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FROM CORDWAINERS TO CUSTOMER SERVICE: THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN APPRENTICES, EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITIES IN ENGLAND

By Alison Fuller and Lorna Unwin Centre for Labour Market Studies
University of Leicester

ESRC funded Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance
Oxford and Warwick Universities

Editor's Foreword

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From cordwainers to customer service: the changing relationship between apprentices, employers and communities in England

Alison Fuller and Lorna Unwin
Centre for Labour Market Studies
University of Leicester

Correspondence
l.unwin@leicester.ac.uk
Tel: 0116 2525995

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Tables

the growth of employment options in alternative and new sectors such as Business Administration, Information Technology and Tourism have provided young people with alternative career paths. Moreover, changing patterns of educational participation related, at least in part, to the collapse of the youth labour market in the early 1980s and the raising of the school leaving age in 1973, have seen the vast majority of young people taking public examinations at 16 and a much higher proportion of the age group staying on for post-compulsory education. Between 1988 and 1993, the percentage of young people continuing in full-time education after 16 rose from 51% to 70%, an increase which Spours (1995) has argued pushed the UK away from a low towards a medium participation system. Since then, staying-on rates have plateaued at around 70%, indicating that a sizeable proportion of school leavers still seek an alternative to continued full-time education (see Unwin and Wellington, 2001 for young people's perspectives on this issue)

Finally, changing social attitudes and the questioning of traditions in domestic and economic life means that there is less tolerance towards the almost exclusive provision of apprenticeship opportunities to white males, and options for girls and those from ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities are being extended. In short, the communities within which apprenticeship is situated are no longer the same.

Over the past decade, changing requirements of work have led to calls for a more highly educated and qualified workforce capable of adapting to new patterns of production and work organisation. The Modern Apprenticeship, launched by the UK Government in 1994, has been promoted by policymakers as a vehicle for the development of young people's skills, knowledge and understanding which map onto contemporary workforce requirements (for example, regarding the use of information technology, quality control, and multi-skilling).

In this paper, we suggest that by analysing the changing relationship between apprenticeship and community that has occurred over the past forty to fifty years, we can provide insight in to how traditional and contemporary models of apprenticeship are each illustrative of the economic and social characteristics of their times. Furthermore, we argue that policymakers, employers and training providers must be aware of what history can teach them when constructing a contemporary model of apprenticeship. Drawing on Lave and Wenger's (1991) notion of the community of

and employers. Since the late 1970s, a series of youth training schemes, originally designed in response to mass youth unemployment, had generally been seen as a failure (see Unwin, 1997). Despite the fact that some young people did find decent jobs with decent employers through these schemes, the overall image was very poor: training inspectors criticised the quality of provision; less than half of trainees at any one time gained a vocational qualification; and many employers used the schemes as a prolonged selection process, or, at worst, as a vehicle for employing cheap labour. The Modern Apprenticeship was heralded, therefore, as a return to the values of the past, though, given the prefix 'Modern', the new programme would also reflect contemporary attitudes with regard to equal opportunities. Ann Widdecombe, then Minister in the Employment Department, told the 1993 CBI conference: "We do not want to stay locked into the traditional apprenticeship industries. The new model can be used anywhere and we need a real effort to involve sectors which haven't traditionally offered apprenticeship – just as we want to see them available equally to young women and men". (Widdecombe, 1993) We will discuss later in this paper the extent to which Widdecombe's aspirations have been met.

It is important to remember that Modern Apprenticeship was launched when John Major was Prime Minister. Major (1993) famously remarked that:

> Fifty years on from now, Britain will still be the country of long shadows on county (cricket) grounds, warm beer, invincible green suburbs, dog lovers and old maids bicycling to Holy Communion through the morning mist.

This nostalgic vision perhaps helps to explain the decision to revitalise apprenticeships. In attempting to create a national apprenticeship programme, Major and his government, perhaps in common with many members of the British public, had an overly rosy view of what apprenticeships in the past had really been like. In part, that rosy view was fuelled by the knowledge that many ex-apprentices still kept their certificates and indenture papers as a matter of pride, and still talked fondly of the camaraderie of the apprentice training school. There was, however, one aspect of traditional apprenticeships which the Conservative government was not keen to celebrate and retain – the close involvement of trade unions. Under the Modern Apprenticeship, it is left up to the NTOs to decide whether they involve trade unions in the design of the apprenticeship framework. However, only a few sectors, most notably engineering, steel and chemicals, have actually continued this link.

Given the range of sectors which are allowed to offer Modern Apprentices and the freedom of the NTOs to design their own frameworks, it is not surprising that there are enormous variations between apprenticeships in terms of: pay; length of training; provision of on and off-the-job training; and range of qualifications included (for a detailed examination of this variety see Unwin and Wellington, 2001).

2. Swindon Case Study

Swindon is located in North East Wiltshire and is the major location for employment in Wiltshire as 40 per cent of the county's employees work in the town (Wiltshire and Swindon TEC, 1997). During the 1990s, manufacturing employment in Swindon grew by 19 per cent against a national decline of 5 per cent (ibid). Motor vehicle (Honda and Rover Body and Pressings), radio, TV and communications equipment (Motorola) companies are the principle employers in manufacturing. Swindon's geographical location near to London and the rest of the South East, together with its transport infrastructure (adjacent to the M4 and on the intercity railway line between London, Bristol and South Wales), has facilitated the development of the town's economy. A major change during the 1980s and 1990s has been the decline of train manufacture which had been a major source of employment in the town. The Great Western Railway ceased trading entirely during the mid-1990s.

In relation to education, the staying on rate in Swindon rose to 65% per cent in 1999, below the 73% rate for the county of Wiltshire. (Lifetime Careers Centre, 2000). Of those who left school at 16, 6% entered work-based training including the Modern Apprenticeship (ibid).

In this paper, we use evidence from two Swindon companies representing two sectors (railways and vehicle manufacture), which had established track records in providing apprenticeships in a range of craft and technical skills. Evidence from these firms is used to illustrate some of the features of the apprenticeships available in Swindon during the 1950s and 1960s and which characterise such 'programmes' as traditional. In the first example, the Great Western Railway's (GWR) historical records indicate the nature of the apprenticeship scheme in operation and how it was illustrative of the four dimensions of community and apprenticeship outlined above. Industrial change over the past forty years has brought an end to this company's existence in Swindon and hence its role as a major employer of apprentices and

relevant skills, values, customs and habits through participating in a community of practice.

Locational – Secondary school records of the destinations of school leavers confirmed that apprenticeship was a popular route for many boys. For example, in one Swindon school in 1956, 27 out of a total of 47 male leavers (57%) became apprentices, 18 of these with the railway. In 1955, the GWR register of apprentices indicated that the company took on a total of 197 apprentices confirming that the firm was providing a significant number of apprenticeship opportunities to local males. Assuming that the number of apprentice starts was roughly similar in other years, the company would have had approximately 1000 apprentices (in a five year programme) at any one time during this period.

Social – The employment records indicate strong family associations running through the employment of workers and apprentices at GWR. The employment register includes information about apprentices on one side of the ledger and information about the boy's father on the other. With regard to the latter, the ledger lists the 'father's name', 'occupation', 'length of service' and 'number of sons apprenticed with the company'. Looking at two pages at random (32 entries per page), we found that the fathers of all new entrants with surnames beginning with 'M' and 'S' worked for GWR. This historical evidence clearly indicates the strong role played by apprenticeship in reproducing the occupational traditions of many families.

Beyond this, the company played a central role in the wider social and economic structure of the local community. It was known as a strongly paternalistic employer, one that provided its employees and their families with housing, leisure and medical facilities.

Rover Body & Pressings

Rover Body & Pressings currently employs about 2,300 people at its Swindon plant. The factory was built during the mid-to-late 1950s as an expansion of the activities of the Pressed Steel Company, which had been manufacturing car body parts and press tools at Cowley in Oxford. The site provides presswork and sub-assembly to the whole of Rover and Land Rover. Following the take-over of Rover by BMW during the mid-1990s, tool design and build was transferred to Germany. Following

it from my great, great, several greats grandfather who was a coachbuilder and trimmer...that's the earliest reference I've got to coachbuilding and trimming but it's about 1840. So they were all coachbuilders and trimmers including my own grandfather who was apprenticed again in the same trade."

KI suggested that his interest in engineering was fostered by his grandfather who lived with the family. He pointed out that the knowledge and skills gained as a child had almost inevitably influenced his choice of career on leaving school:

"I'd learned how to use hand tools and all these sorts of things by the time I came through the educational system and I ended up in engineering because I knew what it was about basically."

Moreover, KI made the point that 40 years ago most young people relied on their families for 'career's advice'. It was common for children to follow in their parents' and relatives' occupational footsteps, partly because of the tacit knowledge available about the occupation, partly because of existing contacts with employers and partly because there were few sources of external advice. The combined effect of these factors meant that family-centred working traditions tended to be reinforced. The scope for young people to make personal decisions, particularly with regard to picking different areas of employment from their parents and relatives, was limited:

"The schools weren't interested in directing you...if you asked they said well go and ask your dad, we're here to educate you ...that's nothing to do with us – no careers service. So the advice you got was predominantly family-based. So if you had a family history of working in a particular organisation it's not surprising that a lot of young people ended up in it because that was mostly the advice they got. You got advice from your dad or your granddad or whatever based on his own experiences so your understanding of careers at that time was based on the experiences that were related to you by those individuals. So if your somebody was in the professions you were more likely to go into them and that's why I think a lot of people, it's not a nepotistic thing, but they followed the parental sort of route because there was nobody to tell you anything different."

had people ...you finished on your 21st birthday, the contract was 21st birthday so we had people in that photograph [of his intake of apprentices] that were just 15 so they left school at the earliest opportunity and they were just turned 15... there were people like me that were just over 16. So I finished my apprenticeship in 4 years and 9 months, some of us did nearly six years – why? It was a completely rigid time-bound apprenticeship.

Another factor was the strong demarcation between trades which led to narrowness in terms of training content and rigidly defined job specificity:

"The weaknesses in it, in the apprenticeship scheme at the time was that it recognised and reinforced old stereotypes so you know well, you're a this or a that and the reason you're a this or a that is because that's the way it's always been. And because of trade unionism there have been very rigid walls and demarcations drawn up between a lot of these trade groups...the problem with the early apprenticeships was that in the skills areas that [demarcation] became restrictive."

In contrast, KI was very positive about the discipline which characterised his apprenticeship experience. There was a disciplined and rigorous approach to time-keeping, behaviour, work habits and standards of craftsmanship which promoted the feeling that, through apprenticeship, he was learning to become a skilled craftsman and member of his trade (tool making):

"What was really strong about it though, the really, really strong bit about the old apprenticeship was that it had enormous discipline, very strong ownership...You'd have to ask permission to go to the loo and very rigid times in which you were allowed to do things, so people were allowed three minutes to wash their hands before the hooter went..."

The character of the apprenticeship at the company can be further illustrated through KI's account of how the programme was operated. Initially the apprentices spent some months in the training school being introduced to engineering equipment and gaining practice:

"I just had a few months introduction to engineering [in the training school] then they moved me out into the workplace but I was in this group of young people,

According to KI, a definite strength of the company's apprenticeship was that from the start it offered the opportunity to attend college on a day release basis. Many apprenticeships at the time did not include a college component, and he felt very fortunate to have had this opportunity. However, the day release and on-the-job training were treated as separate experiences:

> "It [college] wasn't linked to work at all. It was an engineering course so you learnt theory so you could say that was a connection but it never tried to link your learning to what you were doing at work."

On the other hand, KI acknowledged that the apprentices gained some theory through their experience in the training school:

> "In the training school they did give you some theory and to be honest they were very good. You learned how to read micrometers and Vernier gauges and that sort of thing, but then out in the workplace it was just practical. They tried to release you onto your own work as soon as possible so it wasn't like keeping you in some form of formal training programme where they had phased progression. It was 'oh well, get on with that, see how you get on don't ask unless you've got to' – you'd be struggling away and it would make you think hard."

KI contrasted the college day with work, suggesting that college was very similar to school. The craft apprentices followed mostly City and Guilds courses, with the more academically able being encouraged to take the Mechanical Engineering Technician's course which was a forerunner of the Higher National Certificate (HNC).[1]

In conclusion, KI highlighted the strengths of traditional apprenticeship:

> "When I started work I had this unbelievably well-structured programme, incredibly disciplined, wonderful ownership you know and yes it had its faults as I've just described but I really felt that I was being managed...There was an

[1] This would be the equivalent to a Level 4 qualification today.

foundation programme, we already had some form of advanced training which was modularised and documented, we already had training support people in the workplace...So we already met all the requirements."

However, KI recognises that the Modern Apprenticeship has become even more adaptable in its approach to skills' demarcation than earlier apprenticeship models. He perceives that National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) are flexible and have facilitated multi-skilling, particularly across the old mechanical/electrical divide. On the other hand, he was critical about the high level of bureaucracy involved in delivering and assessing the work-based elements of the Modern Apprenticeship and felt that time may be better spent on teaching and learning:

"I wonder how much time, that if you worked it out, over the apprenticeship, how much time they spent with the gathering of evidence, the assembling of evidence, the delivering of evidence as opposed to learning the skills that you want to have."

KI believes that, in contrast with the past, apprentices are now more likely to be encouraged to progress after completing their apprenticeship programme. In relation to his company, he observed:

"I'm looking for a system which has got some form of learning opportunities in a flexible way so that I can say to people leaving school – 'you don't have to make a choice of university and then have to come out of university with no experience and have that awful traumatic time of... or find all of this money to [go through HE]. You can come through this training scheme, go through the stages at a pace you want to go'."

KI sees the lifting of the age restrictions on apprenticeship as very helpful as it rids apprenticeship of one of its traditional inequalities. According to KI, traditional apprenticeships were restricted to younger age groups as a by-product of 'rate-for-age' agreements. These were agreements between unions and management which set apprentice wages as a proportion of adult earnings. Pay increases were staged throughout the apprenticeship and until the training finished at age 21. The lifting of the 'rate-for-age convention' has enabled KI to recruit a wider range of people to apprenticeship including employees in their twenties who have wanted to change track. The current MA programme lasts for up to four years.

"In some ways I feel quite sorry for today's apprentices. The system is much more casual. They certainly have no problems interpersonally, they don't feel afraid like I used to. They have no difficulty in what I would have considered to be quite advanced skills, that is face-to-face skills, they're excellent. They'd knock my generation into a cocked hat in terms of standing up and talking to people, no doubt. But in terms of the fundamental stuff...my instructors expected them to come in knowing what I knew...was like 'this is a left handed thread, this is a right handed thread, this is a buttress thread, this is a wing nut'...My instructors used to say to me, 'we're not school teachers'...We used to get apprentices in, they could do this, they could do that and our job was to take them on from there, now we're having to teach them how to do maths, now we're having to teach them how to do trigonometry and how to do fractions."

Apprenticeship recruitment

The company has been recruiting apprentices since 1960. There were three intakes during the first year, with a total of 63 apprentices starting their engineering training. Most of these (54) entered tool-making apprenticeships. During the 1960s and 1970s, apprentice numbers remained fairly stable at between 34 to 40 new entrants per year, with about 75% of these being recruited as apprentice toolmakers. The apprentice numbers rose and fell during the 1980s and during the period when the company was also taking on engineers under the Youth Training (YT) scheme. According to KI, the best trainees following the YT scheme were able to transfer into the apprenticeship. In other words YT was used to "back fill" the company's apprenticeship programme. Apprentice numbers have declined during the past ten years and particularly since the BMW take-over in the mid 1990s and the transfer of the tool making operation to Germany. In 2000, no apprentices were recruited because of the uncertainty that accompanied the sale of Rover by BMW.

3. Derby Case Study

Derby, traditionally an engineering city, is situated in the centre of England, in the East Midlands region, close to the M1 motorway. Some 270,000 people live in Derby and the city has an unemployment rate of 5.7% compared to 3.8% for the East Midlands. There are 16,000 companies in Derby and its surrounding districts, and 13,000 of them employ less than 10 people. The City Council's official guidebook to Derby boasts that the country's first factory, a silk mill, was built in the city centre on the banks of the river Derwent in 1717. Derby is famous for its engineering companies (Rolls Royce, and the various rail-related businesses), its Royal Crown Derby porcelain factory, and the Courtaulds (now called Accordis) chemical manufacturing plant. There has, however, been significant growth in the service sector with Prudential plc, for example, investing £25m to open a call centre employing 1,500 people by 2002. The Japanese car manufacturer, Toyota, built a new factory in Derby in 1989, but it is largely an assembly plant. Significantly, the company does not recruit engineering apprentices but trains its assembly staff in-house. In 2000, the company recruited 8 young people on to a Modern Apprenticeship in Business Administration.

Derby's rates of post-16 participation in full-time education are lower than those of Swindon. In 1999, 58% of 16 year olds carried on in full-time education, compared to 60% for the county of Derbyshire and 70.7% for England. (DfEE, 2000) Of the 16 year olds who left school at 16, 9% went into government-supported training programmes.

The first rail companies (Midland Counties Railway and North Midland Railway) were established in Derby in the 1830s with the building of lines from Derby to Nottingham and Leeds. A large area of the city, spreading out from the railway station, became devoted to the manufacture of locomotives, carriages, rail track and all the other components needed to support a national rail network. As we will see below in the interviews with two rail company personnel, the rail industry in Derby, as in Swindon, became a major employer for the city and surrounding district, with many hundreds of apprentices being recruited annually.

From the early 1700s to the late 19th century, the majority of apprentices in Derby and the surrounding area were framework knitters. Titles of apprenticeship

> ...his Master faithfully shall serve, his secrets keep, his lawful commands everywhere gladly do. He shall do no damage to his said Master nor see to be done of others...He shall not waste goods of his said Master, nor lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not commit fornication nor contract Matrimony within the said term. He shall not play cards or Dive Tables or any unlawful games whereby his said Master may have any loss with his own goods...he shall not haunt taverns or playhouses, nor absent himself from his said Master's service day or night unlawfully.[4]

An indenture from 1928 for an apprenticeship in bookbinding, lasting 5 and a half years with Bemrose & Sons, Lithographers, Manufacturing Stationers and Bookbinders in Derby, refers to the range of off-the-job education and training courses which the apprentice was expected to attend:

> ...(the apprentice will) truly and faithfully serve them (the employer), keep their secrets and willingly carry out their lawful commands, will attend diligently to the said art, trade or business and will regularly attend twice weekly during session, evening continuation classes on general subjects between the ages of 15 and 17, and on theoretical and practical subjects from 17 to 21 at the local Technical School, also attend two day classes weekly for tuition in design and colour between the ages of 15 and 18 at the Technical School and sit for examinations.[5]

For this section of the paper, we carried out interviews with key informants in four companies with lengthy records of providing apprenticeships in engineering and technical sectors. As in the Swindon case study, the company-based informants are all training managers, two of whom were themselves former apprentices. Two of the four companies, SERCO, and Adtranz, were formed after rail privatisation in the 1980s. The other two companies, Rolls Royce and Accordis, have also gone through dramatic changes in the last decade. The profiles of these companies, as revealed in the interviews, show how any attempt to construct a contemporary model of apprenticeship cannot rely on the certainties of the past, and how the relationship between apprenticeship and community is becoming more and more diluted.

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[4] Indenture collection, Derby Local Studies Library.
[5] ibid

years (the time it was thought needed to complete the modules) and the time-serving element was abolished. The craft apprentices all took an Ordinary National Certificate and technicians went through to HNC.

In the mid-1970s, the company was recruiting 250 apprentices per year and production was focused on the building of high speed and tilting trains. When the Thatcher government was elected, however, it stopped the investment into advanced trains, a move which had a dramatic effect on BREL. Large-scale redundancies followed and, in 1983, one of the company's training schools was closed. By the time of rail privatisation in 1988, recruitment of apprentices was down to 50 annually. The remaining training school was closed and recruitment of apprentices came to a standstill. The sporting facilities also closed and the company lost its cricket and football teams.

Post-privatisation

In the mid-1990s, the new train operating companies started to invest in repairing the old rolling stock, a process which eventually led to the need for more skilled workers. In 2000, SERCO decided to recruit 6 technician apprentices. The company initially advertised the places through the Careers Service but was disappointed with the standard of applicants. They then put an advert in the *Derby Evening Telegraph* and had a better response. They had 70 applications in total, 52 of whom were invited to come for psychometric tests, and all of whom had predicted grades of 4 GCSEs at grades A-C including Maths, English and a Science. Only one female applied and although she was invited for interview, she withdrew. KI2 said that BREL had had female apprentices in the past, though their numbers were always small. KI2 then interviewed 27 applicants and finally selected 6. He said:

> "In the past, lads did better at the selection tests which test for spatial awareness. I think this was because these lads would have been doing wood and metal work at school and have got used to seeing how pieces of metal fit together...or they'd be used to doing more with their hands, fixing their bikes, helping fix cars. It's harder to tell now whether a youngster will take to engineering but that's not to say they won't."

The apprentices spend the first year completely off-the-job, but this now takes place in a training centre run by another company in Derby (Derby Specialist Fabrications)

He had left school without qualifications but passed the psychometric tests and interview to gain an apprenticeship place. The first year was spent off-the-job in the training school and then he attended college one week in 3 to gain a City and Guilds qualification and to cover the Engineering Industry Training Board's (EITB) modules. The apprentices were given the chance to try out all the craft-related jobs (e.g. fitting, sheet metal work, welding, machining etc). He said:

> "The jewel in the crown was to get into the maintenance team where there was more variety and better skill levels."

When KI3 completed his apprenticeship, he went into the millwright's department and then to the cranes. In 1984, he transferred to the production office as a relief project chaser and was 'made up' to a salaried position in 1989. He then became a training instructor and when the training school closed in 1992, he joined the Human Resources department.

In 1996, Adtranz decided it needed to invest in training apprentices again as the business was growing and so recruited 7 craft and 2 technician level Modern Apprentices by applying the same selection techniques as SERCO. Before launching the programme, KI3 approached three local training providers to see if they could give him an appropriate off-the-job package and, like SERCO, decided to use Derby Specialist Fabrications. He said:

> "The big difference now is that the apprentices don't necessarily come straight from school. They may already be in jobs. We also have clerical apprentices because the office side is getting more and more important. We need people who can manage projects and deal with customers. The general engineering skills on site are not as high as 20 years ago but then we aren't manufacturing now but assembling. We need people who are very flexible."

In 1997, 3 clerical apprentices were recruited along with 2 craft and 3 technician apprentices. The clerical apprentices work towards an NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration and Level 2 in IT. They also study for BTEC qualifications at a local college on a day per week, in finance and business administration, and may take qualifications in Human Resources. Key Skills are covered on the college courses and college personnel come into the workplace to carry out Key Skills assessments. KI3 said:

Company records show that from the early 1960s to 1981, a minimum of 25 to 30 apprentices were recruited annually from the local community. In 1969, 85 apprentices were recruited at Spondon during a massive expansion in apprenticeship numbers at Courtaulds' sites across the UK. Apprentice trades included: fitter; caprpenter/joiner; electrician; plumber; pipefitter; tinsmith; coppersmith; turner; sheetmetal worker; tackler; hand engraver; pentographer; welder; painter; signwriter; bricklayer; instrument mechanic; motor mechanic; and lagger.

The company, along with many sectors in the UK economy, experienced problems in the late 1970s and was forced to shed hundreds of jobs as a result of restructuring its production processes. In 1981, the apprentice training centre at Spondon was closed, the annual recruitment of apprentices halved, and apprentice trades reduced to three: fitter-turner; electrican; and instrument mechanic. In 1989, the apprenticeship programme was reformed to reflect moves toward multi-skilling. Apprentices now spent the first three years covering a broad range of skills and then specialised in the fourth year. In 1993, apprenticeship recruitment stopped altogether.

The contraction of the Courtaulds' apprenticeship programme is poignantly mirrored in the changing style of the indenture papers issued to apprentices. The 'indenture' was the symbolic bond between employer, apprentice, and the apprentice's parents. Until the late 1980s, the idenure was prepared on thick parchment bearing the company's seal and written in partly illuminated gothic script. As apprenticeship contracted, the indenture becomes plainer and plainer, eventually reduced to a single sheet of folded A4 paper.

Our informant (KI5) joined Courtaulds research department in 1982, aged 21, having completed a chemical engineering degree and progressed to plant management at the Coventry site. He came to Spondon in 1990 as a quality operations manager, then business products manager and joined the Human Resources department in 2000.

In 1995, the company decided to recruit apprentices again. KI5 explained,

"We knew that for business reasons we should be planning ahead and make sure we had people coming through the system again. It was a clear business decision.".

The company has a history of using NVQs as a vehicle for in-house staff development. In 1988, the carbon fibre plant at Coventry trained 140 process operators to NVQ Level 2 (see Unwin, 1991).

Rolls Royce

The association of Derby with Rolls Royce engine making dates back to 1907 when Charles Rolls and Henry Royce moved their factory from Manchester to Derby after having been approached by the Borough Development Committee, recently established by the Derby Chamber of Commerce and the Borough Council. At various times in the 20th century, some 30% of Derby's workforce was employed directly by Rolls Royce. Today, one in ten people in Derby (12,000 in total) work for the company which produces gas turbines for the aircraft industry.

Our key informant (KI5) at Rolls Royce is the manager for engineering skills and is based at the company's training centre on the outskirts of Derby. KI5 joined the company straight from school in 1968 at the age of 16 as one of 250 craft engineering apprentices recruited that year. The training centre he is now in charge of had just opened when he joined, and in 2001, he will move to a new purpose-built £10 million centre closer to the city centre. This investment reflects the healthy state of a company which, since the 1970s has gone through several changes of fortune but which is now expanding its international market. The company has two smaller training centres in Scotland and Bristol. In 1968, Rolls Royce employed some 63,000 people in the UK compared to 43,000, though some of today's workforce are employed by companies with which Rolls Royce has joint venture projects.

Three years after KI5 joined Rolls Royce, the company went bankrupt. The car making part of the operation was sold off and, with government investment, the remaining parts of the company were restructured. KI5 commented:

> "When it happened, I was working as what was then called a general machinist and my own department said it couldn't keep me. I had thought I'd got a job for life, but I wasn't too worried as I knew I could walk into another job because I was Rolls Royce trained. That meant a lot then and still does now."

The company offered KI5 a job in the aerospace section where he spent eight years before becoming an instructor in the training centre and, eventually, manager. The

Modern Apprenticeship at Rolls Royce

Each department in the company prepares an annual apprenticeship recruitment plan stating the skill area and number of apprentices required. In 2000, 35 craft and technician engineering apprentices were recruited. KI5 received 500 applications, mostly from the Derby area, for these places, though the company does arrange accommodation for young people who live further away. He explained that he sets the minimum GCSE entry requirements according to skill area. Some young people, therefore, may be accepted with less than 5 GCSEs at Grade C, though most will need Maths, English and a science subject at Grade C. KI5 explained:

> "I'm looking for more than just academic success. We need people who have dexterity because the work is still very hands-on. Some production managers say they want 'a rounded engineer' but others just say 'find me a welder'. I've got to get the right mix so they can all slot into the jobs we have and need them to be trained for."

The apprentices spend a minimum of 24 weeks in the training centre and then move into the different departments. They then attend local colleges on either a block or day-release basis to study for BTEC qualifications and some are sponsored on degree courses. KI5 said:

> "It is still possible at Rolls Royce to progress from the shopfloor right through to Board level. Our apprenticeship is designed to give people the foundation for a career at Rolls or in engineering somewhere else. In my day, most apprentices, if they had any aspirations, wanted to reach the level of foreman, but now they can go much higher, to university if they want. The important thing to remember is that we induct these young people with the Rolls Royce philosophy, that's about high standards, doing things the way we expect and being proud of your work. That was the same in my day."

Though there are many similarities between the contemporary apprenticeship programme at Rolls Royce and the one that our informant followed, there are also significant differences as KI5 explained:

community of practice. In his interview at Rover Body Pressings, KI revealed how, as a young apprentice, he was placed with an 'old timer' and that it was from this man's example that he learned to produce tools to exacting standards. He commented, however, that his 'master' was not a good teacher and indicated that the process of skills acquisition was accomplished mainly through learning-by-doing and through critical (negative) feedback when he got things wrong. He was not expected, and would not have dared, to question his master's practice. These experiences were also echoed by the informants at SERCO, Adtranz and Rolls Royce. These accounts confirm the observations of other researchers (notably Lave and Wenger 1991; Engestrom, 1994) that, in traditional apprenticeships, criticism and debate were discouraged within the context of a relationship in which the master was very much the dominant participant.

In the traditional apprenticeship model, work-based and college-based learning were conducted within a stereotypical duality of practice and theory, with no explicit attempt to link the two types of learning experience. The accounts provided by our informants indicate that the community of practice in traditional apprenticeship comprised the training school instructors, apprentices, skilled shopfloor workers, and college lecturers. However, in terms of apprentices' experience, college staff were perceived as being separate from their main sphere of learning activity, the workplace. This is consistent with what Ashworth and Saxton (1990) have referred to as the provision of 'detached theory'.

With regard to contemporary apprenticeship, some progress seems to have been made towards the integration of college and work-based learning experiences. At all five companies, the programme's on and off-the-job input remains broadly similar in that new apprentices spend the first period of their apprenticeship in the training school with day release at college, followed by on-the-job training with day release. However, the trend towards competence-based learning and assessment means that there is more emphasis on ensuring, via the collection of evidence, that the various components of the programme (NVQ, traditional vocational qualification, and key skills units) contribute to the apprentice's development. Importantly, in the Modern Apprenticeships examined in our four companies, successful completion of the programme requires the individual to attain all three types of qualification. There is a recognition that company trainers, college staff, and workplace 'mentors' play important supporting roles in the apprentice's attainment of the required standards.

apprentices at Adtranz further challenges the old occupational boundaries and, significantly, the gendered nature of traditional communities of practice.

Locational – For a major part of the 20th century, the companies (irrespective of changes in ownership and name) have been significant providers of engineering and other apprenticeship opportunities in Swindon and Derby with sizeable annual intakes. However, in the last few years there has been a radical decline in the recruitment of apprentices. All the companies have and are facing uncertainty surrounding their ownership and market share, making it difficult to forecast what their skill requirements are likely to be over the next few years. As the informants at Rover Body Pressings and Rolls Royce made clear, they thought it would be irresponsible employment practice to recruit apprentices to a four-year programme without a strong expectation that they would be able to complete their training.

The decision to curtail the Modern Apprenticeship programme at Rover Body Pressings and the cautious progress seen at the companies in Derby highlights an important issue for Modern Apprenticeship. There may increasingly be a conflict between the uncertainty of contemporary industrial and economic conditions and the need for a long-term stable environment in which to provide apprenticeships, which, by definition, take place over a lengthy period. This contextual backdrop could help explain why fast changing industries, such as information and communication technologies (ICT), have recruited disappointing numbers of apprentices. From the young person's perspective, there are opportunities to gain employment in ICT without following an apprenticeship, and which may offer better pay and quicker progression prospects. From the employer's point of view, it is hard to predict what skills will be required in three to four years time. Some employers may, therefore, be concerned that the apprenticeship framework provides too rigid and inflexible a framework to meet hard-to-predict requirements.

Social - The pattern of apprentice recruitment indicates that Rover Body & Pressings, Accordis and Rolls Royce were able to maintain a substantial programme at a time (during the 1980s and up to the mid-1990s) when post-16 participation in full-time education was rising dramatically, thereby reducing the numbers of potential applicants, and when apprenticeships in traditional sectors were generally on the decline. In the case of Rover Body Pressings, the company benefited from the economic success of the vehicle manufacturing sector in Swindon (Honda and Rover) over this period. Rolls Royce and Accordis were still expanding their

listing 26,900 young people in the 'unstated' category. As this amounts to some 9% of the total 'starts', it is clear that the data for all the sectors is incomplete.

But the statistical picture is also incomplete and unreliable with regard to the numbers of apprentices who complete a full apprenticeship framework (ie. the NVQ Level 3, the specified Key Skill units, and any specified additional vocational qualification) as laid down by the NTOs. Once, again, as at the start of an apprenticeship, the DfEE relies on young people to complete a form to indicate whether they have achieved a qualification when they finish their apprenticeship. Apprentices are asked to state whether they have achieved a full NVQ (at levels 1-5) or units towards an NVQ. The form does not ask for details about other, non-NVQ qualifications. Some 10% of apprentices do not complete this information and so the DfEE's picture of NVQ attainment is inaccurate. Furthermore, it has no picture of apprentice attainment in relation to non-NVQ qualifications, some of which, such as the BTEC National, provide a clear progression route to Level 4 qualifications such as HNDs and higher education.

In terms of knowing how many apprentices have completed their NTO's framework, the picture is even more unreliable. To get this information, the DfEE relies on an annual survey distributed to all apprentices asking them about their progress. The form asks apprentices if they have completed their training. If the apprentice says 'yes', then this is taken to mean they have completed the full apprenticeship framework, even though the young person may interpret the question as simply relating to a spell of off-the-job training. In addition to this basic problem in the questionnaire design, the DfEE openly admits that only a third of apprentices surveyed return a completed questionnaire.

Since the MA was introduced, the DfEE has stressed the importance of the MA frameworks being designed by NTOs for their sectors. In addition, this contemporary apprenticeship programme has been promoted as one in which the apprentice will gain vocational qualifications and key skills. Yet, given the poor state of the available data, the DfEE has, at best, only a partial picture of whether the programme it invests in so heavily is successful. At the heart of this problem lies the dysfunctional relationship between the DfEE and the TECs in which the latter have been treated as if they are, on the one hand, straightforward agencies of government who have to meet DfEE targets in order to receive funding, and, on the other hand, completely autonomous organisations who simply provide a service, in this case the local

Scheme (YTS). Clearly, employers are unlikely to take on a young person if they haven't really any need for another employee, but the intervention of the training provider, who promises to shoulder the 'burden' of recruitment, selection and official paperwork, can be very persuasive. In many areas of the country, employers have come to rely on these providers for their supply of young workers.

For the TECs, the providers play the crucial role of helping them to meet their targets for the MA and other government-sponsored training schemes. It is the providers, and, ironically, not the so-called employer-led TECs, therefore, who form the interface with employers. And this has led to another problem when trying to gain a statistical profile of Modern Apprenticeship. TECs do not know how many employers in their area have recruited apprentices, for that information is kept by the training providers with whom employers have contracts. TECs will know the names of some of the employers who have recruited apprentices but these will usually be large companies and/or companies whose senior staff sit on TEC boards or are involved in other ways with TEC activities. The DfEE, therefore, has no idea how many employers in England and Wales are involved in the MA, which sectors they represent, and the reasons why they are involved. Without such information, the Modern Apprenticeship remains a supply-side programme, whereas, we would argue, the emphasis should be, as in the past, on making sure it is a demand-led initiative.

Structural changes to the funding and organisation of post-compulsory education and training in England, which come into force at the end of March 2001, will not necessarily improve this situation. There has been nothing in the announcements about the establishment of a national Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the replacement of the TECs by local LSCs to suggest that the current intermediary role played by training providers will change or that the LSCs won't face the same target pressures as the TECs.

Given the problems highlighted above, we have attempted to construct as detailed a statistical picture of apprenticeship in England, Wiltshire and Southern Derbyshire towards the end of 2000 as is possible by drawing on DfEE and local TEC data. The first table (Table Two) covers the ten most populated sectors with figures for the following categories: the numbers of apprentices recruited to each sector since the programme began; the number who have left; a breakdown by gender, disability, ethnicity and age; and the numbers achieving an NVQ below, at and above Level 3.

Table Three: Participation and attainment data for remaining sectors to end October 2000

	All starts to end October 2000	All leavers to end October 2000	Female	People with Disabilities	Minority Ethnic	Aged 16	Aged 17	Aged 18	Aged over 18	Level of full qualification gained	
										Below level 3	Level 3 & above
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agriculture & Commercial Horticulture	2,154	1,374	8.25	2.44	0.18	13.13	16.58	32.15	36.39	13.18	54.83
Chemicals Industry	770	372	16.10	1.04	1.82	27.53	18.83	23.77	29.61	19.27	43.30
Early Years Care and Education	13,494	7,895	96.99	2.97	9.14	8.38	15.97	21.52	53.19	10.25	45.04
Engineering Construction	1,121	621	0.89	0.45	0.98	31.04	26.58	24.98	17.31	13.98	50.73
Information Technology	6,613	4,765	29.28	2.30	10.36	10.04	16.98	19.67	53.00	18.41	28.42
Polymers	144	91	6.25	2.78	2.78	14.58	23.61	24.31	35.42	34.09	19.32
Steel Industry	474	343	11.37	1.89	1.05	25.89	20.84	25.26	27.79	18.05	55.03
Travel Services	8,593	5,464	86.79	1.07	1.87	36.10	29.46	14.69	18.21	29.81	53.64
Plumbing	5,329	2,545	0.66	1.80	1.52	32.27	22.53	19.43	24.41	15.96	38.36
Accountancy	11,320	6,369	58.90	3.41	4.20	8.01	11.30	23.06	56.79	16.27	38.69
Aviation	681	384	9.10	1.03	3.38	12.33	17.33	30.69	39.35	13.61	67.28
Arts & Entertainment	90	60	57.78	5.56	18.89	2.22	16.67	14.44	66.67	1.67	35.00
Craft Baking	376	249	27.13	2.39	3.72	16.76	19.95	14.63	47.61	24.18	16.80
Builders Merchants	240	156	9.58	2.92	1.25	20.42	26.25	19.17	33.33	28.48	14.57
Bus & Coach	620	305	2.09	1.93	3.06	46.22	25.12	16.10	11.59	14.09	49.33

Table 3 continued

	All starts to end October 2000	All leavers to end October 2000	Female	People with Disabilities	Minority Ethnic	Aged 16	Aged 17	Aged 18	Aged over 18	Level of full qualification gained	
										Below level 3	Level 3 & above
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Road Haulage & Distribution	1,424	441	15.99	0.91	1.40	1.54	27.91	23.28	47.05	26.62	19.44
Sea Fish	19	15	0.00	0.00	0.00	42.11	21.05	0.00	36.84	6.67	46.67
Security	740	420	0.27	1.89	2.96	21.70	26.28	21.19	29.92	18.67	12.78
Sports & Recreation	3,824	2,559	37.45	2.14	3.18	6.35	11.35	16.59	65.13	21.75	32.14
Telecommunication	2,917	928	18.05	0.68	5.20	6.91	23.73	23.83	45.20	7.73	48.64
Timber Trade (Wood Machining)	12	2	8.33	0.00	8.33	0.00	33.33	8.33	58.33	0.00	50.00
Marine Industry	759	304	1.45	0.26	0.26	26.22	35.31	18.31	19.76	21.65	45.02
Newspapers	260	177	55.77	1.54	2.31	1.54	3.46	8.85	85.00	3.53	68.82
Operating Department Practice	145	111	64.83	6.90	3.45	0.00	0.69	13.79	85.52	2.86	67.62
Physiological Measurement Technicians	172	99	73.26	5.81	7.56	2.33	6.40	22.09	69.16	1.11	52.22
Banking Services	592	416	69.48	0.51	12.48	0.34	3.04	9.95	86.51	2.91	23.06
Broadcasting	86	41	25.58	2.33	12.79	5.81	6.98	19.77	67.44	0.00	43.90
Environmental Conservation	49	32	22.45	2.04	0.00	16.33	20.41	18.37	44.90	36.67	36.67
Floristry	306	185	97.39	4.90	0.98	11.76	11.11	24.51	51.96	17.58	30.22
Insurance	798	540	62.28	2.01	4.65	6.27	12.16	17.79	63.53	20.49	22.93

Table 3 continued

	All starts to end October 2000	All leavers to end October 2000	Female	People with Disabilities	Minority Ethnic	Aged 16	Aged 17	Aged 18	Aged over 18	Level of full qualification gained	
										Below level 3	Level 3 & above
			%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Warehousing	877	420	9.05	1.58	2.83	5.43	11.31	12.33	70.14	24.58	8.59
Information & Library Services	14	3	85.71	0.00	0.00	7.14	7.14	14.29	71.43	0.00	0.00
Textiles	168	93	13.10	2.98	1.79	16.07	15.48	14.88	53.57	4.35	21.74
Water Industry	3	0	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	66.67	33.33	0.00	0.00
Rail	43	11	14.89	0.00	4.26	25.53	10.64	42.55	12.77	36.36	0.00
Health & Beauty Therapy	199	53	99.50	3.50	2.00	34.00	25.00	17.00	23.50	13.21	5.66
Signmaking	39	16	2.56	2.56	0.00	15.38	10.26	41.03	33.33	37.50	18.75
Procurement	19	4	47.62	0.00	0.00	4.76	0.00	4.76	80.95	0.00	50.00
Building Services Engineers	193	68	2.06	0.52	2.06	20.10	21.13	20.62	37.63	0.00	1.49
Jewellery	5	0	40.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
Pharmacy	3	0	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00
Total	**82,042**	**46,558**									

Source: DfEE Modern Apprenticeship database (Sheffield: Department for Education and Employment).

Table Four: Length of stay in apprenticeship

Sectors	Average planned length of stay in weeks	Average actual length of stay in weeks
Engineering	151.18	99.63
Electrical Installation Eng.	173.22	84.81
Motor Industry	129.73	75.00
Construction	123.76	67.30
Hairdressing	125.90	60.60
Business Administration	115.69	57.77
Health and Social Care	115.28	50.50
Retailing	112.10	49.57
Hotel and Catering	122.14	48.83
Customer Service	100.71	30.28

Source: DfEE MA database report

The figures for attainment and length of stay suggest that some sectors do not require the majority of their workforce to have level 3 skills and so calls into question the extent to which an apprenticeship-style training programme is appropriate across all sectors of the economy.

The reality behind the figures in Tables Two, Three and Four reflects the true aim of the programme which has been to attract young people not proceeding to further and higher education, irrespective of the demand for level 3 skills. In this respect, Modern Apprenticeship can be seen as a continuation of the same policy of social inclusion which has governed youth training schemes since the early 1980s. The strategy of the previous Conservative and the current Labour governments has been to concentrate on volume, in terms of apprentice numbers and participating sectors, rather than on skill formation in those sectors which might be said to be important for UK economic growth. The figures for the Information Technology sector, which counts for less than 2 per cent of apprentices, are illustrative of this point. Currently six of the top ten recruiting sectors represent service industries. We would argue that there needs to be a debate about whether significant amounts of public money should be supporting employers in these sectors, where the potential for 'dead weight' seems highest, rather than being invested in those sectors which have demonstrated a definite need for skills at or beyond level 3.

In contrast, Retailing, an 'old industry' but a 'non-traditional' apprenticeship sector, has accounted for 9% (29,450) of all apprenticeship starts and has been the third largest recruiting sector to date. It can, of course, be argued that IT and Electronic Systems are not traditional apprenticeship recruiters as they developed and expanded after the steep decline in apprenticeships twenty plus years ago. In addition, these sectors tend to recruit young people as graduates rather than as school leavers (see Gospel and Fuller, 1998). In contrast, the success of Retailing shows how a non-traditional sector can emerge and so transform the image of apprenticeship, from its traditional base in manufacturing industry to its new home in personal and customer services. Retailing also has a lengthy history (since the late 1970s) of participating in government-sponsored youth training programmes.

6. Statistical Picture of MA in Wiltshire and Swindon TEC Area

This section presents statistical information on Modern Apprenticeships in the 36 sectors that operate the programme in the Wiltshire and Swindon TEC area. The first table (Table Six) shows the numbers of apprentices in each sector.

Table Six: Wiltshire and Swindon apprenticeship starts by sector and gender

Sector		Female	Male	Total Start
101[1]	Agri & Commercial Horticulture	1	1	2
102	Business Administration	176	45	221
103	Chemicals Industry	1	0	1
104	Child Care	180	14	194
105	Electrical Installation Engineering	1	149	150
106	Engineering Manufacturing	26	499	525
108	Information Technology	14	31	45
112	Retailing	110	103	213
115	Travel Services	39	8	47
116	Construction	5	66	71
117	Plumbing	1	27	28
201	Accountancy	15	11	26
211	Electricity Supply	0	7	7
212	Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning	0	32	32
213	Estate Agency	1	1	2

The next table (Table Seven) shows the destinations of apprentices after they have left the programme. These figures were compiled by the local TEC.

Table Seven: Wiltshire and Swindon Leavers by sector and destination

Sector		Unknown	Employed[1]	Employed[2]	Employed[3]	Unemployed	Other[4]
101	Agriculture & Commercial Horticulture	1	4		7		
102	Business Administration	3	5	5	31	6	
103	Chemicals Industry					1	
104	Child Care	5	10	3	34	1	
105	Electrical Installation Engineering	4		1	16		
106	Engineering Manufacture	14		1	65	3	
108	Information Technology	2	1	1	10	1	
109	Marine Engineering				12	1	
112	Retailing	9	6	7	25	5	
115	Travel Services		5	4	9		
116	Construction		2	1	2		
117	Plumbing	1		1		1	
201	Accountancy			1	2	2	
204	Master Bakers				2		
212	Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning			1	5	2	
213	Estate Agency	1			2		
217	Hairdressing	7	4	8	40		
218	Healthcare (No longer used)				1		
219	Amenity Horticulture	3					
220	Hotel & Catering	6	9	5	17	1	
227	Printing				3		
231	Sports & Recreation		1		6		
232	Telecommunications	1					
235	Motor Industry	5	6	6	31	1	
236	Health & Social Care	11	7	10	29	3	

The next table (Table Eight) shows the numbers of apprentices who have completed a full apprenticeship by the time they left the programme.

Table Eight: Wiltshire and Swindon 'Completers' by sector and gender

Sector		Female	Male	Total
101	Agri & Comm Horticulture		10	10
102	Business Admin	19	2	21
104	Child Care	33	1	34
105	Elect Install Eng		4	4
106	Eng Manufacturing	2	50	52
108	Information Tech		5	5
109	Marine Engineering	2	28	30
112	Retailing	3	1	4
115	Travel Services	6		6
116	Construction		2	2
201	Accountancy		1	1
204	Master Bakers	1		1
212	Heating/Ventilation		1	1
213	Estate Agency		2	2
217	Hairdressing	27		27
220	Hotel & Catering	5	3	8
231	Sports & Recreation	1		1
235	Motor Industry		26	26
236	Health & Social Care	25	1	26
247	Horses	2		2
248	Insurance	10		10
263	Customer Service	2		2
265	Gas		4	4
Total Completers		**138**	**141**	**279**

The largest proportion of apprenticeship completers come from the Engineering Manufacture sector (19%), followed by Hairdressing (10%) and Motor Industry and Health and Social Care with 9% each. Although Business Administration is one of the largest and most established sectors

The pattern of distribution for Hairdressing was quite similar to Engineering Manufacture in that 32% of apprentices were recruited as the sole apprentice, whilst 35% were recruited to firms with 2-5 apprentices, and 25% were recruited to firms with 11-20 apprentices.

7. Statistical Picture of MA in Southern Derbyshire TEC area

The section below presents statistical information on Modern Apprenticeship in a range of sectors in the Southern Derbyshire TEC area, which incorporates the city of Derby. The first table (Table Ten) shows the number of apprentices who started the programme in each sector.

Table Ten: Southern Derbyshire MA starts by sector and gender

Sector		Female	Male	Total Start
101	Agri & Comm Horticul	20	41	61
102	Business Admin	708	129	837
103	Chemicals Industry	2	0	2
104	Child Care	225	7	232
105	Elect Install Eng	0	371	371
106	Eng Manufacturing	25	777	802
107	Eng Construction	0	5	5
108	Information Tech	12	75	87
109	Marine Engineering	0	14	14
111	Polymers Sector	0	8	8
112	Retailing	108	91	199
113	Steel Industry	0	1	1
115	Travel Services	130	29	159
116	Construction	2	258	260
117	Plumbing	1	43	44
201	Accountancy	136	113	249
202	Air Transport	0	2	2
205	Builders Merchants	0	1	1
207	Carpet Manufacturing	1	0	1
209	Cleaning Services	0	2	2
210	Clothing	5	0	5
211	Electricity Supply	0	29	29

Table 10 continued

Sector		Female	Male	Total Start
264	Food and Drink	1	0	1
265	Gas	0	2	2
267	Warehousing	0	4	4
279	Health and Beauty	16	0	16
Total MA Starts		**2560**	**2932**	**5494**

Source: Southern Derbyshire TEC.

The first point to note is that this TEC area offers apprenticeships in 23 more sectors than in Wiltshire and Swindon. Those additional sectors reflect the broader base of industry in the Derby area but may also reflect a more vigorous attempt by the Southern Derbyshire TEC to persuade employers to recruit apprentices. In addition, this TEC area is responsible for twice as many apprentices as its southern counterpart.

The seven largest apprenticeship sectors in the Derby area in 1999/2000 were: Business Administration (15%); Engineering Manufacture (14%); Hairdressing (9%); Motor Industry (8%); Hotel and Catering (5%); Construction (5%); and Accountancy (5%). Customer Service and Retailing capture 4% of apprentice recruitment. This presents a different profile to that found in Wiltshire and Swindon as apprentices in the Derby area are much more thinly spread across a larger range of sectors. The same sectors are dominant in both areas but the position of Business Administration is reversed, coming top in the Derby area and seventh in the Wiltshire and Swindon chart. Accountancy is much stronger in the Derby area than in Wiltshire and Swindon where it only attracts 1% of apprenticeship recruitment.

Table 11 continued

Sector		Unknown	Employed[1]	Employed[2]	Employed[3]	Unemployed	Other[4]
231	Sports & Recreation	1	2	4	3	2	1
232	Telecomms				3	0	1
233	Timber Trade		2	1	2	3	2
235	Motor Industry	6	4	3	10	7	9
236	Health & Social Care	2	8	4	12	6	18
238	Road Haulage			1			
241	Banking Services	1	2	4	2		13
247	Horses		2	4	3		3
248	Insurance		2	1	4	2	
250	Museums				1		
251	Photography				2		
256	Surface Coatings			1	1		
257	Electronic Systems				1		
259	International Trade				1		
260	Management	1	5	4	5	2	5
263	Customer Service	5	9	7	9	6	7
264	Food and Drink		1				
265	Gas				1		
267	Warehousing				2		
278	Health and Beauty			1	2	2	1
Totals		**107**	**135**	**117**	**243**	**108**	**197**
Grand Total leavers 907							

Source: Southern Derbyshire TEC

[1]Employed elsewhere (same/related occupation)

[2]Employed elsewhere (unrelated occupation)

[3]Employed with same business

[4]Other including conversion to National Traineeship, conversion to other training, further education, higher education, injury/serious illness, and self-employed.

Table 12 continued

Sector		Female	Male	Total
106	Eng Manufacturing	6	132	138
108	Information Tech	1	2	3
112	Retailing	14	6	20
113	Steel		1	1
115	Travel Services	22		22
116	Construction		39	39
117	Plumbing		3	3
201	Accountancy	16	9	25
215	Furniture		1	1
217	Hairdressing	17		17
220	Hotel & Catering	9	10	19
222	Knitting and Lace	1		1
227	Printing		2	2
231	Sports & Recreation		1	1
232	Telecommunications		2	2
233	Timber Trade		3	3
235	Motor Industry		49	49
236	Health & Social Care	16		16
241	Banking Services	14		14
247	Horses	8	2	10
248	Insurance	1		1
251	Photography			1
260	Management		2	2
263	Customer Service	27	3	30
264	Food and Drink	1		1
Total Completers		327	317	644

Source: Southern Derbyshire TEC.

The largest proportion of apprenticeship completers (25%) come from the Business Administration sector, closely followed by Engineering Manufacture (21%). There is then a sizeable gap with the Motor Industry taking third place with 8% and Construction fourth place with 6% of apprentices completing the full framework. These figures show how few apprentices are completing the full framework and must bring into question whether the concept of a 'framework' should be re-examined.

presence, and the pitiful statistical records compiled by the DfEE, distort the true picture of how apprenticeship is being experienced by employers and their apprentices. It is not clear that the dismantling of TECs and their replacement by the Learning and Skills Council will automatically lead to a more reliable, rigorous and transparent collection and management of local statistics on Modern Apprenticeship. Indeed, we are concerned that data currently held by TECs may be lost or become scattered as systems are transferred to the new institutions.

Beyond the above points, the Modern Apprenticeship differs to its ancestor in one crucial way. Apprenticeships in the past were demand rather than supply-led. Employers decided when and if they needed apprentices. Today, the agencies of government, in the form of the TECs, orchestrate apprenticeship recruitment, supported by a network of training providers. The reality that the livelihood of these intermediary organisations depends on take-up of places on government-supported training schemes means that the resulting patterns of participation probably reflect a distorted picture of actual demand. The non-completion and leaver figures presented in this report suggest that many employers do not feel any particular 'ownership' of the programme. They also suggest that, in many sectors and particularly in those with no tradition of offering apprenticeships, there isn't the demand for Level 3 skills.

Many of the occupational sectors permitted to run MAs are changing in terms of their working practices, skill requirements and job descriptions. Some are so new that employees may find they are required from the start to be hybrids, their title changing from week to week. Having an occupational identity is very important to young people's sense of worth and carries status in the adult community. We need to be sure that all sectors understand this. If young people are to learn effectively at work, they need some anchors, something to make them feel secure for the time they are training. They need to hear how the sector has developed and, if it is particularly new, where it emerged from and where it might be going. In other words, young people need to learn how to talk about the work they do, to feel part of an occupational community. The analysis presented in this paper and research in to Modern Apprenticeship more generally indicates that those sectors and companies which have inherited a tradition of apprenticeship, together with an accompanying training infrastructure and developed community of practice (including in-house trainers and college lecturers), are best placed to provide a context for skill formation and progression.

In their study of workplace learning in the UK, Stern and Sommerlad (1999, p.23) found that the hospitality and catering industry "well exemplifies a sector where the scope for workplace learning is limited, beyond responding to immediate pressures for customer care programmes". The retail sector also places a high priority on 'customer care' training, though Raper et al (1997) have found

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