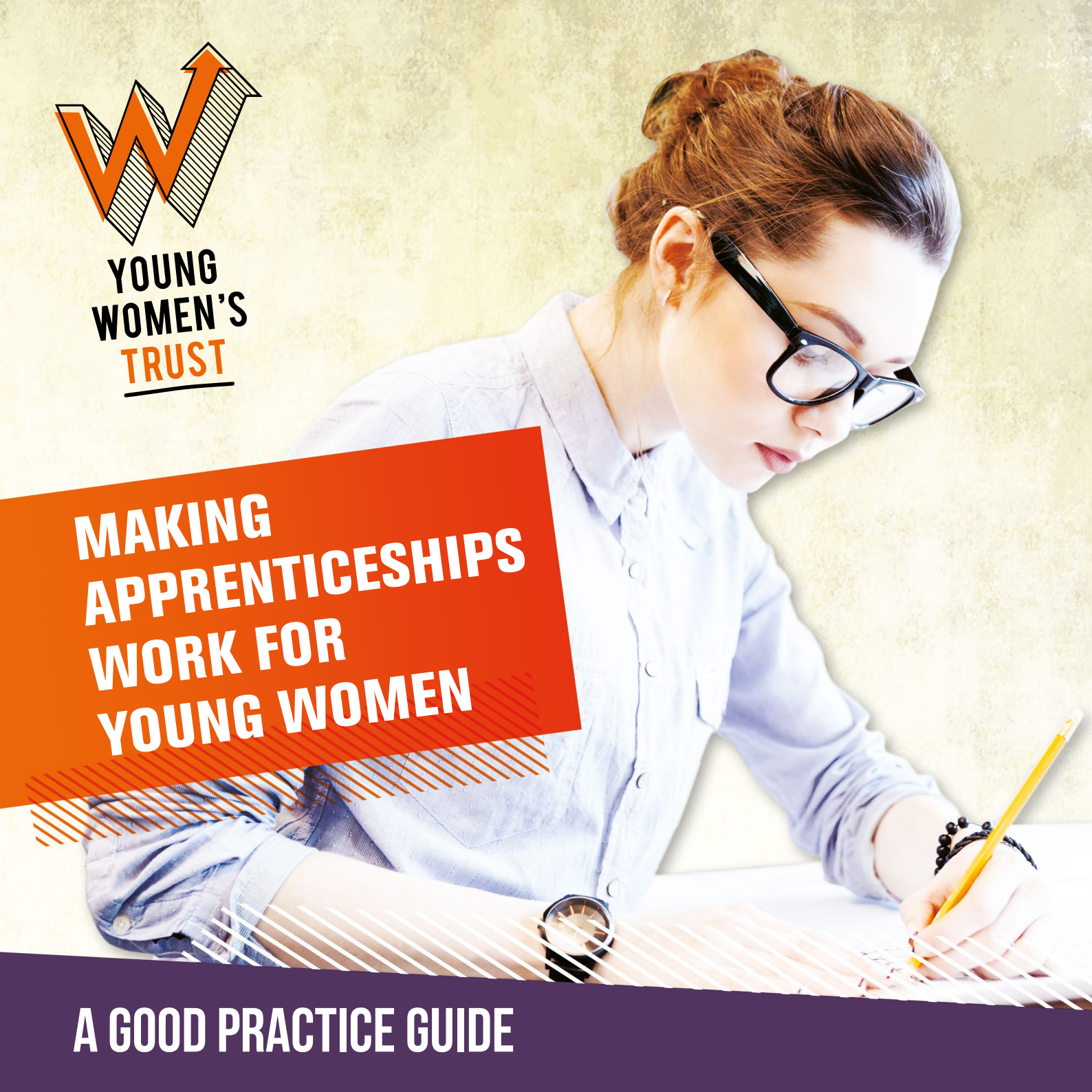




**YOUNG
WOMEN'S
TRUST**

MAKING APPRENTICESHIPS WORK FOR YOUNG WOMEN

A GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE



FOREWORD

GLYNN DAVIES

When I was 17 I enrolled in a construction apprenticeship. Excited and highly motivated, I could not wait to get stuck in. However, I was automatically treated differently. There was a view I didn't belong there; being only one of two females I experienced constant sexist remarks like "get us a cuppa" or "be careful you don't want to break a nail".

After approaching the management team and finding little support, I made the choice to terminate my apprenticeship. I had arrived at a place where my need to provide for myself was overshadowed by my need to protect myself.

It could be easy to dismiss my story as an anomaly but, this is not the case. Occupational segregation is commonplace and produces mammoth barriers for both the young women of Britain and also employers. There is an untapped pool of talent on the sidelines desperate to jump in. It is amazing to see employers, including those in this guide, stepping forward to address and challenge the outdated ideas of gendered jobs.

Young Women's Trust's employer pledge calls on employers to promote diversity and make apprenticeships work better for young women. It is my hope that more employers sign up to the pledge and get creative with their own workforces. It would be especially great to see employers offer more part-time apprenticeships in order to provide more opportunities for young women, especially those who are parents.

It will take us working together to challenge the gendered system currently in place and I hope those reading this guide will be inspired to do just that.

**Member of Young Women's Trust
Apprenticeship Advisory Group**

FOREWORD

DR CAROLE EASTON OBE

Since Young Women's Trust launched *Making Apprenticeships Work for Young Women* there have been huge changes in the apprenticeships system. Soon, public sector targets, the levy and new funding rules will transform apprenticeships. It is pleasing to see so much attention on developing our young people.

But these changes do not yet seem to be transforming the experiences of young women. Indeed it seems likely that, for the first time in nearly a decade, there will be more men than women starting apprenticeships this year. An explanation for this might be that much of the growth in apprenticeship numbers has occurred in sectors such as engineering and construction. Young Women's Trust has found that young women are all too often shut out of these sectors. It was shocking, for example, that in London last year there were no higher-level women apprentices in either construction or engineering.

Supporting young women into these types of apprenticeships benefits women, benefits businesses and benefits the economy. We need urgent action. Over the last year Young Women's Trust has been working to turn the tide. We have submitted evidence to parliamentary committees, given oral evidence to the London Assembly's Economic Committee and spoken at many high-profile events. We were also invited to join the Department for Education's Apprenticeship Equality and Diversity Group and developed ever-closer links to employers keen to be a part of the change that is needed.

The level of enthusiasm for this agenda is encouraging. As this guide demonstrates, there are signs that progress is being made by a range of innovative employers. We hope that this will encourage even greater action to make apprenticeships work for young women.

Chief Executive, Young Women's Trust



“For the first time in nearly a decade there will be more men than women starting apprenticeships this year”

WHY ACTION IS NEEDED

In March 2016, Young Women's Trust (YWT) released its report *Making Apprenticeships Work For Young Women*. Based on research involving young women, employers and government the report found that the system is still not working for all young women. We found that:

- **Young women received** average pay of **£4.82** an hour, compared with **£5.85 for young men**.
- **23% of young women** received no off-the-job training, compared to 12% of young men.
- **16% of women** were out of work after their apprenticeship, compared to **6% of men**.

A key reason for these differences is the dramatic occupational segregation by gender, which has hardly changed in over a decade. The proportion of **construction apprentices that are women has risen from 1% to 2%** in that time while the figure for electrotechnical apprenticeships has remained static at 1.4%. In some cases sectors have even gone backwards – for example **10 years ago 5% of engineering apprentices were female compared to 4% last year**.

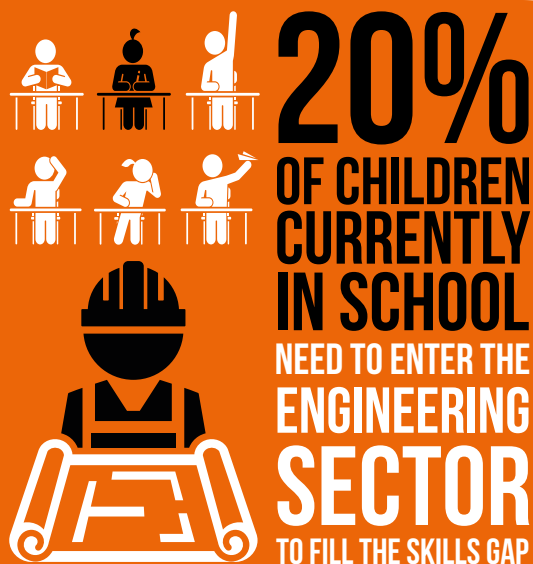


Our report called on the Government and employers to take action by:

- **Taking positive action to increase diversity in apprenticeships:** the under-representation of women in male-dominated sectors hasn't improved in more than a decade and it won't change unless organisations are proactive. This report shows that much more can be done within current legislation.
- **Increasing the emphasis on the collection and publication of data relating to apprenticeships:** in order to monitor progress on diversity, it needs to be tracked. Furthermore, it is important to track the outcomes of apprenticeships so that we can monitor their success long-term.
- **Offering increased pay and financial support to apprentices:** many young women were put off doing apprenticeships because of low pay. Making apprenticeships financially viable is key to making them work for young women.
- **Making part-time and flexible apprenticeships more readily available:** young women told us that the lack of part-time apprenticeships meant they weren't an option. In a poll of young women, a quarter of mothers who had considered apprenticeships had been unable to start one because of the lack of flexible working opportunities. This prevents employers being able to make the most of their talent.
- **Renewing the focus on advice and support given to apprentices before, during and after their apprenticeship:** young women tend to get funnelled into a narrow range of careers that are insecure, lower-paid and have fewer routes for progression. They need high-quality careers advice and in-work support to maximise their potential.

YWT believes that these recommendations will bring huge benefits to employers and the wider economy, and ensure that the Government is able to stay on track in its plan to **create 3 million new apprenticeships by 2020**. With wider challenges to the economy still to come, employers will be under even more pressure to develop much-needed skills in young people.

For example it has been shown that **20% of children currently in school need to enter the engineering sector to fill the skills gap**. YWT hopes that by making apprenticeships work for young women it will be possible to fill such gaps.



TEN TIPS ON HOW TO MAKE APPRENTICESHIPS WORK FOR YOUNG WOMEN

1. **Language and images in advertising:**
Young Women's Trust's report highlighted how adverts for roles in traditionally male sectors often use words such as 'leader', 'competitive' or 'dominant'. These words have been shown to deter female applicants who may be more likely to respond to words such as 'support', 'understand' or 'interpersonal'. Similarly, increasing the number of women pictured in adverts can help to change the perception of the organisations and encourage more young women to apply.
2. **Offering more part-time and flexible apprenticeships:** YWT's research showed that being able to balance work and other responsibilities was key for many young women in being able to undertake an apprenticeship. Despite a common perception that apprentices must be employed on a full-time basis, part-time apprenticeships are allowed under current rules if the apprentice works more than 16 hours.
3. **Women-only work experience and open days:**
Many young women have little experience of sectors such as engineering, construction and technology. Work experience and open days allow them to see the range of roles available and makes them more likely to consider these options as future careers. Tailoring these to the needs of young women also helps to build confidence, increasing the impact.

4. **Engaging with schools and parents:** Parents, teachers and schools careers services are vital in influencing the choices young women make about their future careers. However, they often do not have the same awareness about apprenticeships as they do about academic routes. Holding open days and events for parents and teachers, as well as engaging directly with pupils in local schools can help to create better relationships and understanding. This can lead to increasing the pipeline of young women organisations can draw on.
5. **Removing academic entry requirements:** Many apprenticeships continue to stipulate minimum academic entry requirements of 5 GCSEs at levels A* to C including maths and English. Removing academic entry requirements, unless they are an essential or legal requirement for the role, can help to encourage diversity. There is no evidence that this leads to a reduction in the quality of apprentices recruited.
6. **Women role models:** Focus groups with young women have highlighted how the lack of visible women in certain sectors shapes their views about what opportunities are available to them. It is important that these role models are people who young women can relate to and should, where possible, be former apprentices from a diverse range of backgrounds, rather than senior management.
7. **Mentoring and women's networks:** Starting an apprenticeship can be a daunting prospect and YWT's research showed the need to provide support and guidance to young women. Encouraging other women in the organisations to take on mentoring roles and to develop women's networks can be ways to provide additional support to young women outside the usual management structures.
8. **Involving apprentices in shaping organisational policy:** It can be a challenge to understand how best to meet the needs of young women, especially those with caring responsibilities, including childcare. Creating a forum for these groups to influence organisational policy can ensure that the company is better able to meet their needs in a way that also benefits the business.
9. **Ensuring adequate pay, above the apprenticeship minimum wage:** Polling carried out by Young Women's Trust and Populus Data Solutions showed that young women are less likely to be able to sacrifice pay in order to take in an apprenticeship. At just £3.40 an hour, the apprenticeship minimum wage means that many young women are simply not able to engage with an apprenticeship. Many organisations have had success by increasing the basic wage and offering support for essentials such as transport and childcare.
10. **Data and transparency:** Understanding your workforce is key to understanding the needs of specific groups within the organisation. The ***Making Apprenticeships Work For Young Women*** report found that young women in male-dominated sectors were more likely to drop out of their apprenticeship and less likely to stay in the industry. Collecting and monitoring data relating to gender, age and ethnicity as well as other aspects of personal development (such as which roles they move into or the speed of career progression) can help to identify any challenges that prevent companies making the most of female talent. It can also demonstrate the success of changes and identify any additional support young women might need to succeed.

BAE SYSTEMS POSITIVE ACTION

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

BAE Systems recruits around 700 apprentices a year and currently employs more than 2,000 apprentices. 26% of its apprenticeship intake in 2016 was female – up from 12% in 2012. This compares well to an average of just 5% for the engineering sector overall. Throughout the recruitment process, BAE Systems tracks diversity and inclusion statistics and has a range of initiatives and programmes aimed at increasing awareness of STEM subjects and career options with young women.

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Positive action

The company has taken a broad range of positive actions to attract more young women into the organisation. The annual Schools Roadshow is delivered in partnership with the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy to over 90,000 young people across the UK. It not only aims to promote STEM amongst young people but it also challenges female students' perceptions of STEM subjects and careers in engineering.

Engagement with schools

Engagement with teachers has been a successful way of increasing understanding of the company's apprenticeship scheme and broadening its appeal. The organisation provides two-day placements for teachers to gain a familiarity with the apprenticeship programmes with the aim of increasing awareness of these as career routes for young women as well as men.

BAE Systems also sponsors two STEM-based postgraduates (one male and one female) who are working as physics teachers to improve the quality of maths and physics teaching and encourage more girls to study the subjects in sixth-form or college.

Work experience

BAE Systems ensures there is an equal gender split in the scholarships it offers to A-level students and the 600 work experience placements it provides. This includes female-only placements for groups of young women, essential in providing peer support and guarding against the sense of isolation young women say they often feel in male-dominated sectors.

Female role models

Ensuring its female engineers are visible is an important part of encouraging women to join the organisation. Around 35% of the company's STEM Ambassadors are female and regularly support school classroom activities, events and careers fairs across the UK.

Pay and support

BAE Systems has also worked to ensure good levels of pay for apprenticeships and provides discounted travel and support with childcare. Alongside this all staff, including apprentices, are able to apply for flexible working, including part-time and term-time working. As part of this offer some female engineers have been able to undertake their apprenticeship part-time where it has been necessary to meet their needs.

NETWORK RAIL TARGETS, ADVERTISING AND RECRUITMENT METHODS, SUPPORT /MENTORING

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

Engineering is a sector that has long struggled to increase the number of young women. Network Rail has been no exception to that trend with 4-6% of its engineering apprentices being female – in line with the sector average. Network Rail recruits around 140 apprentices each year and has already taken action to make the scheme more attractive to young women. The organisation is particularly committed to increasing the number of women working in engineering roles.

**“WE HAVE INCREASED THE DIVERSITY OF
OUR INTERVIEW AND ASSESSOR PANELS”**

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Changing language and images in advertising

Network Rail has also changed the way it advertises its apprenticeships, using more images of women and adapting language, in an effort to provide visible role models and to reassure potential applicants that the organisation is a great place for women to work.

Changes to recruitment processes

The recruitment process itself has also been overhauled. Psychometric tests have been replaced with Games-based assessments, which has been shown to appeal more to young women and increase their chances of success. Similarly, the organisation has put great effort into increasing the diversity of its interview and assessor panels. This challenges unconscious bias ensuring the process is fair and giving young women every chance to succeed.

The organisation has also moved its training centre from its previous location on a military base as it seeks to change its masculine image of the organisation.

Improving support and guidance

Once female apprentices are working at Network Rail they are allocated a Female Apprentice Development Manager, who offers pastoral support and guidance. In addition there is a well-developed women's network in the organisation called 'Inspire', which seeks to support women and career progression.

Network Rail also promotes Young Women's Trust's 'Work it Out' Service which offers online and telephone coaching to young women.

CAMDEN COUNCIL PART-TIME AND FLEXIBLE APPRENTICESHIPS

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

Camden Council is a local authority in London. The Borough's Equality Taskforce identified that unemployed residents (and particularly parents) faced a range of barriers to the job market including a lack of skills, work experience and flexible working options. The council worked with employers to tackle the issues that prevented residents taking up employment, with a focus on apprenticeships.

“WE HAVE PROVIDED WAGE SUBSIDIES TO BOOST APPRENTICESHIP WAGES TO THE LEVEL OF THE LONDON LIVING WAGE”

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Part-time and flexible apprenticeships

Camden aimed to create ten flexible apprenticeships for residents. Nine of the apprentices are now on course to complete their qualifications with six having been offered jobs. The feedback from employers has been extremely positive. Flexible, part-time apprenticeships were attractive to several groups, including parents. Employers found that the part-time apprentices were highly motivated and committed and that they made valuable contributions to the business. The project has proved the concept that the part-time flexible apprenticeships are viable, and attractive to both employers and people looking to get into work. The ongoing apprenticeship reforms provide further scope to investigate the possibilities of flexible apprenticeships.

Wage subsidies

Young Women's Trust's research showed that young women in particular needed apprenticeships to pay well in order for them to be a viable option. The Camden project targeted parents over 25, not currently in employment and with children under the age of 12. Camden is a London Living Wage employer and offered wage subsidies to employers participating in the project who were not already paying the London Living Wage. This helped to provide security for the apprentices and enabled them to remain engaged with the project.

In-work support

The transition to work was problematic for some of the apprentices, including the move from benefits to wages. Camden provided in-work support including discretionary payments to some apprentices, to help them manage their finances in the transition period. This was invaluable in helping apprentices to sustain jobs.

CENTRICA SCHOOLS PARENTS NETWORKS

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

Centrica is one of the UK's largest apprenticeship providers and employers of gas engineers and technicians in a sector that has traditionally been very male dominated. The efforts Centrica has made to tackle the underrepresentation of women have contributed to the organisation receiving 8th place in the annual 'Female FTSE' benchmarking report, based on research from Cranfield University.

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Engagement with schools

A key part of its drive to increase the number of women has been the company's work in schools. Central to this work is Careers Lab – an initiative that involves Centrica volunteers delivering careers workshops in secondary schools. Volunteers help young people to develop the skills and share their own knowledge and experience of the world of work to inspire a young person's future career.

Women role models

Centrica has worked to ensure that women are at the forefront its external engagement with an aim to present a female face of engineering. 50 female engineers from Centrica visited schools in 2016, which has enabled the company to challenge stereotypes held by both young men and young women and therefore encourage more young women to consider alternative career paths.

Supporting parents

Young Women's Trust's previous report highlighted how young women were much more likely to need apprenticeships that provided a balance with childcare responsibilities. In 2014, Centrica reviewed its family-friendly policies to see if there was a better way of supporting employees who have parental responsibilities. This resulted in the 'Centrica Parents' Network' which has a senior manager as a sponsor and gives parents a vital role in shaping family friendly policies. All employees, including apprentices, have the right to work flexibly to help them balance other responsibilities.



**“50 OF OUR FEMALE ENGINEERS VISITED SCHOOLS IN 2016,
WHICH HAS ENABLED US TO CHALLENGE STEREOTYPES”**

BARCLAYS SUPPORT NETWORKS

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

Barclays has employed more than 3,000 apprentices since 2012 at levels ranging from level 2 to level 6 degree apprentices and including a new programme for older apprentices over 24. A key focus of the scheme has been to build the diversity of the organisation and support efforts to tackle youth unemployment.

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Barclays was the first organisation to sign up to Young Women's Trust's employer pledge, committing to improving the diversity of its apprenticeship schemes and to ensuring they work well for young women.

Tracking and monitoring

YWT research highlighted the importance of understanding not just the numbers of young women starting apprenticeships but also their destination – where they go after they finish. Barclays encourages apprentices to remain with the business and is committed to ensuring that the women on its apprenticeship programmes take on the same sorts of roles as young men graduating from the scheme. The banking group now collects data about what roles apprentices move into after they complete their apprenticeship and works to understand how it can ensure young women are getting access to the same opportunities.

The focus on data also ensures the experience and performance of the apprentice on the scheme is monitored to ensure they are offered the right type of support.

Paying the living wage

Barclays pays apprentices at least the Living Wage, which supports them to remain with the programme. A clear development and progression plan is developed for each apprentice.

Removing academic entry requirements

A key element of Barclays' strategy has been to reach more young women from disadvantaged backgrounds by focussing on talent and potential. Academic entry requirements have been removed to encourage a more diverse range of applicants. Evaluation of this policy has shown that, with the right support, these recruits have the same level of success as those who met the previous entry requirements.

Women's Networks

Barclays Women's Initiative Network (WIN) ensures there is a channel for all women in Barclays to have their voices heard, receive mentoring and influence the direction of the organisation. Similarly, the Women@Barclays website raises the profile of female role models and lets young female apprentices know that the organisation values them.

All female work experience opportunities and pre-apprenticeship training

Barclays is pleased with the impact it is already having but wants to do more. It is considering how to implement female-only traineeships as a way of encouraging more young women to get involved and make the step up to a Barclays' apprenticeship.

BALFOUR BEATTY

SECTOR AND CONTEXT

Balfour Beatty currently trains about 320 apprentices and recruits over 100 new apprentices each year. They are trained predominately in engineering and construction. Both these sectors have found it difficult to appeal to women – only 2% of construction skills apprentices and 5% of engineering apprentices are women. Balfour Beatty has begun to take action to challenge these trends.

WHAT HAVE THEY DONE?

Work experience aimed at women

Balfour Beatty offers work experience and pre-apprenticeship programmes for young women. The organisation has benefited directly by being able to recruit from these programmes onto its apprenticeship scheme.

Engaging with schools

Balfour Beatty sponsored five Arkwright Scholarships for female students. Scholarships are awarded to 16 year olds who receive financial support, mentoring and work experience. By focussing this support on young women, Balfour Beatty aims to support future leaders in the industry and challenge perceptions about the industry.

Adapting the language used in apprenticeship adverts

Balfour Beatty has plans to adapt the language used in its apprenticeship adverts. To ensure the new language is effective the company will be working with Young Women's Trust and our advisory panel of young women too.

Women's Networks

Balfour Beatty has a 'Gender Affinity Group' in the business and are introducing a Women in Business training programme and Returners' programme. Whilst not exclusive to apprentices, these networks help to create a culture in which women are supported and welcomed into the business.

Setting targets

Balfour Beatty has set targets for the recruitment of women onto its apprenticeship and graduate schemes. The programmes will aim to have an intake that is 20% female in 2017, 30% female in 2020 rising to an equal split in 2025.

Tracking achievement

Young Women's Trust research has shown that it is important not only to monitor the numbers of young women starting an apprenticeship but also to ensure that they are able to access the same opportunities to progress as young men. Tracking apprenticeship achievement is an important part of this, allowing Balfour Beatty to assess how female apprentices are performing and integrating into the business.

“WE HAVE A ‘GENDER AFFINITY GROUP’ AND ARE INTRODUCING A WOMEN IN BUSINESS TRAINING PROGRAMME AND RETURNERS’ PROGRAMME”

WHAT NEXT FOR YOUNG WOMEN'S TRUST?

It has been encouraging to see real commitment from employers who are keen to address the issues around young women in apprenticeships. However, it is also clear that many employers continue to face challenges in meeting these aims.

In particular many employers wanted to offer part-time apprenticeships but thought that regulations limited them to a minimum of 30 hours a week. Employers have also told us of their confusion over equalities legislation, which limited the decisions they took around positive action; difficulties in perceptions of some apprenticeships amongst young women; and uncertainty about the implementation of the apprenticeship levy. Young Women's Trust will work with employers to understand these challenges and develop solutions. In particular we will be working in the following ways:

POSITIVE ACTION RESEARCH

Women are still hugely underrepresented in sectors such as engineering, construction and technology. This is a trend that goes beyond apprentices and Young Women's Trust wants to understand what is working well to change the situation, as well as the ongoing challenges. We will work with employers to discover what more can be done to ensure they are able to make the most of the talent young women have to offer.

DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR PART-TIME APPRENTICESHIPS

Young women tell us that flexible working, particularly apprenticeships that offer part-time working, would allow them to take up opportunities to train that are often denied to them. Young Women's Trust wants to understand what prevents employers offering more part-time apprenticeships. We want to help develop models for part-time apprenticeships with employers and training providers to ensure that practical solutions are found.

EMPLOYER SURVEY

A key aspect of Young Women's Trust's apprenticeship research has been understanding the needs of employers. Young Women's Trust will be conducting a poll of employers to gather more information about their views and experiences of apprenticeships, positive action and young people in the workplace.

APPRENTICE SURVEY

Making Apprenticeships Work for Young Women was rooted in young women's experience of apprenticeships. We will repeat the survey we carried out in 2015 to understand the impact of recent changes to apprenticeships. We will also work with employers who have signed our apprenticeship pledge to increase their understanding of what motivates and attracts young women apprentices as well as the nature and level of the support they need.

MID-TERM APPRENTICESHIP REVIEW

In the autumn we will also be releasing a progress report on the Government's 2020 target to demonstrate what progress has been made in improving apprenticeships for young women and to recommend what more can be done. We will ensure that our recommendations to Government are underpinned by the needs of employers and will offer signatories to the YWT employer pledge the opportunity to contribute to the report.

NEXT STEPS FOR EMPLOYERS

The examples in this guide are just a snapshot of the proactive steps that employers can take to make apprenticeships work well for young women. By reviewing their current schemes and by making often small changes, it is clear that employers can make a difference and bring benefits to their organisations.

We hope employers will:

- Sign our apprenticeship pledge.
- Develop an action plan to demonstrate how they can make their own schemes work better for young women.
- Attend a YWT good practice sharing forum in Summer 2017.

YOUNG WOMEN'S TRUST EMPLOYER PLEDGE

Young Women's Trust's employer pledge states that:

**“OUR ORGANISATION RECOGNISES THE
VALUE OF GENDER DIVERSITY AND WILL
TAKE ACTION TO INCREASE THE
REPRESENTATION OF YOUNG WOMEN IN
OUR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES.”**

Organisations signing the pledge will join a growing campaign of top UK employers who want to make apprenticeships work for young women.

They will have also have:

- Access to our advisory panel of young women and emerging findings from Young Women's Trust research to help inform their work.
- Opportunities to learn from other pledge signatories through our quarterly newsletter and annual events. The first event will take place in summer 2017.
- Support to promote their work through our blogs and other media opportunities as well as in future reports.



PERMANENT
JOB CONTRACT



GOAL



For more information about the employer pledge or the case studies in this report, please contact:

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Young Women's Trust is the operating name of YWCA England & Wales.
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With **special thanks** to the following employers for their continuing efforts to raise awareness and standards for young women in work:

BAE SYSTEMS
I N S P I R E D W O R K

Balfour Beatty

 **BARCLAYS**

 **Camden**

centrica

NetworkRail
