



# Apprenticeships and gender

A joint TUC and YWCA paper

## Apprenticeships – a gendered picture

The past decade has seen a vast and welcome expansion in the number of apprenticeships being offered across all sectors, including many sectors which have not traditionally been associated with apprenticeships. Both the Labour government and the current coalition government have made the expansion of apprenticeships a priority.

In January 2008 the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) was set up to increase the number of apprenticeship opportunities and provide a dedicated, responsive service for both employers and learners.

The National Apprenticeship Service's priorities for young people in 2010-2011 include "work[ing] to address stereotyping and under-representation across all equality strands, including gender, race and disability."

As well as an increase in the number of apprentices, there has also been an increase in proportion of women apprentices. However, this is not to say there is an army of young female apprentice engineers or plumbers out there. The expansion in apprenticeships has replicated traditional patterns of gender segregation.

The increase in female participation in apprenticeships has been primarily driven by new apprenticeships being created in sectors with a large female workforce such as retail and business admin, rather than an influx of young women into traditionally better paid and male dominated apprenticeships such as Engineering.

In 2008/9 there were 119,300 female apprenticeship starts out of a total of 239,900 (just under 50%). Table 1 below shows trends in apprenticeship starts and completions by gender in the past six years.

While the percentage of women starting and completing apprenticeships over the past six years is encouragingly high, it is concerning that the trend – at least until 2007-8 – was that the percentage of women starting and completing apprenticeships was in decline. Considering the rapid growth in apprenticeship frameworks such as Business Administration (apprenticeship achievements in Business Administration have increased from 6,600 in 2003-4 to 13,200 in 2008-9, of which 81% were female) in which women are well represented, it is cause for some concern that the overall percentage of apprenticeships completed by women is still in decline.

Table 1

	2003-4	2004-5	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9
<b>Percentage of female apprenticeship starts</b>	48.2%	46.4%	47.2%	45.8%	47.4%	49.7%
<b>Percentage of apprenticeships completed by women</b>	51.1%	47.9%	46.3%	45.5%	45.2%	47.5%

Source: Statistical First Release, March 2010

## Data on participation

There is another important point to note about the data on women and apprenticeships. While the number of women starting and completing apprenticeships is reasonably high, this does not provide an accurate picture of female participation in apprenticeships. That is to say that the data on the number of women enrolled and employed as an apprentice at any given time is conspicuous by its absence. This data is not currently publicly available however it would be reasonable to surmise that the number of women participating in apprenticeships is significantly lower than men. The reason for this is that traditionally “female” sectors offer much shorter apprenticeship courses; typically less than one year. This means that starts and completions mask a rather different picture of female participation.

There is a paucity of up-to-date data regarding average durations of apprenticeships. According to Hogarth and Hasluck’s research in 2003, the average duration of an apprenticeship ranged from one year in retail to three and a half years in engineering.

“The length of apprenticeship by sector, the assumptions made, based upon observed duration in Hogarth and Hasluck’s (2003) study of employer costs described below, are a duration of three and a half years in engineering, three years in construction, two years in business administration, one and a half years in hospitality, and one year in retail trade.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> MacIntosh, S - *A Cost Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications*  
 Dept of Economics University of Sheffield 2007 p.30

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the average duration of an apprenticeship, particularly in less traditional apprenticeship sectors such as retail and business administration, has significantly declined in recent years. Business Administration apprenticeships are routinely completed in less than twelve months and many Retail apprenticeships are significantly shorter. One major retail outlet recently publicised the creation of a 13 week retail apprenticeship.

So if women are predominantly concentrated in apprenticeship schemes which last for one year or less and the longer apprenticeship schemes such as engineering and construction are predominantly undertaken by men, it follows that the number of women on an apprenticeship scheme at any given time will be significantly lower than the number of men.

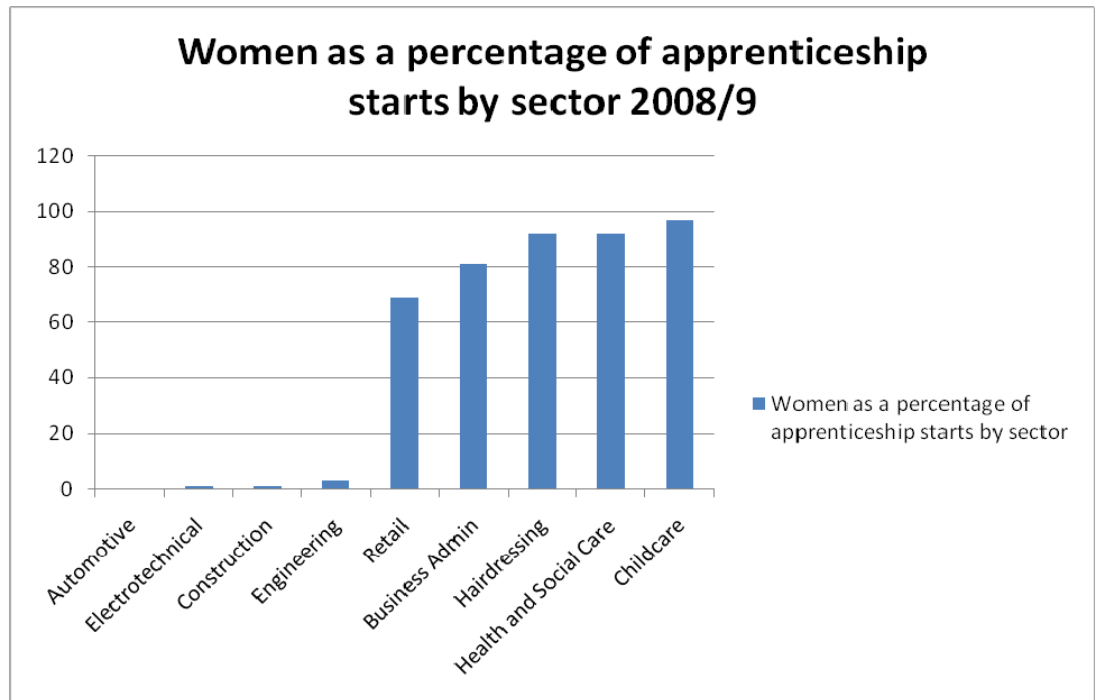
## Occupational segregation

Occupational segregation remains a key feature of apprenticeships. In 2003 the Equal Opportunities Commission undertook a General Formal Investigation into occupational segregation in England. The investigation highlighted the failure of the Modern Apprenticeship system (the precursor to the current apprenticeship system) to address traditional patterns of gender segregation in the world of work.

Further research and analysis in the interim period such as the TUC's *Still more (better paid) jobs for the boys*, the IES *Diversity in Apprenticeships* report, Beck, Fuller, and Unwin's paper, *The Gendered Nature of Apprenticeships*, and the *Business Case for Diversity in Apprenticeships* produced by the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network, have all found that the problem of occupational gender segregation has failed to improve since the EOC's investigation.

Although the Government has taken some action to address how young men and women are represented in apprenticeships (photos of male childcare workers and female construction workers can be found on central Government websites about careers and apprenticeships), a cursory browse through the apprenticeships pages of a random selection of FE college websites illustrates just how little has changed in terms of what is perceived as "women's work". Web pages aimed at prospective apprentices are illustrated with pictures of young women cutting hair and young men in engineering and construction.

Table 2



Source: Statistical First Release, 2008/9

As the table above illustrates, women are over-represented in traditional areas of low pay, low status “women’s work” such as caring and clerical work and retail. By the same token, women are poorly represented – or in some cases, entirely absent – from well paid apprenticeships such as car manufacturing, engineering and construction.

Many of the occupations which have the lowest levels of female participation in apprenticeships – such as engineering, construction, and automotive – are those which are facing the most pressing skills shortages. As Beck, Fuller and Unwin note in their paper on *The Gendered Nature of Apprenticeships*, “There is an important economic dimension to the issue [of occupational gender segregation] in that skills shortages exist in the sectors with least female participation. It follows that increasing the numbers of women entering these sectors would increase the pool of (skilled) labour on which such sectors can draw.”<sup>2</sup>

The issue of occupational gender segregation is not just problematic for women. Men wishing to work in childcare or hairdressing may be dissuaded not only by the low pay prevalent in those sectors but also by stigma and stereotyping attached to “women’s work”.

<sup>2</sup> Beck V , Fuller A and Unwin L *The Gendered Nature of Apprenticeships* Education and Training Vol.47, No.4/5, 2005, pp.301-302

## Occupational segregation and apprentice pay

### **Gender pay gap**

The gender pay gap for apprentices is greater than the gender pay gap in the wider labour market. According to the most recent data on the gender pay gap in apprenticeships (2007), female apprentices earn, on average, 21% less than male apprentices.

The gender pay gap amongst apprentices can to some extent be explained by the deeply entrenched patterns of occupational gender segregation that can be seen in the apprenticeships system.

*'I knew the money was going to be rubbish, but I was living at home so I didn't think it would be that bad; but then I got kicked out and I just couldn't live with it.'*

Laura, YWCA, who started an apprenticeship with a travel firm but had to give up when she could no longer live at home.

### **Low pay**

The table below illustrates the correlation low pay and the prevalence of women in certain apprenticeship sectors and, conversely, the correlation between high pay and the prevalence of men in other sectors.

**Table 3**

Sector	% of women apprentice starts (L2 and L3) in 2007/8	Average pay (per week) 2007
Electrotechnical	1 %	£210
Engineering	3%	£189
Construction	1%	£174
Automotive industry	0%	£170
Retail	69%	£168
Business Admin	81%	£168
Health and Social Care	92%	£157
Childcare	97%	£142
Hairdressing	92%	£109

Source: Statistical First Release 2007/8 and DIUS Apprentice Pay Survey 2007

Occupational gender segregation is clearly a major contributing factor to the gender pay gap amongst apprentices but it is not the only factor. Even within the same sector a significant pay gap can be seen. For example, in 2007 male retail apprentices were paid 16% more than female retail apprentices<sup>3</sup>.

Women are often unaware of the vast difference in pay between different sectors when they make careers choices. There is little in the way of visible information on pay rates on employer websites or the National Apprenticeship Service's

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<sup>3</sup> DIUS Apprentice Pay Survey 2007

Vacancy Matching website which serves as a recruitment portal for prospective apprentices. The Equal Opportunities Commission found in a 2003 survey that 67% of women were not aware of the differences in pay rates for work usually done by women and men. Unsurprisingly, 67% of women aged 16–24 said they would have considered a wider range of career options if they had known about the differences in pay between sectors<sup>4</sup>.

### Case Study

Hairdresser, age 20 - YWCA

“My boyfriend’s a plumber and he was on much more money than me when I was an apprentice. He was on £150 a week when he first started, and now he’s just finished he brings home about £300 a week. So that’s a lot more money, and once I’ve got my NVQ Level 3 and he hasn’t, I will still be qualified higher than him but he will be on more money.

“I mean, the wages that I’m on I could go and work in Topshop or somewhere 9 to 5 and I’d get paid more. I think that’s why a lot of young girls leave hairdressing. It’s because of the pay and the hours.”

Source: YWCA

There are many myths and misconceptions surrounding occupational segregation which serve to justify or explain why women “choose” to enter into low paid, “women’s work” sectors. These myths, such as “women don’t like to get dirty” or “women aren’t interested in the product [in car manufacturing or engineering]” are not supported by any evidence. Furthermore, such myths ignore the fact that so called “women’s work” is often just as dirty and dangerous as “men’s work”. Childcare and hairdressing in particular involve getting dirty can involve working with hazardous substances. Many areas of “women’s work” are just as physically demanding as traditional male sectors.

The gender pay gap also highlights a common assumption that “women’s work” is somehow of less value than “men’s work”. The value of a job to society is not an easy thing to quantify but many of the lowest paid, female dominated sectors are arguably of equal if not greater value than higher paid sectors. Caring for children would be considered by most people to be a valuable, skilled, responsible

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<sup>4</sup> *Free to Choose: Tackling Gender Barriers to Better Jobs*, EOC

and important job, yet childcare apprentices earn on average a third less than electrotechnical apprentices.

## Other factors influencing the gender pay gap in apprenticeships

### **Paid overtime**

Predominantly female apprenticeship sectors are less likely to attract paid overtime payments than some of the higher paying, predominantly male apprenticeships sectors. According to the DIUS Apprenticeship Survey 2007, only 35% of Hairdressing apprentices received overtime payments in contrast to 97% of Engineering apprentices. Overall, in 2007 male apprentices were 21% more likely than female apprentices to receive paid overtime.

### **Pay lower than the minimum pay arrangements<sup>5</sup>**

The DIUS Apprentice Pay Survey 2007 also found that eight per cent of women apprentices in England were paid less than contractual minimum (then £80 per week for those apprentices exempt from the national minimum wage), as compared to two per cent of male apprentices. The sectors which were found to have the highest incidence (11%) of employers paying less than the minimum rate were two female dominated sectors: Hairdressing and Childcare.

### **No pay**

Those sectors which report the highest levels of apprentices receiving no pay whatsoever are also in areas which are predominantly female. In 2007 41% of Retail apprentices, 32% of Health and Social Care, and 30% Customer Service apprentices reported receiving no pay whatsoever. Conversely, those sectors with the highest proportion of male apprentices reported the lowest incidence of non-payment; Electrotechnical (0.5%), Engineering Manufacturing (1%), Construction (1%)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> In England, apprentices who are not entitled to the minimum wage (those under 19 and those in the first year of their apprenticeship) are instead covered by a weekly minimum rate (originally set at £80 per week but increased to £95 per week in 2009) which was set by the Learning and Skills Council. There are no enforcement mechanisms in place to ensure that employers comply with this arrangement therefore, unsurprisingly, the little pay data that we have shows high levels of non-compliance.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid*

## Impact of occupational segregation and the gender pay gap for women apprentices

### **Low pay and implications for National Insurance Contributions and benefits**

The current minimum pay arrangement for apprentices in England who are exempt from the national minimum wage is £95 per week. The exemption applies to apprentices in England who are under 19 or who are in the first twelve months of their apprenticeship.

From October 2010 a new national minimum wage will apply to those apprentices who are currently exempt from the national minimum wage framework. The new rate of £2.50 per hour will not represent an increase in earnings for those apprentices currently working 38 hours or less per week.

The current minimum pay arrangement of £95 per week and the new apprentice minimum wage rate<sup>7</sup> fall short of the threshold for National Insurance Contributions (NIC) which, at the time of writing, is £97 per week. Earning less than the National Insurance Contributions threshold has several implications for low paid apprentices' both while in work and in their future lives. An apprentice earning less than £97 per week will find themselves disadvantaged in terms of their ability to claim the following state benefits:

- the basic State Pension
- the additional State Pension, sometimes called the Second State Pension
- Jobseeker's Allowance - the 'contribution-based' element
- Employment and Support Allowance – the 'contribution-based' element
- Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP)
- Bereavement benefits - Bereavement Allowance, Bereavement Payment and Widowed Parent's Allowance<sup>8</sup>
- Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

For women apprentices earning less than £97 per week, the impact of gaps in National Insurance Contributions on future benefits may be particularly detrimental. In addition to the disadvantages related to reduced pension entitlements and other benefits, women apprentices on low pay may be disadvantaged if they become pregnant and find that they are not eligible for either Maternity Allowance or Statutory Maternity Pay.

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<sup>7</sup> If working 38 hours or less per week.

<sup>8</sup> HMRC website: <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/intro/benefits.htm#1>

This, combined with the lack of flexible working and the full-time nature of most apprenticeships, could act as a significant disincentive for many women.

### **Lower wage returns for women apprentices**

Not only do women apprentices earn less while they are undertaking their training, they also earn less than their male counterparts once fully qualified. Indeed, research in 2007 found that women who had undertaken a traditional apprenticeship earned less than women who had not done an apprenticeship and whose highest qualification was at Level 2. The estimated wage benefits for a woman undertaking Foundation Modern Apprenticeship (Level 2)<sup>9</sup> are just 4%, compared to 20% for a man undertaking the same level apprenticeship.<sup>10</sup>

Furthermore, the research found that lower wage returns for women apprentices were not just due to occupational segregation as the same pattern emerged even within the same sector.

According to a cost benefit analysis of apprenticeships carried out by the University of Sheffield, “*There are no significantly positive wage returns to recognised apprenticeships for women [...]. Note that poor wage returns to apprenticeships for women are not simply a consequence of women working in lower-paying sectors, since when we look within sectors [...] the wage returns to apprenticeships for women are typically lower for women than for men in the same sector.*”<sup>11</sup>

### **Progression**

The TUC’s 2008 report *Still More (Better Paid) Jobs for the Boys*<sup>12</sup> found that women were less likely to undertake Level 3 (Advanced) apprenticeships. While the gap has narrowed since that report, there are still fewer women starting Level 3 apprenticeships than men. In 2008/9 52% of Level 2 apprentice starts were women whereas 48% of Level 3 apprentice starts were women.

Table 4 below shows that while the number of women starting Level 2 apprenticeships has now outstripped the number of men, there are still fewer women than men starting Level 3 apprenticeships.

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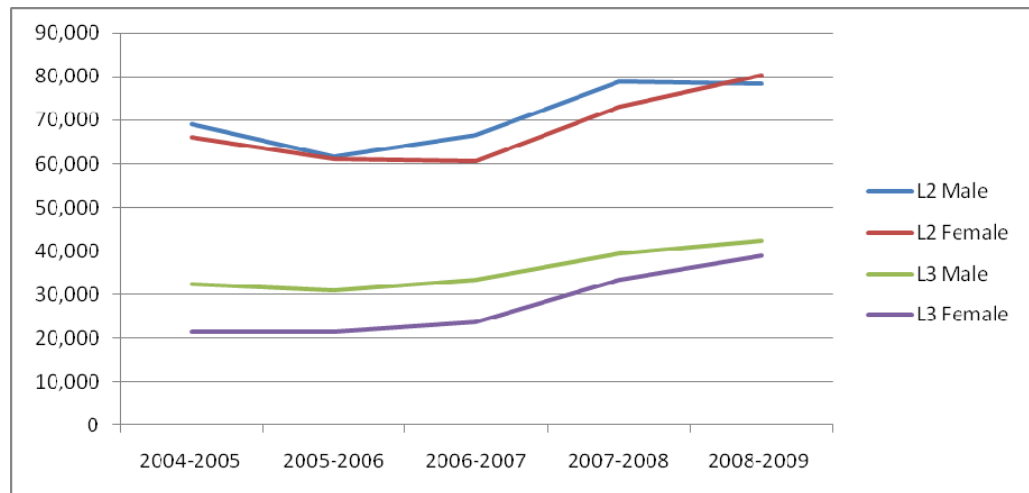
<sup>9</sup> Equivalent to what is now referred to simply as an Apprenticeship (Level 2)

<sup>10</sup> MacIntosh, S - A Cost Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications Department of Economics University of Sheffield 2007 p.21

<sup>11</sup> MacIntosh, S - A Cost Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications Department of Economics University of Sheffield 2007 p.21

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.tuc.org.uk/extras/genderreport.pdf>

Table 4



Source: Statistical First Release March 2010

The government has signalled its intention to focus on progression routes for apprentices and higher level apprenticeships (L3, L4 and progression into HE).

Currently only five Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4) exist; Engineering Technology, ICT Professionals, Purchasing and Supply, Accountancy, and Contact Centres. The government does not currently publish any data on the number or gender breakdown of apprentices at Level 4 so it is impossible to gauge with any accuracy how many women are accessing higher level apprenticeships. Although women are well represented at Level 2 and Level 3 in Contact Centres and Accountancy, they are seriously under-represented in Engineering Technology and ICT apprenticeships which implies that they may also be under-represented in these sectors at Level 4.

With the new political focus on higher level apprenticeships and progression, it is essential that young women are not be left behind or trapped in female dominated apprenticeships which offer fewer opportunities for progression.

### Lack of flexible working

Although in theory an apprentice has the same entitlements as any other employee to request flexible working, in practice flexible working patterns are not common in the apprenticeship system. This may pose a significant barrier to women with childcare or other caring duties who wish to start an apprenticeship.

As the law currently stands, an employee is only entitled to request flexible working after 26 weeks of continuous employment. For women with caring responsibilities on short (less than 12 month) apprenticeships, this may be too long to wait for flexibility.

In Australia part time apprenticeship opportunities were created specifically to address gender inequalities in the apprenticeship system and to enable more women with caring responsibilities to access apprenticeship training.

It is essential that the issue of flexibility is addressed in the UK apprenticeship system and that greater pressure is placed on providers and employers to consider offering part time apprenticeships to allow people to fit them in with their caring commitments.

### What stops young women getting into non-traditional apprenticeships?

Many of the gender inequalities in the apprenticeship system are linked to occupational gender segregation which raises the question of why traditional patterns of gender stereotyping persist and what is preventing women from accessing better paid apprenticeships which offer greater wage returns and more opportunities for progression.

A cursory look at Further Education providers' apprenticeships information online gives some insight into how prevalent sexism and gender stereotyping still are. Many colleges still illustrate their course options with pictures of female hairdressers and carers and male engineers and construction workers.

YWCA regularly hears from young women who complain of poor, stereotyped careers advice on the part of careers advisors and teachers.

*"I dreamt of becoming a motor mechanic but I was given work experience in a Harvester restaurant as a waitress. I don't know whether I ever said what I really wanted to do but no-one ever asked", Young woman, YWCA West Kent*

*"In school in year 9 the girls were encouraged into art and design and textiles whilst the lads were encouraged into design technology" Claire, YWCA Kirkby*

For many young women, family and peer group expectations exert a great deal of pressure in terms of deciding on appropriate career paths. Women also need to see examples of other women following non-traditional career paths. There are still too few visible positive female role models in male dominated sectors.

What barriers are faced by women apprentices once they are in predominantly male workplaces?

Women who want to pursue an apprenticeship scheme in a male dominated sector can face significant barriers from family, school, colleges, friends and employers.

The Women and Work Commission made recommendations about the value of careers advice in terms of providing girls and young women with non-sexist information, advice and guidance in order to encourage and support them to take up non-traditional roles. Whilst efforts have been made to improve careers advice, such as the government's IAG strategy<sup>13</sup> which included a requirement that careers advice should challenge gender stereotypes, there is clearly more that needs to be done to ensure that this happens.

## Case Study

### Claire's Story - YWCA

Claire had always been good at mending things and did a lot of DIY at home. She received no careers advice at school but knew she was interested in engineering. She asked her Dad to get her an engine to practice on but he just laughed at her because she was a girl.

Nevertheless, Claire persevered and got onto an engineering apprenticeship.

*Claire says "I was the first female engineer they had ever employed and they publicised this in the local media. In fact, I was the first female they had ever employed in any hands-on job, the only other women who worked there were in the offices. [But they] were not ready for a female engineer. There were no female toilets or female showers. I had to use the boys' toilets."*

The company eventually converted the smoking room into a toilet and shower block for her but that made the men resent her even more. She was badly bullied and used to end up crying at home at night.

She excelled at her apprenticeship and won Apprentice of the Year but her success only increased the resentment and hostility of her colleagues. She had no one to turn to and in the end she left. *"My foreman was a dinosaur. I was on my own...it was just too hard"* says Claire.

Claire says that if she had had more support from a mentor she would probably have stayed but doing it on her own was just too hard.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://publications.education.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/IAG-Report-v2.pdf>

Once women have overcome the many real and perceived barriers that may be put in their way by family, teachers, careers advisers, and employers and have got onto an apprenticeship scheme in a male dominated sector, they may well find that the working environment and workplace culture is not welcoming to women.

Employers need to be ready to receive girls and young women if their companies and organisations are traditionally male dominated. Many workplaces are still macho environments which may not be very welcoming to young women. Lack of changing facilities or toilets for women can also be a problem in male dominated workplaces. This is not *just* about putting in women's toilets and changing facilities (although this is obviously vital) but is about ensuring that the culture of the workplace welcomes women.

Some apprenticeship courses are conducted at residential centres which require a small minority of young women apprentices to live on-site with hundreds of male apprentices. For many young women who are living away from home for the first time, such a residential arrangement could be a very daunting prospect and may put them off applying.

Women in workplaces where there are few female mentors or role models may also feel that they lack female peer support.

## Conclusions and recommendations for a way forward

Although the problems of occupational segregation, gender stereotyping, poor careers advice, low pay and lack of progression for women in the apprenticeships system is well documented and well understood, little progress has been made in recent years in terms of narrowing the gender pay gap or encouraging more women into non-traditional apprenticeships.

The recommendations below merely reiterate recommendations which have been made time and time again by the EHRC, the EOC before it, the Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network, the Women and Work Commission, several academics YWCA and the TUC.

### **Improve careers advice**

Careers advisors have a crucial role to play in ensuring that young women are aware of the wide range of career options open to them including apprenticeships in traditionally male sectors such as science, engineering and technology. Careers advice should broaden horizons and challenge stereotypes.

Sector Skills Councils, employers, and unions also have a role to play in visiting schools and arranging open days for local school pupils. Some employers and unions in the print sector and in the automotive industry have successfully run open days especially for girls at local schools.

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children, and Learning Act (2009) introduced a requirement for careers advisors to offer pupils information about apprenticeships as well as academic routes. This is a welcome development and it is essential that this advice is offered to boys and girls alike and that no one is discouraged from choosing an atypical apprenticeship path.

### **Promote best practice in recruitment procedures**

Seven out of ten employers fail to monitor applications in terms of gender<sup>14</sup>. Many unions have had great success in influencing employers' recruitment procedures to ensure that women are given fair access to non-traditional apprenticeship opportunities.

### **Publicise positive images of women in industry**

YWCA have found that positive images of women in non-traditional sectors are hugely important in raising the aspirations and broadening the horizons of the young women that they work with. Unions are well placed to identify and promote case studies and examples of women in non-traditional sectors.

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<sup>14</sup> Beck V, Fuller A and Unwin L *The Gendered Nature of Apprenticeships* Education and Training Vol.47, No.4/5, 2005, pp.301-302

### **Publicise apprentice pay rates**

Too few employers advertise rates of pay for apprenticeship schemes on their own websites or on the National Apprenticeship Service's vacancy matching website. If more women were aware of the pay attached to non-traditional apprenticeship schemes, they will be able to make more informed careers choices.

The TUC and YWCA believes there should be a duty on employers and on NAS to clearly and transparently advertise apprentice pay rates if the apprenticeship is supported by public funding.

### **Making the most of procurement**

In 2003 the EOC recommended that procurement should be used to challenge gender segregation. This view was endorsed by the DTI select committee and the Women and Work Commission yet little progress appears to have been made. The TUC and YWCA support this recommendation.

Unions have a role to play in negotiating with employers to ensure that procurement processes promote best practice in terms of equality and diversity.

### **Equality and diversity training**

Employers should carry out equality and diversity training for all staff to challenge sexist stereotypes and behaviour in the workplace.

Organisations such as UKRC (see contacts) who carry out such training in the science, engineering and technology sectors report that this is an incredibly effective way of raising awareness amongst men of what the real and perceived barriers to entering a male-dominated workplace might be for a young woman.

### **Mentoring and peer support networks in the workplace**

YWCA, through its work with young women apprentices, knows how valuable and important mentoring and peer support networks are. YWCA encourages peer support networks and peer mentoring and unions are also well placed to provide the mentoring element of an apprenticeship and may well have female reps in the workplace who can provide informal peer support to female apprentices.

The TUC offers a course for union reps on mentoring apprentices. Organisations such as the UKRC (see Contacts and Further Information) offer national female peer support and mentoring networks in science, technology and engineering sectors.

### **Improve pay and conditions**

Women apprentices are paid less than male apprentices and are more likely than men to receive the lowest minimum payments or to receive no pay at all. The Low Pay Commission should pay special consideration to how the apprentice minimum wage rate will impact upon female apprentices.

Furthermore, the government should ensure that the apprentice minimum wage rate should be increased at least to a level where apprentices are able to make National Insurance contributions and to receive maternity benefits and sick pay.

### **Prioritise collection of data**

No new pay data for apprentices has been produced since 2007. Given the worrying size of the gender pay gap in apprenticeships, the monitoring of apprentice pay should be prioritised by government.

Data on participation in apprenticeships broken down by gender should also be published as well as data on numbers of apprentices undertaking Level 4 Advanced Apprenticeships.

### **Flexible working**

The Government should consider the feasibility of promoting part-time apprenticeship routes in order to enable more women with caring responsibilities to access apprenticeship training.

A similar model to the Australian example could be implemented in the UK and would make apprenticeships a viable option for a wider and more diverse range of applicants.

### **Government diversity pilot schemes**

In 2009 the National Apprenticeship Service announced that it would be tendering for “Critical Mass” diversity pilots which would involve funding specific projects designed to improve equality (all equality strands, not just gender) within the apprenticeship system.

This was a welcome and important step in providing practical support to NGOs and employers who wanted to tackle inequalities in the apprenticeship system. A piece of research by the Institute of Employment Studies<sup>15</sup> was commissioned to underpin and shape the pilots.

Unfortunately, almost one year on, the tenders still have not yet been issued so no pilots have yet taken place.

The TUC and YWCA would like to see these pilots go ahead and to be used to promote innovation and best practice amongst employers with regard to addressing under representation of women in apprenticeships.

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<sup>15</sup> Marangazov, R et al - *Research to Shape Critical Mass Pilots to Address Under-Representation in Apprenticeships*, IES 2009



## Further information and references

*Still more (better paid) jobs for the boys* – TUC 2008

*Research to shape Critical Mass Pilots to address under-representation in Apprenticeships* - Institute of Employment Studies 2009

*Daring to be different: The case for diversity in apprenticeships* – EHRC 2007

*Free to Choose: Tackling Gender Barriers to Better Jobs*, EOC

*The Gendered Nature of Apprenticeships* – Unwin and Fuller, Education and Training Vol.47

*A Cost Benefit Analysis of Apprenticeships and Other Vocational Qualifications*  
- MacIntosh, Department of Economics University of Sheffield

## Contacts

TUC <http://www.tuc.org.uk>

YWCA - <http://www.ywca.org.uk/resources/category/apprenticeships>

NAS – [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

Unionlearn – [www.unionlearn.org.uk](http://www.unionlearn.org.uk)

More Than One Rung campaign - <http://www.morethanonerung.org>

UKRC (UK Resource Centre) <http://www.ukrc4setwomen.org>

WISE (Women into Engineering and Science) <http://www.wisecampaign.org.uk>

EHRC - <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com>

Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network – [www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk](http://www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk)