Bluesheep Data

Background

What is Bluesheep Data?

For an Apprenticeship Provider to record an Apprenticeship start on the DfE's system, the start must be associated with a single identifiable workplace. In businesses with multiple sites it is the workplace of that business where the Apprentice is based that is recorded. It is the responsibility of the Provider who is training the Apprentice to register any new workplaces on the system. The system is run by a company called Bluesheep. Each workplace registered is allocated a unique code called an EDS code.

The data system like many, is only as good as the quality of the information inputted, and this means that with a system used by 100's of organisations to input 1000's of data entries, human error has and will result in mistakes such as duplication.

Why is Bluesheep data useful?

LEPs have a data sharing agreement with DfE to allow access to the Data Cube which provides access to a range of Apprenticeship data, for example, Apprenticeships by academic year, learner characteristics, geography, subject, level, starts, achievements and by EDS code. Data by EDS code only does not enable reference to the business employing the Apprentice. However the Bluesheep data can be purchased by LEPs, which provides the EDS codes and the associated workplace name, address, employee numbers, and sector (where available) of the employers.

Why do we want to find out which businesses have apprentices?

By viewing which businesses have had apprentices over the last few years it is possible to identify those businesses who have embraced the Apprenticeship Reforms, those who have not and what Apprenticeships are being offered by businesses.

Analysis of the data can be used to inform business engagement, to address businesses issues and share best practise, and to inform the development of guidance/support materials to certain types of business.

What we have done?

Initially all Lancashire workplaces were listed that had started any Apprentices in the last three academic years (15/16, 16/17 and 17/18); this gave a list of just under 17,500 workplaces.

To bring this number down to a manageable sample, the list was cut down to Lancashire workplaces who had started 10 or more Apprentices in the last three years academic years (15/16, 16/17 and 17/18). This exercise brought the number down to 427 workplaces. These businesses have the greatest potential to be champions and share good practice or as they historically had Apprentices, be able to give insight into reasons for reduced engagement.

Who are the 427?

By sector

70% (297 of the 427 workplaces) were in Lancashire's skills and employment priority sectors. See table 1 below.

Table 1 below shows the workplaces in Lancashire's priority sectors who, between 16/17 and 17/18, have reduced their Apprenticeship starts, remained the same or grown their Apprenticeship starts.

Table 1.

Sector	Overall Number of businesses by priority sector	Number of businesses who have increased apprenticeship starts	Number of businesses who have maintained apprenticeship starts	Number of businesses who have reduced apprenticeship starts
Health and Social Care	182	38	6	138
Manufacturing	48	16	3	29
Financial and Professional Services	27	9	4	14
Visitor Economy	13	3	4	6
Construction	11	3	0	8
Digital	10	2	0	8
Energy and Environmental Technologies	6	1	0	5
Totals	**297**	**72**	**17**	**208**

Of the remaining workplaces another 24% (105), fit into one of the following sector categories:

- Education - 25
- Retail - 21
- Public Sector 18
- Food Production - 11
- Wholesale - 11
- Transport - 7
- Security - 7
- Housing Association - 5

Levy Payers

Of the 427 workplaces, 99 have been identified as likely levy payers based on employee numbers and turnover.

Sector	Overall Number of levy businesses by priority sector	Number of businesses who have increased apprenticeship starts	Number of businesses who have maintained apprenticeship starts	Number of businesses who have reduced apprenticeship starts
Health and Social Care	15	3	0	11
Manufacturing	31	11	2	18
Financial and Professional Services	3	3	0	0
Visitor Economy	4	1	0	3
Construction	4	2	0	2
Digital	2	0	0	2
Energy and Environmental Technologies	2	0	0	2
Total	**61**	**17**	**2**	**41**

Levy payers in other sectors

- Retail – 8
- Education - 6
- Transport – 5
- Food Production - 4
- Wholesale – 4
- Debt recovery – 2
- Football Clubs – 2
- Housing Association – 2
- Security – 2
- Logistics - 1
- Misc. – 2