

Written evidence submitted by Mr Jim French MBE (RDF0021)

LOGISTICS APPRENTICESHIPS

Introduction

The Government has introduced a number of measures to help solve the LGV Driver shortage on a short term basis.

However, the age profile of LGV Drivers and indeed other roles within the Logistics Sector also necessitates longer term solutions.

One of these must be to make more use of Apprenticeships, which will provide more relative, quality training and consequently a more skilled individual on completion of the course.

The DfE could do more to make Logistics Apprenticeships more attractive for both the Employer and the Apprentice.

By the end of 2021 the Transport and Logistics Sector will have contributed £700 million in Apprenticeship Levy since its introduction in April 2017, yet it is doubtful whether it will have recovered as much as £150 million from Logistics based Apprenticeships.

The DfE needs to have more understanding and empathy with the roles within the sector and the requirements of Employers. The ESFA rules are more geared to academic or trade occupations with very little relevance to those in our Sector.

LGV Driver Apprenticeships

It has taken four years of lobbying by the industry for the Institute to acknowledge that we require two LGV Driver Apprenticeships. One for Rigid drivers and one for Artic. drivers. When this was finally accepted it has taken a further eighteen months to convince the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education that there is a difference between the two roles.

Then, again because of the inflexibility of the rules, the recommended funding level for the new Urban Driver Apprenticeship is £500 lower than the old LGV Driver Cat C Apprenticeship which was approved in 2016.

The ESFA rules for funding apprenticeships exclude items such as Test fees, Vehicle depreciation or leasing cost, Insurance and Maintenance. All essential

to provide LGV Driver training and operate legally. These can amount to more than £1,000 for an LGV Driver Cat C+E Apprenticeship which then has to be funded by the Employer. Hardly encouraging for Logistics operators who are already paying more in levy than they are able to recover.

Despite consulting on the ESFA rules of Eligible and Ineligible costs last December, there have been no changes or even feedback as yet.

Logistics Management Apprenticeships

The pivotal role of the Road Freight Transport Sector is that of the Transport Manager. It is a legal requirement for any operator in the Hire and Reward Sector to appoint a Transport Manager, who has a Certificate of Professional competence.

Many job adverts for Transport Managers stipulate that applicants should possess a CPC, and the Trailblazer Group have been successful in producing an Apprenticeship where the Transport Manager CPC is mandated. Although the industry terms this role a Manager, the IFATE rules decree that the Apprenticeship has to be termed an 'Operations Supervisor'. This devalues the role and makes the Apprenticeship less attractive to potential candidates.

Also, within the same Apprenticeship there is a Warehousing option titled "Warehouse Operations Supervisor" but essentially again a Management role.

The Trailblazer Group wanted to incorporate the CILT's Award in Warehousing within the Apprenticeship but again the IFATE rules would not permit this. Consequently, an attempt by the Industry to raise the standard and professionalism within the Sector was stifled by bureaucracy.

I understood the objective of the new Apprenticeship Standards was to become more relevant to the needs of employers. If the DfE could move a little towards understanding and supporting what the Logistics Sector requires, then we could see more take up of Apprenticeships, Employers recovering their Apprenticeship Levy payments and a long term solution to the Sector Skills Shortage.

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