

through licence acquisition apprenticeships.

Pallet network manager Dan Wilson is enrolled on the Level 3 Transport Manager Supervisor apprenticeship. This includes standard management skills alongside his Transport Manager's CPC.

Financial director Sarah Metcalfe and operations manager Gary Hedges are both undertaking Level 5 Operations/Department Manager apprenticeships. This takes two years and allows the individual qualifications to register as full Chartered Management Institute members. A further three years' management experience will give them chartered management status.

Cottam-Shea says that while the benefits to the individuals and the organisation of all this training is huge, "the financial input is minimal and, in total, cheaper than putting one person through their TM CPC."

"The full cost of the Team Leader apprenticeship is £6,000, of which I pay £300," she says. "That's a fraction of the cost of the CPC on its own."

Cottam-Shea is a big believer in continual learning, and although as a degree holder she can't do the apprenticeships herself, she does sit in on some of the sessions. She says: "I'm looking forward to working with everyone through this journey. I've learned so much already. It's great."

Not all staff shares her enthusiasm for the training she expects them to do. However, to Cottam-Shea developing your team is part of the broader responsibility of management, not only for the good of the business but also the individuals.

"I have told my team that they need structured, objective measures of their competence. If they want another job, saying, 'I was very good at my last job' isn't sufficient."

She doesn't understand why more hauliers don't take advantage of the levy funding, as well as other opportunities available to them. SCS has previously worked with its local university, including graduate placements to help with commercial development and research into sustainable vehicles.

However Cottam-Shea says the beauty of the current courses is that they are tailored to logistics. "TRS really understands what we do," she says.

APPRENTICESHIPS: DRIVING POST-PANDEMIC RECOVERY

As the vaccination programme forges ahead, there is a sense that the end of the pandemic is on the horizon. As the country shakes itself off from the effects of lockdown, the government is positioning apprenticeships as one of the key drivers for recovery and industry growth. In the Budget in March, Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak announced an increase in grants for apprenticeships from £1,500 to £3,000, and an £126 million incentive for traineeships.

Businesses in the logistics and road haulage sector can use apprenticeships to develop LGV drivers, porters, traffic office staff and transport managers, as well as more generic customer service and administrative staff. With between 95% and 100% funding available to cover the costs of training and a range of financial incentives on offer to recruit apprentices, many more road haulage and logistics firms are turning to apprenticeships as a strategy for staff development.

Professional industry standards

Apprenticeships are a tried and tested way of introducing professional, recognised skills into logistics businesses. They also provide the framework and funding to acquire coveted certifica-

tion such as the LGV licence, CPC and other team leading qualifications. These standards reassure clients and offer career pathways that inspire existing staff to progress. In addition, they help retain staff by boosting loyalty and motivation, especially in challenging times.

Pandemic-proof

Perhaps unsurprisingly, apprenticeships in the road haulage and logistics sector have proved relatively resilient during Covid. In the main, this is due to advances in online technology for the delivery of apprenticeship training. So furloughed apprentices continued with their training remotely, as did those who were homeworking.

Before Covid struck, apprenticeship providers worth their salt were already delivering training virtually. Apprenticeship provider and RHA partner TRS Training have been training apprentices via online classrooms since well before the pandemic. The training sessions fit around working patterns.

Furthermore, TRS run each training session several times. In this way, apprentices employed by a single company don't have to all attend

CS Ellis: Apprenticeship distinctions during lockdown

RHA member CS Ellis, a family logistics firm in operation since 1933, has long relied on apprentices to grow and strengthen its business. Like many others, it is well aware of the shortages of drivers in the industry. However, it addresses this by using apprenticeships as a strategy to recruit and train new drivers. In addition, recruiting apprentices forms part of the company philosophy.

CEO Chaz Ellis says: "As an employer, it is partly our responsibility to bring young people into the industry. On average, we employ between eight and 10 apprentices a year."

CS Ellis uses TRS Training to deliver the LGV apprenticeship to staff. At the end of their programme, each apprentice is assessed by the RHA to ensure they have achieved industry standards. During the pandemic, two LGV apprentices at CS Ellis, Raj Haithcock and Dominic Hurr achieved distinction at the end of their training.



BJS Haulage: Choosing apprenticeships over university

Some see the disruption to the education system as a prelude to a surge in career-seekers opting for apprenticeships. Take 18-year-old apprentice Luke Harrison, for example (pictured right).

Luke was unable to sit his A-levels last year when the government cancelled exams due to Covid-19. Nervous about pursuing his higher education plans, he enrolled as a transport office apprentice at RHA member BJS Haulage, where his father Roy Harrison also works as transport planner and co-ordinator.

Luke explains why an apprenticeship made sense to him:

“The ‘earn while you learn’ aspect of apprenticeships was a strong factor in my decision. But mainly, I chose an apprenticeship because I want to be in control of my learning and life choices for the next few years. Plus, I had already done a work experience placement at BJS and enjoyed it. My dad works for the company, and it’s a growth sector, so it seemed like a solid decision.”

Beverley Ellis, training director at TRS Training, notes the growth in interest for apprenticeships:

“We have noticed an increase in enquiries about our apprenticeships since



the cancellation and disruption of school exams. Young people want to protect their career prospects and are understandably apprehensive about embarking on university courses. So many are seeking alternative future-proof routes that keep them in control

of their futures. Apprenticeships certainly offer this reassurance. This trend can only benefit businesses who are turning to apprenticeships as a recruitment vehicle, as we can expect to see the pool of strong apprenticeship candidates grow.”

training simultaneously, thus avoiding staff shortages. TRS Training’s model of training delivery proved flexible and robust enough to ride the restrictions of lockdown. Models like these provide reassurance of continuity whatever happens moving forward in the fight against Covid.

The number of businesses engaging with apprenticeships was also boosted thanks to incentives introduced by the government during the pandemic.

Apprenticeships as a recruitment tool

During a recent RHA industry webinar, a panel of experts drew up priorities for businesses in the sector over the two years. Alongside issues such as addressing the industry’s environmental image, the recruitment of staff (and in particular drivers) is predicted to remain a considerable challenge. If anything, demand for qualified drivers has increased due to the growth in home shopping and delivery services.

Apprenticeships go a long way in tack-

ling the shortage of staff, in particular LGV drivers. TRS Training’s LGV Apprenticeship includes LGV driving lessons and licence acquisition. Consequently, it is the ideal vehicle for developing a firm’s existing van drivers, drivers’ mates or warehouse staff into LGV

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drivers, rather than recruiting new drivers. In addition to this, apprenticeship providers like TRS Training also provide comprehensive free apprentice recruitment services.

Funding and financial incentives

As long as a company has a wage bill of less than £3 million, the government funds 95% of apprenticeship training costs, with the

employer paying just 5%. Employers with wage bills of over £3 million already pay an Apprenticeship Levy. These funds must be used within 24 months, or they are lost.

While the costs of training are largely covered, there is no direct funding for apprentices’ wages. Apprentices must be paid at least the minimum apprenticeship wage for their age; the minimum apprenticeship wage is currently £4.15 per hour for a 16 to 18-year-old or an older apprentice on the first year of their apprenticeship.

However, there are now financial incentives for employers to encourage them to employ apprentices. To illustrate, a company can currently claim up to £3,000 for each new apprentice they recruit.

Staff recruited through the government’s Kickstart scheme can also progress onto an apprenticeship once their Kickstart placement finishes. TRS Training offers both Kickstart and apprenticeships, which means the progression from one programme to another is seamless.



Develop LGV drivers and supervisors through Apprenticeships



LARGE GOODS VEHICLE APPRENTICESHIP

- ★ Develop your van drivers, drivers' mates, warehouse operatives or porters
- ★ Includes LGV licence acquisition
- ★ RHA assess and approve apprentices' skills at end of programme



TRANSPORT MANAGER/SUPERVISOR APPRENTICESHIP

- ★ Develop promising staff into qualified transport managers
- ★ CPC and team leading qualifications
- ★ Apprenticeships proved to increase staff loyalty, motivation & productivity

Training funded by Apprenticeship Levy or Government subsidy

Industry names like **Wren Kitchens** and **Oak Furnitureland** are using **TRS Training Apprenticeships** to develop their next generation of LGV drivers and transport supervisors.

Choose TRS Training as your Apprenticeship partner

- ★ Haulage and logistics industry experts
- ★ Apprenticeship Levy & funding advice
- ★ Our training programmes fit round work schedules
- ★ Free recruitment service for new vacancies
- ★ 100% client satisfaction

Employers review TRS Training as "EXCELLENT" on official Government Apprenticeships website

Call MD Kevin Birch for no-obligation chat about how TRS Training Apprenticeships can help your organisation **07788 120 608**

