000 employ fewer than 4 staff. Currently, Apprentices make up approximately 2.4% of the GM workforce, the majority of which (80% in 2014/15) are employed by companies with fewer than 100 staff, and a third by companies with 10 or fewer employees:

These figures illustrate that small and micro businesses have the potential to be the engine room for Apprenticeship growth in Greater Manchester and highlight the opportunity to engage SMEs in ambitious workforce development activity built around high quality Apprenticeships for both new and existing staff.

SMEs and other businesses whose annual paybill is below the £3m threshold will not pay the levy. Instead, their Apprenticeship training and assessment costs will be supported by a substantial public subsidy from Government, 90% of the costs of training and assessment, with employers investing the remaining 10% of costs themselves. We need to work together to ensure that Greater Manchester’s business support agencies, mechanisms and initiatives actively stimulate demand for apprentices amongst those employers, by providing appropriate, consistent and high quality advice, support and additional incentives where appropriate in order to assist employers in accessing the right Apprenticeship training for their workforce.

This work will also dovetail with other employer engagement initiatives aimed at involving employers across a range of activity, including offering Traineeships, as part of the broader pathway leading into Apprenticeships.

**Large employers and the Apprenticeship Levy**

It is anticipated that between 1,500 and 2,000 organisations in Greater Manchester’s will be required to pay the Apprenticeship Levy. Initial estimates suggest this will equate to between £50m - £60m per annum across GM (including the public sector contribution which makes up approx. 50%). These organisations have huge potential to provide high quality opportunities for GM’s residents whilst also developing the workforce that Greater Manchester’s employers need, now and in the future; however, in many cases employers are not currently involved in Apprenticeships and will need support to maximise their investment via the Levy and to benefit from the digital vouchers, both directly and, in the future, within their supply chains.

The Apprenticeship Levy therefore represents a significant opportunity for GM across all sectors (public, private and voluntary), for individual employers as well as the wider GM economy. It needs to be used strategically within the parameters of the national funding rules to drive productivity and development across industry**,** providing the opportunity and impetus to grow Apprenticeships whilst helping to close the skills and productivity gap.

Levy paying organisations will want to ensure they maximise their investment in the Levy, but this funding and the Apprenticeships it creates must do more than simply accredit existing skills. It is essential that these reforms create high quality new roles and progression opportunities with intrinsic learning and development, delivering pathways towards higher level skills and Apprenticeships to improve the overall skills base across GM whilst at the same time providing high quality entry level opportunities for young people and those who are entering or returning to the labour market. With no Government funding for L3+ qualifications within the workplace, Apprenticeships at Advanced and Higher levels, along with loan funding, will become the key route for supporting progression through higher skill levels.

In the longer term, the levy will not only have potential benefit for those employers who pay in and draw down the topped up digital vouchers: from 2018 Levy paying employers will be able to gift a proposed 10% of their vouchers to support Apprenticeships within other organisations, such as businesses within their supply chains. This has the potential to have a significant impact on the Apprenticeship opportunities across GM’s SME community, in terms of volume and influence over quality and job creation, and could influence a sector’s productivity and enhance whole-sector development opportunities. It also offers opportunities for levy-paying employers to support social value

In addition, there are a number of Levy paying organisations with significant workforce based in GM but headquartered elsewhere, such as banks, supermarket chains and national public sector organisations such as Job Centre Plus. We will aim to work with those employers to ensure that their workforce development and Apprenticeship activity reflects the generation of levy payments relating to employees working in GM.

Through the implementation of the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP), employers have the opportunity to become providers in their own right whether just for their own organisations or for the wider sector bringing currency and specialist knowledge to their wider industry. Larger employers will also have the capacity to engage with the design of new Apprenticeship standards or work with education partners to design industry relevant curriculum, potentially even providing expert staff to support delivery.

**Greater Manchester’s Public Sector**

Work is underway with all ten Greater Manchester local authorities, GM Police, GM Fire & Rescue Service, Transport for Greater Manchester, the Health Trusts associated health sector to explore how best to invest the potential Levy payments they will be making (worth approximately an estimated £25m) and the opportunities for change this will bring within the sector, its workforce development approach and recruitment practices. A Memorandum of Understanding has been agreed between all the public sector to support collaborative working and ensuring added value for both organisations and individuals within the apprenticeship system. Activity is underway to develop a consistent approach to supporting, recruiting and training apprentices across the public sector (whether new recruits or developing existing staff) through a GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme, which will look to add value to and maximise the levy investment, as well as meeting the 2.3% public sector Apprenticeship target as set out in the Enterprise Act. Across the public sector in GM there were approximately 1475 apprentices in December 2016; this figure needs to more than double to meet the 2.3% headcount target.

Health Devolution, the creation of new locality organisations across GM and the Levy implementation provides a unique opportunity to ensure that we have a strong health and social care workforce, made up of suitably qualified and skilled individuals who are able to deliver the changes on the ground; and that the provision offer is aligned to the needs of health & social care employers in all sectors. Apprenticeships provide a clear opportunity to begin to develop and enhance health & social care skills gaps (with increased involvement from employers in the sectors) and progression routes at all levels including clinical, non-clinical and support roles. GM Health Trusts need to engage in the development of new Apprenticeship Standards that will meet their future workforce needs. Discussions are underway with the 14 health trusts and health & social care Devolution leaders to ensure skills needs and workforce development through Apprenticeships (and wider skills requirements at all levels) are a key part of future devolved arrangements.

Opportunities also exist across the wider national public sector infrastructure with GM-based operations to join up activity, making links with other elements of devolution such as JCP staff and the Working Well expansion and co-commissioning of the Work and Health Programme.

The public sector needs to act as an exemplar for all employers in its approach to apprentice recruitment, support and progression opportunities setting a standard that can be followed across all sectors. Through demanding high quality provision from Apprenticeship providers they will drive the quality for all employers. They must also use their influencing role and tactical procurement approaches with supply chains and large contractors (e.g. construction companies) to grow apprenticeship numbers in these organisations demonstrating not just social value in public spend, but that for businesses to thrive and prosper they need to consider their workforce development needs and future skills gaps and use Apprenticeships as a route to achieve this.

They also have a role in supporting pathways into apprenticeship (such as Traineeship provision) for those not yet apprentice ready or those young people facing barriers that mean they are not yet able to fully commit to an apprenticeship route addressing the needs of social value and increasing social mobility for their residents.

**Priority Sectors and Occupational Areas**

Greater Manchester has identified a number of priority sectors where there is significant employment or the opportunity for business growth and increased productivity. Annexes 2 - 9 contain the current baseline Apprenticeship numbers in each occupational area, specific issues and barriers faced by each occupational area and the opportunities for Apprenticeship growth. The table below summarises the key challenges and opportunities for each of the priority occupational areas.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Occupational Area** | **Apprenticeship reach 2014/15**  (% of apprentices in GM workforce)[[4]](#footnote-4) | **Opportunities** | **Challenges** |
| Construction | 2.3%  (includes self-employed workforce) | * Supply chain benefits from major infrastructure developments, eg: * Residential home-building programmes * HS2 and HS3 set to create around 50,000 jobs, incl. 60% at L3 and above and 6,000 Apprenticeships * Existing employer group and Greater Manchester ATA operated via the Chamber of Commerce * 4,500 young people aged 16-18 undertaking non-Apprenticeship construction related courses | * Lack of BME and women in construction Apprenticeships * Need more Higher Apprenticeships (and progression towards them) - almost a third of the job growth in the sector projected to 2035 is expected to be at L3 and above * Large proportion of businesses are micro/sole traders; research indicates many firms consider themselves too small to be able to train staff internally and as many as 80% have no formal training budget * Complexity of supply chains utilising specialist sub-contractors who are not located in GM – difficulty in providing opportunities within companies who have only short term contractors. |
| Health | 4.1% | * Devolved Health Service in GM offers opportunity to work across the public sector as well as integrating health, skills and work * Growth in research & development and health innovation linked to GM’s key science assets, eg Oxford Road Corridor | * Attracting younger apprentices to the workforce * Large number of providers delivering Apprenticeships in this sector – lack of consistency? * Articulating and quantifying demand in a complex sector (we have seen some quantification from NHS England) * Managing the dialogue between employers and the potential supplier base in a complex environment with multiple employers/commissioning organisations and the sheer breadth of occupational skills required |
| Digital | 2.2% | * Digital is one of the 4 prime capabilities for the Northern Powerhouse and growth is expected, not only around MediaCityUK and Salford Quays, but also around the Sharp and Space Project and the expansion of small/micro businesses in clusters within lower cost areas of GM * As well as being a key employment sector in its own right, there is an equivalent number of digital specialists employed across the GM economy as a whole, eg coders required in finance and health sectors * Digital Strategy * Development of pre-Level 3 Apprenticeship routes to ensure people are ready to meet employer requirements for apprentices. * Real opportunities linked to the Post-16 Skills Plan’s vision for technical education routes and the forthcoming national digital strategy, alongside Greater Manchester’s Digital Strategy * Publication of the Government’s digital challenge and the developments through local working groups/employer forums * Embedding digital skills as a core competency across all Apprenticeships in greater Manchester | * Number of young women undertaking Apprenticeships is disproportionately low * Skills shortages arise from the pace of change in the industry, eg ensuring curriculum keeps pace with technological developments, shortages in the number of candidates with the relevant software/hardware knowledge, rather than particular qualifications * Lack of specialist providers of digital Apprenticeships * Defining, quantifying and articulating employer demand in a sector with a very wide foot print and a broad range of occupations. * Too few young people undertaking STEM and too few women and girls undertaking STEM subjects at school and beyond |
| Financial Services | 1.7% | * Finance (together with business & professional services) is expected to be GM’s biggest growth sector in terms of job numbers * Associate professional and technical roles at Levels 3 and 4 will be in particular demand * Opportunity around degree Apprenticeships | * Need more starts for what is perceived as a key sector for GM and the Northern Powerhouse * Only 1% of young people aged 16-18 are undertaking a post 16 education programme defined as finance * Need to match supply with employer need - strongest demand in the industry is generally at Levels 3 and 4, but most learning starts in the sector are for qualifications at Level 2 |
| Engineering and Manufacturing | 2.1% | * Growth in demand – sector accounts for 1 in 10 employees across GM, rising to 1 in 5 in some districts * Growth Funding and national policy developments for Institutes of technology * Reform of technical education – Post 16 Skills Plan * Opportunity for degree Apprenticeships to fill skills gap and place more emphasis on ‘growing our own’ future workforce – 170,000 new recruits needed over the next 5 years | * Low numbers of Advanced and higher (higher in particular) * Gender imbalance * Huge provider base – no one delivering significant numbers * Persistent skills gaps and an ageing workforce with significant replacement demand – less than 9% of the workforce is aged 19-24 (compared to 14% average across other sectors) * Diverse range of providers with limited capacity in relation to advanced manufacturing * Graduate retention in engineering and manufacturing is poor. In mathematical sciences and engineering only 24% and 25% of students respectively choose to stay in GM, dropping to 21% for physical sciences. (By comparison, for subjects such as education retention is above 50%.) |
| Hospitality, Travel and Tourism | 1.7% | * Forecasts suggest potential growth as key projects including HS2/3 and developments at Manchester airport boost the visitor economy, not only in travel and tourism but also business and conferencing * GM is well known as a destination for sports and music events / assests but there is a growing market around less well-known heritage and outdoors activities * GTA model may offer opportunities to support retention and completion of Apprenticeships by mitigating for seasonal / short term roles (as used by some parts of the construction industry) | * Significant proportion of Level 2 and not enough higher level Apprenticeships indicating low progression opportunities * Challenging employment patterns (including casual work and zero hour contracts), high vacancy rates, retention difficulties, and seasonal working patterns mean job roles are not always conducive to Apprenticeship programmes * High staff turnover means significant training costs for the industry but training is often at entry and elementary levels for the large numbers of new recruits rather than skills development linked to growth and productivity |
| Retail | 0.5% | * Whilst Retail and Wholesale Distribution as a sector continues to support staff at all levels, forecasts indication that by 2035 almost a quarter of workers in the sector will be qualified at Level 4 and above, and the same proportion at Level 3, indicating an increasing need for highly skilled workers * Shifting nature of sector with a move towards e-commerce, etc | * Progression opportunities through Advanced and Higher * Shifting focus of training needs/skills gaps: as the nature of the sector is changing there is greater need for IT and management skills * High levels of hard to fill vacancies with particular gaps in technical, sales and entrepreneurial skills * SMEs/sole traders in particular struggle to address skills gaps |
| Other professional services – law, HR, business admin, management, etc | 5.1% | * Significant growth sector in terms of job numbers and GVA * Higher level and Degree Apprenticeships offer a real opportunity as an alternative to traditional graduate schemes * Remodelling of organisations such as the Crown prosecution Service and Police will provide recruitment opportunities | * Need more advanced and progression opportunities through to higher * As with the financial services sector, there is a mismatch between skills/training supply and demand: skills needs now and in the future are likely to be strongest at associate professional and technical roles at levels 3 and 4 (eg legal associate and paralegal, actuaries), yet most of the FE/training programmes started within GM in this sector are at level 2 * Attracting and retaining talent, leadership, and investing in skills and management capability are key challenges. |

Key Objectives for employers

* Supporting Levy paying employers in the private sector to maximise their levy investment through the provision of high quality Apprenticeship opportunities
* Supporting and developing the public sector (including LA’s, Health organisations, Police, Fire and rescue services) to ensure target Apprenticeship headcount is reached supporting work force development, and the levy paid is maximised within the Greater Manchester region
* Ensuring SMEs / non-levy paying organisations across all sectors engage with the Apprenticeship system and see it as key to supporting their business growth through incentives and support mechanisms to navigate the Apprenticeship standard and funding landscape as part of GM’s unique business support structures
* A priority sector focus, that builds the capacity of employers and providers to grow the range, level and volume of available Apprenticeship opportunities to meet labour market needs at both entry and higher levels
* Facilitate employer engagement in the wider skills sector through brokerage, opportunities to support providers and supply chain influence to increase the quality of apprenticeship opportunities

## Apprenticeship Provider Base

**Outcome**

Providers will be of the highest quality offering quality training and assessment for apprentices alongside support for employers that ensures successful achievement of programmes

Last year, in Greater Manchester, around 450 individual training providers (including our FE colleges) delivered over 30,000 Apprenticeship starts working with 19,000 employers. Over 75% of the Apprenticeship starts in Greater Manchester were delivered by just 50 of those organisations, with only around 20% of the total starts were delivered by the 10 FE colleges collectively. Approximately two thirds of all training is delivered by organisations based either in Greater Manchester or in other North West LEP areas.

In some sectors such as health and social care, hospitality and tourism and retail significant volumes of starts, especially for adult (19+) Apprenticeships are provided by large national industry specialist training providers, meeting the needs of large national employers. A number of further education colleges based outside Greater Manchester appear to have significant volumes of starts but are in fact delivering this provision via sub-contractors based in Greater Manchester. People are more likely to have their training provided by Greater Manchester based providers.

Currently over 80% of GM Apprentices work for SMEs and micro businesses. The introduction of the levy will lead to significant growth and business development opportunities especially in the public sector. Few if any providers will be able to meet the entirety of the skills needs across complex organisations such as health trusts and local authorities. To meet employer demand will require new models of collaboration which are beginning to emerge. Apprenticeship providers will also need to adapt their business models to operate in an employer led system where employer cash contributions become a mandatory requirement for the majority of businesses.

Apprenticeships are dominated by intermediate level provision in sectors and occupations where Apprenticeship provision is well embedded. Whilst replacement demand in these sectors will remain high and there will remain a need for entry level programmes, there are very real skills shortages in the key growth sectors, many of which are reported to be at advanced and higher levels. This is replicated by the skills levels of the trainers and assessors working for providers who regularly report difficulty in recruiting suitably qualified and / or experienced staff into these roles.

Whilst a number of providers are already heavily engaged in the development and delivery of the new Apprenticeship standards this trend needs to accelerate if providers in Greater Manchester are to continue to meet future employer skill needs and, importantly, if Greater Manchester’s employers are to influence and shape training to meet their needs.

This need to build capacity and capability is being brought into sharper focus as a result of the Post-16 Skills Plan, as it is envisaged that there will be an increase in demand for high quality technical education – not least Apprenticeships – across the 15 proposed occupational areas, as well as the supporting provision linked to transition years and bridging provision which will allow learners to transfer between technical and academic provision.

There is also a need to increase the range and volume of both Higher and Degree Apprenticeship provision and to actively involve employers in those developments. The Manchester Metropolitan University, for example, has been recognised as playing a leading role as a provider in the development of degree Apprenticeships in the legal and digital sectors, and other HEI’s are developing their offer. In addition a number of independent providers and colleges have been involved in the development of higher Apprenticeships, although this remains a small minority of providers.

Whilst the quality of the vast majority of Apprenticeship provision in Greater Manchester is delivered by providers achieving better than national benchmarks there are a number of well-rehearsed and acknowledged weaknesses. The current funding regime drives provider behaviour, although funding reforms are pending which may offer an opportunity to tackle current systemic disincentives to working differently. There is also a need to increase the number of providers delivering good quality Traineeships with progression to Apprenticeships. Progress is being made to embed effective delivery of maths, English, and digital skills within Apprenticeships but this remains a challenge, as does the recruitment of suitably qualified and capable staff for both training and assessment. Our experiences in GM have shown this to be particularly the case in relation to Higher Apprenticeships, in which the teaching and assessment requirements are more specialised. There are real opportunities to improve collaboration with employers and other providers to share of expertise in these areas.

The Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers opens up the market for new and different types of organisation to deliver Apprenticeship training (including more employers themselves). The growth and development of degree Apprenticeships will also bring more higher education institutes into the arena creating a wider range of opportunities and progression routes for both apprentices and employers. Whilst this is all positive from an employer-choice perspective, it creates a shifting landscape for the existing provider base that will need to respond with a higher quality and more bespoke offer to ensure business continuity.

Apprenticeship providers continue to report that they have unfilled Apprenticeship vacancies and faced continual challenges in recruiting suitably able people. This is in part a result of too few young people actively considering an Apprenticeship, something which may be addressed by the emphasis on high quality vocational routes under the Post-16 Skills Plan. Progress is being made to embed the Apprenticeship option within good quality CEIAG but alongside this there is also a need to improve the Apprenticeship opportunities available. The challenge to providers is to continue working with employers to ensure that Apprenticeships result in sustained employment and are integrated into longer term workforce development, career progression and succession planning.

Key Objectives for providers

* Support a methodology to develop provider quality and delivery to reflect the Apprenticeship reforms (funding and transition to Standards) and truly provide a high quality service for apprentices and employers in Greater Manchester
* Providers to offer progression routes to higher level / degree Apprenticeships for activity on GM’s priority growth sectors
* Growth in the apprenticeship provision delivered by GM’s FE colleges reflecting individual specialisms and the pipeline of potential apprentices studying within them

# Cross Cutting Themes

Throughout the 3 pillars of Apprenticeships are a number of fundamental cross-cutting themes to be addressed, which also form the basis of the activity plan. These are outlined below, with the challenges and what GM aims to achieve.

**Influencing Government** – GM needs to work in-depth with Government, building on current Devolution deals, to influence future Apprenticeship policy direction and funding models, and maximise the impact Apprenticeships have for our businesses and their workforce.

**Maximising the Levy investment made in GM** – We need to ensure the Levy paid within GM (for employers based here and those with significant workforces) is maximised, supporting businesses to engage, understand and develop their workforce whilst ensuring the right provision is in place for their skills development needs.

**Supporting SME (non-levy paying) employers** – As new funding rules are implemented from 2017/18 for non-Levy paying employers, GM needs to ensure that support is in place to help them navigate Apprenticeship funding, whilst continuing to promote the opportunities an apprentice can bring to an organisation’s growth and productivity. SMEs will be the engine room of apprenticeship growth and we need to develop a support framework to join up the creation of apprenticeship opportunities with employer engagement in schools, colleges and providers across the full range of activity, including offering careers inspiration, work experience and traineeship opportunities.

**Removing Barriers** – Significant barriers – both real and perceived – exist around Apprenticeships for individuals and employers alike, often preventing people from choosing this route as a career development option. Barriers might include transport costs, salary levels, and impact on benefits, alongside issues of equality such as underrepresentation within Apprenticeships relative to the GM population of cohorts such as young people in/leaving care, the BAME community and those with education, health and care plans (EHCP). Positive action is needed to remove real barriers and change the overall perceptions of Apprenticeships.

**Ensuring a level playing field for Apprenticeship routes** – Through GM’s CEIAG activity, much work has been undertaken to promote the value of Apprenticeships (particularly in schools and colleges) and open the eyes of (young) people and their advisers/influencers to the benefits of Apprenticeships as an alternative to a traditional academic route to achieving qualifications, including at Advanced, Higher and Degree levels. More still needs to be done to ensure that every person is in a position to make informed decisions, identify their career aspirations and understand how an Apprenticeship could help them achieve their ambition as a high quality learning and development opportunity. This will be absolutely essential in the light of the Post-16 Skills Plan, which will require young people to make a choice at age 16 between an academic route and one of the 15 technical pathways.

**Developing progression pathways at all levels** – With the shift to Apprenticeship Standards, reform of technical education routes, and changes to employment programmes, mapped progression pathways into and through Apprenticeships (pre-Apprenticeships and Traineeships to Higher / Degree Apprenticeships) are essential to provide all potential and progressing apprentices with a clear understanding of the opportunities they can bring. Stepping in to an Apprenticeship pathway at the right point will be crucial to supporting career aspirations, particularly for education leavers, as will ensuring that appropriate ‘bridging provision’ from academic pathways is developed to support learners who want to move into and progress within a higher and degree level technical/Apprenticeship route.

**Improving quality and achievements** - Quality is key to all Apprenticeship activity (in terms of employers, providers and the apprentices themselves) with measures identified, promoted and tracked to ensure achievement rates continue to improve; we will take a place-based approach to our discussions with providers, ensuring that Greater Manchester’s provider base is working effectively with employers, to ensure that the GM offer meets the needs of the local labour market and that business models respond positively and flexibly to shifting needs.

**Harnessing the opportunities arising from current and ongoing Apprenticeship reforms** – Apprenticeships and technical education are a key element of Greater Manchester’s workforce development and of economic growth and productivity. Opportunities linked to these reforms must be harnessed and the potential impact of unintended negative consequences of Apprenticeship reform must be minimised, ensuring Apprenticeship numbers and quality are maintained and improved during the transition to standards and new funding mechanisms, with Greater Manchester leading the way in its priority sectors.

**Meeting the numbers challenge** – For GM to achieve its Apprenticeship start target (within the Government’s overall 3 million target), activity around the above themes needs to underpin an overall growth in the number of opportunities available each year by 45% over five years. However, increasing the number of starts is not enough and standards must also increase; locally defined targets around achievement and quality must not be forgotten and should be embedded in all new provision as it is developed.

# Key Targets and measures

Whilst avoiding an unwieldy basket of measures, key targets need to be identified for each of the 3 pillars of Apprenticeships – individually and collectively – to ensure the strategy ambition is being met. The measures set out below take a balanced approach to measuring the impact of the strategy. Detailed tables are included in Appendices 1 and 2.

Individual projects which stem from the themes and strategic activity set out in the Activity table will be expected to contribute towards the achievement of the targets.

Starts

Achievements

GM workforce proportion

Traineeship starts

Progression

Vacancies available

# Strategy Monitoring and Governance

Delivery of the Strategy will be overseen by a core partnership of key organisations representing the 3 pillars – employers, providers and apprentices / potential apprentices – alongside GMCA, LA representatives and the SFA. This will include (but not exclusively):

* Greater Manchester Chambers of Commerce
* Federation of Small Businesses
* North West Business Leadership Team
* Business Growth Hub
* Institute for Apprenticeships representative
* Greater Manchester Colleges Group
* Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network
* JCP
* Apprentice representatives
* Local Authorities
* NAS / ESFA

The group will meet every 6 months to review progress, facilitated by GMCA, with some organisations taking a leading role in a particular theme and / or associated activity. Advisory sub-groups will be developed (as a first stage) with key remits to look at and drive:

* Apprenticeship Quality
* Messaging and Communications
* Public Sector Apprentices
* Pre-Apprenticeship Programmes
* Sector focused as required

Links will also be made with the Careers and Participation and Employer Engagement groups to ensure joining up of work and activity development across the Work and Skills priorities.

6-monthly update reports for the Skills and Employment Partnership and associated influencing groups will be produced following the partnership meetings.

Progress towards achieving the targets set out in the strategy will be reported annually to GMCA following publication of the previous year’s Apprenticeship data. Interim reports may be provided where financially related decisions need to be made or significant updates are to be given.

# High Level Activity Plan

The activity plan below sets out high level programmes of activity that will need to be developed to ensure the strategy ambition is achieved. The plan will be used to support future operational planning and project developments by all partners and guide the use of future funding opportunities.

As has been recognised throughout, there is already a great deal of successful activity underway, both in terms of strategic partnership working and in relation to delivering Apprenticeships. However, to date these initiatives, projects and learning programmes have not yet been brought together under a single, cohesive activity plan for Apprenticeships across Greater Manchester.

New delivery proposals and ongoing activity stemming from this will be expected to build on existing good practice, and successful Apprenticeship related projects delivered through the GM Apprenticeship Hub City Deal and other partner projects particularly where positive evaluations and successful outcomes can be demonstrated.

| **Theme** | **Rationale** | **Outcome** | **Activity required** | **How to achieve** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Influencing Government | Apprenticeships are a key part of the employment and skills landscape. As part of GM’s ambitions around a fully integrated education, work, skills and health system we need to develop an evidence base around Apprenticeships to influence decision-making and policy development, as well as to support future business cases which might be advanced around aspects of the Levy, public sector targets and the Devolution agenda. | More stable landscape in which to work, enabling longer-term planning and embedding of activity  Evidence base which supports a business case for GM to have greater influence over the Apprenticeship agenda as part of its ambitions for an integrated work and skills system  The ability to explore ways of working which shift the focus away from funding-driven behaviour, particularly in relation to CEIAG, and deliver quality apprenticeship learning | Work with Government to advocate the potential of the levy to maximise productive growth and support both place-based and sector-wide workforce development by ensuring wider supply chain organisations can be supported through the transfer of digital vouchers by large employers.  Begin discussions with Government to propose unspent levy (after 2 years) that was paid by GM employers is allocated to support the wider develop of apprenticeships across the City Region  Continue dialogue with Government to fully represent the views and intelligence gathered from GM’s stakeholders.  Respond to changes to and consultations on revised funding models ensuring the benefits are maximised for GM learners and employers.  Support Government to understand the impact of the shifting policy landscape at a delivery and individual level e.g. the impact on family benefits  Engage with and influence the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education through its expert panels which will consider quality assurance, content, funding etc. of Apprenticeship Standards and Post-16 routes.  Lobby Government and its agencies for improved and dynamic Apprenticeship data to include levy spends, provider data and the full ILR to track learner progression, etc.  Request input into the ongoing development of the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers and procured providers of Apprenticeships to non-levy paying employers to ensure adequate coverage in terms of the balance and mix of provision, and to ensure quality meets GM’s standards.  Explore with Government/ESFA ways in which local influence/considerations can be incorporated into the process for entry to the RoATP so that engagement with the LEP and responsiveness to GM needs are taken into account when considering applications (including for employer providers). | GMCA to work with DfE & agencies and provide support to GMCA’s executive and member leads for Skills, Employment & Worklessness  LAs and other core partners to contribute intelligence to consultations etc to be fed back to Government.  GM to offer test-beds for pilot activity, eg Technical education route pathfinders |
| Removing Barriers | In order to increase participation we need to understand and address the barriers, real and perceived, facing:   * Large employers * Small/micro (non-levy paying) employers * Prospective apprentices (by cohort/characteristics, eg age, gender, ethnicity, deprivation, complex needs, learning difficulties/disability * Influencers * Providers. | Barriers faced by potential apprentices are removed to provide equality of opportunity for all applicants  Improved understanding of the barriers facing each cohort/group and of the factors which can be influenced/ addressed at a local level, and taking steps to mitigate and remove those barriers  Confusion and bureaucracy around applying for Apprenticeships are minimised so that young people, their parents and schools have full access to the range of opportunities available, along with the relevant tools and integrated labour market information to support informed decision making | Develop Apprenticeship related project activity to challenge racial and gender stereotyping within occupational areas, identifying and building upon existing good practice  Develop a transport offer for Apprentices based on TfGM pilot activity  Develop a consistent GM provider approach to the delivery of Functional Maths and English within Apprenticeships and Traineeships  Following the employer peer-to-peer ‘test & learn’ project, ensure that outcomes to encourage employers to recruit apprentices from key target groups are implemented to support employers creating opportunities  Pilot a part-time Apprenticeship model allowing for flexible learning / employment models for those for whom full-time employment/learning is a barrier, eg young parents and those with health conditions  Ensure that GM Apprenticeship related communications and case studies are fully representative and encompass the full range of potential apprentices  Building on Government funding commitment to supporting Care leavers, develop a consistent approach across GM to support their journey towards Apprenticeships  Research and recommend a GM Apprenticeship living wage (linked to employer quality standard development)  Ensure safeguarding policies are in place and consistent across GM to protect vulnerable apprentices | Links with Govt. target to increase the proportion of Apprentices from BAME backgrounds to 20%  Partnership activity and clear key messages from employer networks (eg GM Chamber of Commerce, NWBLT, BITC), learning provider and college networks, as well as individual organisations  Work with organisations who work directly with young people, esp those furthest from the labour market, NEET/at risk of becoming NEET, through programmes such as Talent Match, Working Well, Troubled Families etc. |
| Maximising the Levy investment made in GM | We must work collectively and smartly to ensure that levy-paying employers in GM, particularly within the public sector, have plans in place which will enable them to put their levy payments/top-up to best use | GM’s public and private sector employers draw down their full digital voucher value plus top-up and/or, in the future, or gift the maximum amount of unspent vouchers | Develop and deliver a high quality GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme for Local Authorities, Health trusts, Police, Fire and other GM public services  Steer the public sector on large scale / capital procurement activities to include Apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities  Support partners to develop and promote a strategic and consistent approach by providers and key stakeholders to engaging Levy paying employers and providing consistent key messages  Work with GM’s large employers to ensure they maximise and retain their levy investment within GM  Develop mechanisms to monitor and influence the prposed 10% voucher ‘gifting’ option available to Levy payers from 2018 for the benefit of GM and reflecting social value / CSR principles  Facilitate a levy paying employer group to build consistency of expectations and a clear GM wide understanding of Apprenticeships  Work through the LEP with non GM HQ’d employers to ensure maximum levy returns for GM residents | GMCA to lead development of GM Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme, in partnerships with LAs, GMFRS, GM Police, Health trusts, etc, underpinned by a memorandum of understanding setting out the respective parties’ shared objectives, principles and commitments.  Provide support and advice working alongside National Apprenticeship Service and local partners |
| Supporting SME (non-levy paying) employers | The majority of apprentices in GM are employed by small and micro businesses. These non-levy paying employers will be the engine room of achieving our Apprenticeship ambitions in GM and, as such, they will need coherent, up-to-date advice and support around Apprenticeships, ranging from helping new employers to understand what’s involved in employing Trainees and Apprentices, through to in-depth business support and forward-planning. | Substantial increase in the number of SMEs offering Traineeship and Apprenticeship opportunities  Demonstrable commitment from SMEs to offering high quality Apprenticeship opportunities for new and existing employees | Test and embed the promotion of Apprenticeships as part of workforce development planning leading to growth and improved productivity for non-levy payers  Facilitate business support services and networks that support SMEs across GM to provide clear and consistent messaging, support and advice about Apprenticeships  Develop sector specific activity focused on growing quality and numbers of apprenticeship opportunities  Consider alternative models for delivery, including ATA type model, for sectors such as digital in which SMEs may find it difficult to offer full Apprenticeship roles in isolation  Work with discrete elements of the business community to understand challenges and opportunities which may lead to an increase in the proportion of employers from BAME communities offering Apprenticeship opportunities | City Deal *Stimulating Employer Demand for Apprenticeships* project delivered by Business Growth Hub, GM Chamber of Commerce and partners, to include the development and roll-out of GM quality standard for Apprenticeship employment  MMU / GMCC Erasmus funded project  Links with Career & Enterprise Company activity, Youth Contract peer-to-peer mentoring activity, etc |
| Developing progression pathways – pre-Apprenticeship to degree | We must ensure that there is sufficient high quality provision available to offer a clear line of sight for individuals (whether considering their first step on the career ladder or progression later in their working life) which enables them to see how they can enter an occupational area or sector and progress within their chosen career, using Apprenticeships as their core development tool. | A core priority within GM is embedding Apprenticeships as a well-understood and well-regarded career progression option, situated at the heart of employers’ workforce development/talent management plans and supported by a dynamic pipeline of suitable candidates. We want the GM Apprenticeship system to have logical, high quality Apprenticeship options at every stage of the learning and skills journey, from entry level through to degree level, enabling people of all ages, abilities and levels of prior attainment to have a clear pathway into and within productive, skilled employment.  Apprenticeship providers must be supported and – where necessary – challenged to ensure that the balance and mix of provision and their capacity to deliver meets the needs of the GM labour market. | Maintain and further develop GM Traineeships resources and activity delivered through the City Deal to ensure that providers of employment programmes proactively link with Traineeship/Apprenticeship providers to provide entry routes into the Apprenticeship system.  Work with FE colleges and providers to ensure all provision, including the ‘bridging provision’ and transition year proposed under the Post-16 Skills Plan has genuine currency in the labour market and leads to Apprenticeships and further learning.  Through the implementation of all age CEIAG activity, ensure that the opportunities and progression routes available through Apprenticeships are clearly described and, understood by potential apprentices, their parents / carers and advisors.  Work with sector bodies and employer support organisations to articulate the opportunities apprentices can bring at all levels to an organisation developing talent pipelines and succession plans.  Building on the sector skills deep dives, support the development of higher and degree level Apprenticeship provision to meet future employer skills needs. | GM curriculum review/area based review and subsequent implementation  Implementation of GM Careers and Participation Strategy  Ongoing/recent City Deal projects, including GM Traineeship Toolkit and masterclass training, Pathways to Productivity |
| Ensuring a level playing field for Apprenticeship routes | Apprenticeships have a key contribution to make to the delivery of Greater Manchester’s Raising the Participation Age (RPA) Strategy, as well as to the wider workforce development agenda. We must make sure that Apprenticeships are viewed with the same value and esteem as more traditional academic learning pathways when young people and their advisors/influencers are considering and applying for the most appropriate learning options for their career aspirations. | Apprenticeships to be viewed as a valued and valuable first choice by prospective apprentices and their advisors and influencers. | Ensure consistent and positive messaging about the value of Apprenticeships, through the development of GM-specific Apprenticeship marketing and communications material and website maximising the impact of national campaigns  Develop and pilot an employer-led yet parent-focused resource / programme / activity to recognise and promote the benefits of Apprenticeships for both individuals and workplaces  Continue to build upon the cultural shift within schools around the perception of Apprenticeships (developed through the Apprenticeship Hub CEIAG activity)  Continue to develop the role of existing apprentices as advocates for Apprenticeships in learning institutions and work places  With the implementation of the Post 16 Skills plan, ensure young people and education providers are fully aware of their future options at both 16 and 18. | Strong links with Careers and Participation Strategy and CEIAG delivery partners  Partnership working with GMLPN/GMCG around perceptions, particularly around projects including marketing & communications, Pathways to Productivity, apprentice ambassador activity, etc |
| Improving quality and achievements | The focus on target numbers must not be at the expense of quality. Quality, completion / achievement and progression are at the heart of the ambition to position Apprenticeships as a desirable option for learners, their influencers, and employers. | Outcomes will be both quantitative and qualitative, including:  *Quantitative*:  Improved achievement / success rates for apprentices  Progression and destinations to be tracked  *Qualitative*:  Suitable balance and mix of high quality providers is included on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) for GM  All Apprenticeship provision in GM to be rated good or outstanding by Ofsted  GM Quality Standard to become a robust and recognised measure of excellence for employers | Define and implement GM Quality Standard for Apprentice Employers that recognises high quality Apprenticeship roles, apprentice friendly employment practice, fair contracts / terms & conditions, workplace learning support, positive role models, etc  Ensure sufficient Assessment Bodies to meet GM employer requirements for standards.  Undertake research to understand reasons for non-achievement.  Create a programme that facilitates and promotes employer / provider partnerships for the development of industry specialists to act as trainers, tutors and assessors for higher level skills programmes where there are identified gaps in provision. Aligned to this, work with employers who have expressed an interest in applying to join the RoATP as employer providers and/or providers.  Further develop the relationship between GM, providers, representative bodies and Ofsted to support providers in becoming Good or Outstanding in their Apprenticeship delivery whilst continuing to meeting the needs of GM’s employers  Consider the development of a shared commitment / sign up for providers defining employer and learner expectations in GM including links to IAG, initial assessment, support and independent employer advice  Ensure FE vocational / technical learning provision (particularly in FE colleges) leads to identified progression opportunities.  Support HEI’s and other providers to continue to develop Degree and Higher Apprenticeships that support the regions higher skills needs | Work with providers, Ofsted, representative bodies as appropriate  Employer quality standard  GM expectations of Apprenticeship Providers (over and above RoATP) initiated through the public sector procurement of providers driving quality for all employers |
| Harnessing the opportunities brought through Apprenticeship reforms | The ongoing programme of reform offers real opportunities but also has the potential to lead to confusion and reluctance to engage, particularly among employers who may not fully understand the reforms and who will now be required to invest more in Apprenticeships, whether through the levy or through the 90:10 co-investment with government. | Any unintended consequences of reform are mitigated by engaging at the earliest opportunity with:   * employers in order to ensure that they are persuaded of the benefits of engaging in Apprenticeships and that they understand what will be required of them in terms of investment and quality of opportunity * providers, who must be ready to operate in the reformed Apprenticeships landscape | Work with providers to support and shift business models towards delivering Apprenticeship Standards rather than frameworks as soon as possible, ensuring that provider behaviour is driven by quality and responsiveness to the demands of the GM labour market, rather than by changes to the funding system and rates  Work with employers and intermediary bodies/business development agencies to ensure that they understand and actively seek out the new employer-shaped Standards  Encourage employers to get involved in development of standards that meet their workforce needs, providing such support as is possible to facilitate their involvement and to identify gaps in provision where the development of new standards should be considered  Looking to the medium term, ensure that, when the capacity for levy paying employers to ‘gift’ digital vouchers, a strategic approach is taken across GM (particularly in the public sector) to ways in which the transfer of digital funds might particularly support supply chains within key sectors as well as the corporate social responsibility and social value agenda. | Work with the strategic and operational parties tasked with the implementation of the area based review and curriculum review, including colleges and providers and their respective representative networks to ensure that Traineeships and Apprenticeships are considered and reflected fully within any proposed changes to GM’s post-16 learning infrastructure  Continue working in partnership with the SFA, DfE and other agencies involved in the planning and funding of provision on areas of synergy |
| Meeting the numbers challenge | GM has a well-established and well-resourced Apprenticeship Hub, a large provider base and a reputation for large volumes of Apprenticeship starts and, as such, is expected to contribute significantly to the achievement of the Government’s 3m target.*.* If we meet the objectives set out within this strategy, we are confident that participation will increase. | Greater Manchester will have achieved the trajectory set by government to deliver c.184,000 Apprenticeship starts during the life of the current parliament, as part of the national 3m target.  The stimulation of more Advanced, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships is an opportunity to respond to skills needs and employment growth within priority sectors, and will help to create a pull-through effect to open up opportunities at entry and intermediate levels in support of social mobility principles | Building on the marketing and communications activity produced at a national level, ensure that strong additional campaigns at a GM level add value and promote key local messages.  Continue to promote Apprenticeships as a key to organisational and workforce development for career entry and up-skilling all ages, leveraging the value of the digital vouchers and top-up to levy payers  Develop activity to support Apprenticeship and traineeship growth for all groups of potential apprentices, including education leavers and switchers, returners to the labour market after periods of unemployment, custody or personal choice, and career changers  Leverage flexibilities through public sector procurement activities to require apprenticeships. | GM apprentice Marketing and communications (#SeeDifferent) to continue to develop and grow through targeted activity and messaging to promote Apprenticeships, bust myths, etc.  Engage with SMEs and provide support through the Stimulating Employer Demand for Apprenticeships project and any complementary activity  Any public sector procurement activity to consider ways to add value in relation to workforce development and Apprenticeships when commissioning of value goods and services. |

# Appendix 1 - Apprenticeship Growth Targets (based on GM starts)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | starts | % annual growth |  | Intermediate | Advanced | Higher |  | <19 | 19-24 | 25+ |
| 2013/14 actual | 27000 |  |  | 17,300 | 9,180 | 520 |  | 7,260 | 9,660 | 10,080 |
| 2014/15 actual | 29446 | 8% |  | 17,313 | 10,753 | 1,380 |  | 8,295 | 8,737 | 12,414 |
| 2015/2016 | *31,314*  *(actual = 30,379)* | 6%  (actual = 3%) |  | *17,849*  *(actual = 17,401)* | *11,899*  *(actual = 11,273)* | *1,566*  *(actual = 1,705)* |  | *8,400*  *(actual = 7,612)* | *10,000*  *(actual = 8,722)* | 12,914  (actual = 14,045) |
| 2016/2017 | *33,814* | 7% |  | *18,429* | *13,187* | *2,198* |  | *9,400* | *11,000* | 13,414 |
| 2017/2018 | *36,614* | 8% |  | *19,039* | *14,829* | *2,746* |  | *10,500* | *12,200* | 13,914 |
| 2018/2019 | *39,614* | 8% |  | *20,203* | *15,846* | *3,565* |  | *11,700* | *13,500* | 14,414 |
| 2019/2020 | *42,814* | 7% |  | *20,551* | *17,982* | *4,281* |  | *13,000* | *14,900* | 14,914 |
|  | 184,170 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

# Appendix 2 – Measures and targets

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Definition | Source | 2014/15 baseline | *2015/16* | *2016/17* | *2017/18* | *2018/19* | *2019/20* |
| Apprenticeship starts | Number of starts within GM | SFA Datacube – learner home post code | 29,446 | Target – 31,314  Actual -30,379 | *33,814* | *36,614* | *39,614* | *42,814* |
| Starts for different age groups and at different levels of Apprenticeship | Breakdown of above by age range and level of Apprenticeship | SFA Datacube | *See table in Appendix 1* | | | | | |
| Achievement rates | Percentage of cohort expected to complete in year successfully achieving their Apprenticeship based on delivery in LEP | NART | 70.3%  *(67.3% adjusted rate)* | Target - 71%  Actual – 66.4% | *72%* | *73%* | *74%* | *75%* |
| BME Apprenticeship starts | Proportion of Apprenticeship starts identifying as non-white (aiming to reflect the GM population as a whole) | SFA Datacube | 11% | Target – *12%*  Actual – 11% | *13%* | *14%* | *15%* | *16%* |
| Apprenticeship Vacancies | Number of Apprenticeship vacancies in GM | Source being identified | Not available | Not available |  |  |  |  |
| Apprenticeship applications | Number of Apprenticeship applications in GM | Source being identified | Not available | Not available |  |  |  |  |
| Proportion of apprentices making up the GM workforce | Number of GM Apprenticeship starts divided by total GM workforce | SFA Datacube / GM Skills analysis | 2.4% | Target – 2.5%  Actual - | 2.6% | 2.7% | 2.8% | 3% |
| Occupational area starts / reach into the workforce | Occupational area Apprenticeship starts and starts divided by occupational area workforce aiming for a 50% increase against baseline | SFA Datacube / GM sector deep dives |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * Construction | 1788 / 2.3% | Target – *1966*  Actual - 2471 | *2145* | *2324* | *2503* | *2682* |
| * Health | 6433 / 4.1% | Target – 7076  Actual - 6767 | *7719* | *8362* | *9006* | *9649* |
| * Digital | 1199 / 2.2% | Target – *1318*  Actual - 1301 | *1438* | *1558* | *1678* | *1798* |
| * Financial Services | 797 / 1.7% | Target – 876  Actual - 698 | *956* | *1036* | *1115* | *1195* |
| * Engineering and Manufacturing | 2467 / 2,1% | Target – *2713*  Actual -2760 | *2960* | *3207* | *3453* | *3700* |
| * Hospitality, travel and tourism | 1697 / 1.7% | Target – *1866*  Actual - 2243 | *2036* | *2206* | *2375* | *2545* |
| * Retail | 999 / 0.5% | Target – *1098*  Actual - 683 | *1198* | *1298* | *1398* | *1498* |
| * Other professional services | 8839 / 5.1% | Target – *9722*  Actual - 9062 | *10606* | *11490* | *12374* | *13258* |
| Traineeship starts | Number of GM residents starting a traineeship | Datacube | 1639 | Target – *2250*  Actual - 2339 | *2700* | *3150* | *3500* | *4000* |
| Number of Good and Outstanding GM Apprenticeship providers | Based on the top 50 Apprenticeship providers (by volume), the number graded Outstanding or Good by Ofsted | SFA datacube & Ofsted | 35/50  (3 outstanding) | Target – 38/50  Actual -36/50 (3 outstanding) | *41/50* | *44/50* | *47/50* | *50/50* |
| Average employer satisfaction score | Based on the top 50 Apprenticeship providers (by volume | SFA datacube & FE Choices survey | 82.59 | Target – 83  Actual - 78 | *84* | *85* | *86* | *87* |
| Average learner satisfaction score | Based on the top 50 Apprenticeship providers (by volume | SFA datacube & FE Choices survey | 87.41 | Target – 88  Actual - 85 | *89* | *89* | *90* | *90* |
| Number of Employers meeting GM Quality Standard |  |  | 0 | *0* | *150* | *200* | *250* | *300* |
| Young people progressing from education to an Apprenticeship at end of: | % of cohort progressing in to an Apprenticeship | Destination data |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| * KS4 | 7% | Target – *8%*  Actual – 7% | *9%* | *10%* | *11%* | *13%* |
| * KS5 | 7% | Target – *8%*  Actual – 8% | *10%* | *12%* | *14%* | *15%* |

# Appendix 3 – Key partners

Realising the ambition set out in this strategy will require partnership working across Greater Manchester’s education, skills and employment sector alongside employer bodies. We look to the full range of partners to bring their expertise and commitment to the table and seek in-principle agreement from them to endorse this strategy and commit to working together on its implementation.

Core partners:

* 1. GM LEP
  2. GM Apprenticeship Hub partners collectively and individually
  3. Employers and employer representative groups (such as Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, North West Business Leaders Team, Federation of Small Businesses, Business in the Community)
  4. Sector-specific industry groups and specialist networks (eg Manchester Digital, GM Manufacturing Champions Network, Engineering Futures)
  5. Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network
  6. Greater Manchester Colleges Group
  7. Apprenticeship Providers (including colleges, independent training providers and higher education institutions)
  8. Awarding and assessment bodies
  9. GMCA and the ten individual local authorities
  10. Department for Education / Skills Funding Agency / National Apprenticeship Service
  11. Schools and education providers
  12. Department for Work & Pensions / Jobcentre Plus
  13. Health Trusts, Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Fire & Rescue Service
  14. Transport for Greater Manchester
  15. Housing associations and wider public sector

1. *Stronger Together – Greater Manchester Strategy 2013*, published jointly by the Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/info/20067/greater_manchester_strategy> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Building Our Industrial* Strategy was published in January 2017 and was subject to consultation at the time of writing <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/building-our-industrial-strategy> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation* (HM Treasury, July 2015) [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Calculated based on the number of Apprenticeship starts within the sector as recorded on the SFA Datacube as a proportion of the relevant GM sector workforce identified within New Economy deep dive research. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)