

Engaging Black and Minority Ethnic in Apprenticeships

Consultation Report



A report commissioned by
Skills Development Scotland



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1. Introduction.....	04
- 2. Attendance - Young BME Individuals.....	05
- 3. Attendance - BME Parents.....	06
- 4. Understanding apprenticeships.....	07
- 5. Barriers.....	08
- 6. Overcoming barriers.....	09
- 7. Features and benefits	10
- 8. Career aspirations	11
- 9. Concluding comments	12
 Appendix A	 13

1. INTRODUCTION

It is the aim of Skills Development Scotland (SDS) that all individuals have equality of opportunity in relation to apprenticeships. Work in this area is undertaken through a range of activities including project based interventions to test methods of engagement and promotion, delivery of continuous professional development to internal staff and training providers to enable them to better understanding and be more confident in relation to equality related matters, and by the introduction of incentives that support apprentices including enhanced funding and the Ethnic intersectionality initiative.

SDS have a considerable array of information both internally and from recognised external sources that they use to inform the decisions and actions they take. They report on activities, actions and results through their Annual Equality Action plan update, across 4 main groups that have been identified as significantly at risk of lack of participation in apprenticeships. These groups are gender, Disabled people, Care experienced individuals and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). Statistical information is reported against demographic populations for each group across Scotland.

Engagement rates from BME people are considerably lower than their demographic population and SDS, in discussions with the Scottish Apprenticeship Advisory Board for Equality, has asked for some insight as to any potential reason behind this. Statistical information also suggests that once in an apprenticeship, BME individuals are just as likely to complete their qualification as their non BME counterparts therefore the issue appears to stem from lack of engagement in the programme initially

CEMVO were asked to conduct a piece of consultative work. This would comprise of 2 separate sessions, one with young BME individuals, one with BME parents. Individuals would be advised of the purpose of the consultation and appropriate consent forms for participation on the consultation were completed. In addition, and again with consent, the events would be recorded to enable any additional detailed information to be reviewed for the purpose of this report.

In collaboration with the SDS Equality and Marketing Teams, a series of questions were devised. CEMVO representatives facilitated the events. For ease, the feedback within the report has been aligned to each event, and the questions within each. A copy of the information questions is attached (Appendix A).



2. ATTENDANCE

Young BME individuals

TABLE 1
Attendance by Gender

Male (10)	66.7%
Female (5)	33.3%

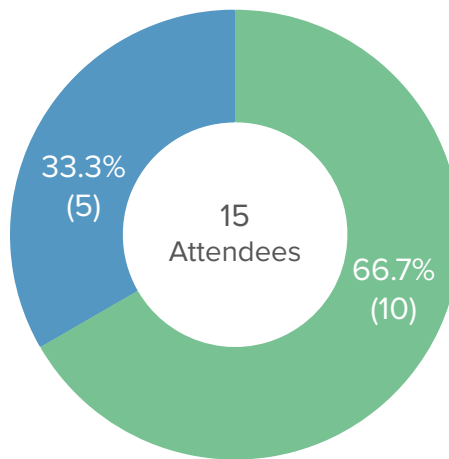


TABLE 2
Attendance by Ethnic Origin

Pakistani (12)	80%
African (1)	6.6%
Chinese(1)	6.6%
Indian (1)	6.6%

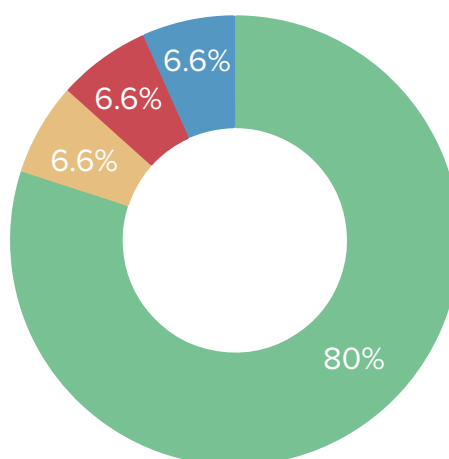
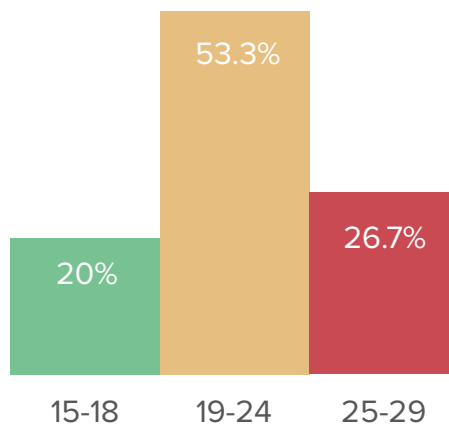


TABLE 3
Attendance by Age

15-17 (3)	20%
18-24 (8)	53.3%
25-29(4)	26.7%



3. ATTENDANCE

BME Parents

TABLE 1
Attendance by Gender

■ Male (2)	66.7%
■ Female (12)	33.3%

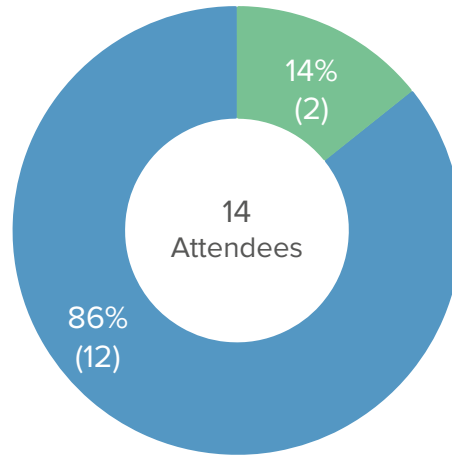
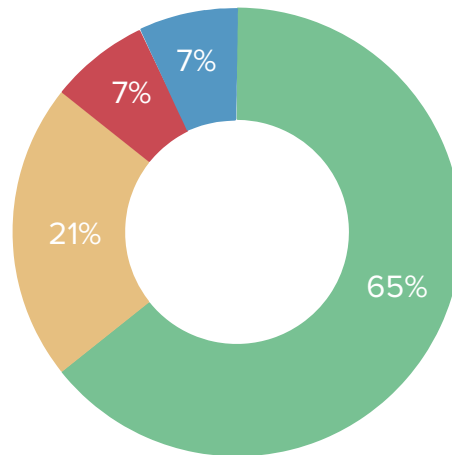


TABLE 2
Attendance by Ethnic Origin

■ Pakistani (9)	80%
■ African (3)	6.6%
■ Chinese(1)	6.6%
■ Iraqi (1)	6.6%

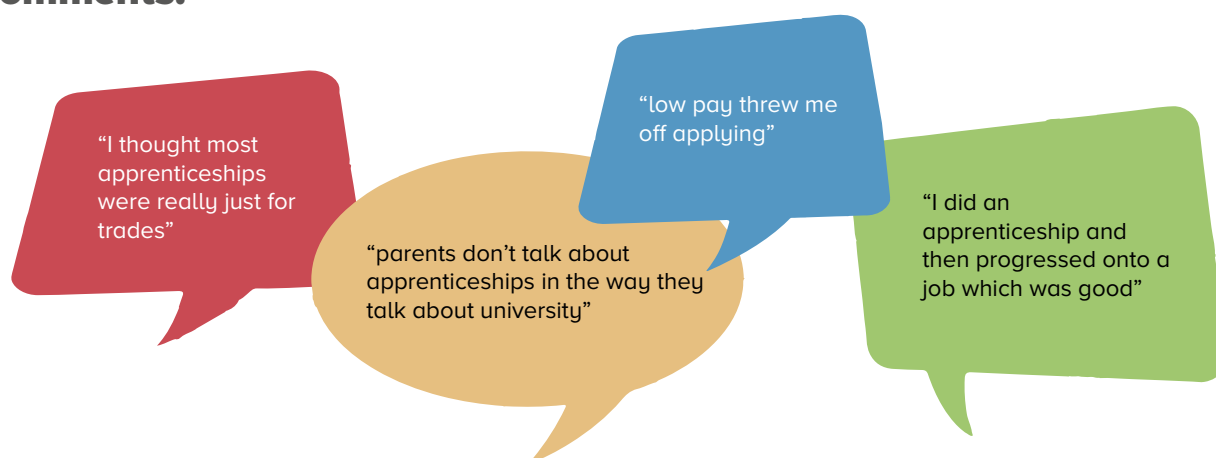


4. UNDERSTANDING APPRENTICESHIPS

Young BME individuals

Some of the individuals had heard about apprenticeships, though some were not sure what they were. Some of the individuals stated that with the conversations within the school, once they had suggested going to university, then only conversations regarding university took place. Most of the individuals thought that apprenticeships were more trade based i.e. building, electrician, joinery and not really related to other areas of work. A couple of individuals felt that apprenticeships could have been a good routeway for them but that no one had really explained how they got into one. There were a few individuals on the call who felt they have left school, and no have no real direction now, but that apprenticeships could be a routeway for them and were keen to speak to someone about this from SDS. A couple of individuals had completed an apprenticeship.

Comments:



BME Parents

Some of the individuals had heard about apprenticeships, though some were not sure what they were. Most of the individuals thought that apprenticeships were more trade based i.e. building, electrician, joinery and not really related to other areas of work. Most of the individuals felt that careers such as a doctor or lawyer were more aligned to the careers they wanted their children to have. A couple of individuals felt that apprenticeships could have been a good routeway for their child but that no one had really explained how they got into one. Of the apprenticeships that some individuals were aware of, they felt to be more aligned to boys rather than girls in terms of information they had seen.

Comments:



5. BARRIERS

Young BME individuals

Would you consider doing an apprenticeship?

Most of the individuals stated that having heard about what apprenticeships were, they might have considered them, however this was caveated by the fact that most of the individuals felt that apprenticeships were not as valuable in the labour market as a degree. Of those who had investigated apprenticeships as an option, they felt that in some instances the wages being paid were too low to make this a viable option for them, and that it somehow made the apprenticeships an undervalued option. Very few of the individuals knew the differences between Foundation, modern and graduate.

Comments:

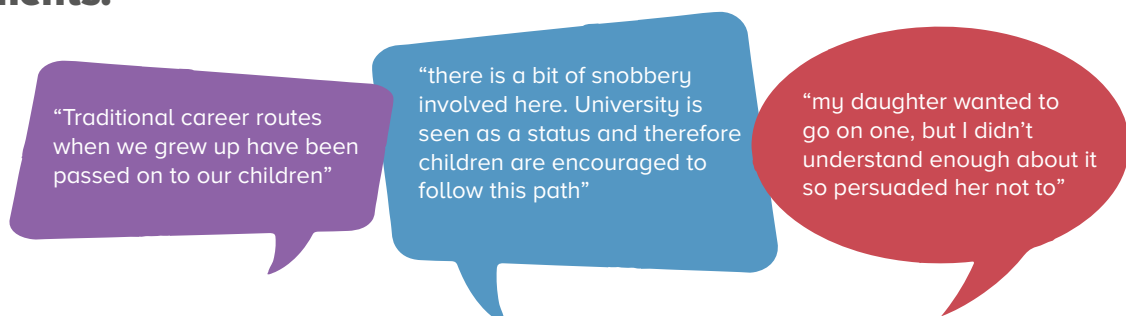


BME Parents

Would you consider your child doing an apprenticeship?

Most of the individuals stated that they did not understand enough about apprenticeships to support their child’s choice in this area. Nearly all individuals advised they would not know where to go to find out more information about apprenticeships. Some individuals suggested that information in different languages might help some parents to understand apprenticeships better. Nearly all individuals outlined the transitions path they had taken namely school, driving test, university. Without other options known to them, this is the sort of pathway they would envisage for their child. No individuals knew the differences between Foundation, modern and graduate.

Comments:



6. OVERCOMING BARRIERS

Young BME individuals

What might make you more likely to consider an apprenticeship?

Some of the individuals advised that if there were more examples on SDS websites and in schools about where an apprentice would take you, that might encourage more people to participate. Better pay rates would also be beneficial. Some individuals mentioned that they had looked at the app.scot website but that of the apprenticeships they looked at, the minimum requirements were more than they had so they didn't look again. Graduate apprenticeships need to be promoted as nearly all the individuals did not know what they were, and some thought you had to be a graduate to apply.

Comments:

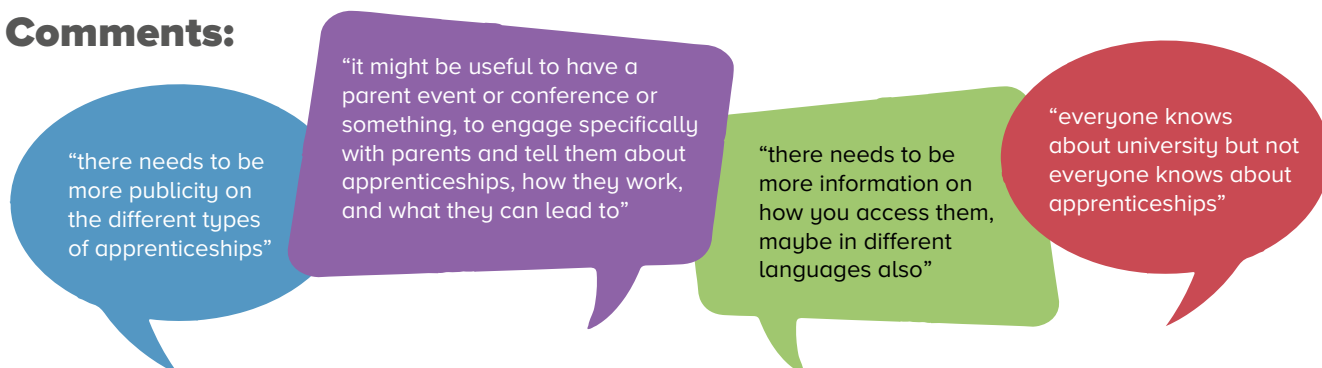


BME Parents

What might make you more likely to consider an apprenticeship for your child?

Some of the individuals advised that if there should be more examples more widely promoted about where an apprentice would take you. That might encourage more people to participate. Graduate apprenticeships need to be promoted as nearly all the individuals did not know what they were. It also needs reaffirmed that a Graduate Apprenticeship is as good as the normal degree route, and that it is not perceived as a lower qualification. The range and scope of apprenticeships should also be promoted more as of the parents who knew something about apprenticeships, most thought that they were for trade related industries and most thought, therefore not appropriate for their child as their career should be more in professional services

Comments:



7. FEATURES AND BENEFITS

Young BME individuals

BME Parents

These are some of the features of an apprenticeship. Which do each of you in the group find the most important and why?

The idea behind this question was to “rate” the features in order of most important. However, the format of the event did not really allow for this. A general discussion took place on the features listed and everyone agreed these were all important.



8. CAREER ASPIRATIONS



Young BME individuals

The format of the event did not really allow for detailed information to be captured. There was a sense through the conversations that a good salary, and a good job were ambitions of work. It was also commented that on an apprenticeship you have a job at the end but with college or university, you still need to find a job. Most indicated that university was their chosen option.

BME Parents

The format of the event did not really allow for detailed information to be captured. There was a sense through the conversations that following a university degree route would be the preferred routeway for their child. This was mainly due to expectation from their own career journey, that degrees carry more value in the labour market and that other potential options were not well known. Most individuals thought professional services such as lawyers and doctors would withstand changes in the economy unlike some other vocations. Most indicated that university was also their chosen option because of promotion in school and that the university journey was understood by most people.

9. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The size and scale of this consultative work was not large enough to allow any definitive conclusions to be made. What it does however provide is an insight into the nuances within EM communities that may impact their ability to engage and access apprenticeships.

Based on the two focus groups, it appears that there is a lack of awareness, knowledge and understanding of apprenticeships in general and this extends to the types of apprenticeships available, and the breadth of apprenticeships offered in Scotland (foundation, modern, graduate).

Furthermore, apprenticeships appear to be stigmatised, especially from an EM parent perspective. The prevailing perception being that apprenticeships are a below par alternative to university and therefore not a choice they wish their children to aspire to. Furthermore, the focus group findings suggest that a direct correlation between a child's career choice and parental influence exists, meaning that EM young people are therefore less likely to see apprenticeships as a possible career path and that any change of perception requires work with both young people and parents.

The comments also show that other than parents as influencers on job/career prospects, schools or career guidance teachers, also play a part in determining a potential career choice at school age. However, the majority of the young people in the focus group felt that the schools were perhaps out of touch with the complete world of work and therefore the advice was limited to their sphere of knowledge. This knowledge was limited to only some of the apprenticeships available and mainly focused on a path that led to higher education. The consequence of this left pupils with limited options to make informed career choices.

On a positive note, the focus group participants were not opposed to the idea of apprenticeships and this was further solidified when discussing the features of apprenticeships. They unanimously agreed that all the features listed were important and advantageous and were factors that they would consider when progressing from school to the world of work.

Overall participants felt that university was still their chosen option, yet if the features that participants deemed important are considered, it is possible that apprenticeships could be seen as more desirable. This would however require a more targeted response around awareness, marketing, and engagement.

Based on this report more work is required to develop a detailed picture of engagement rates in Scotland. The below are potential ways forward to do this:

- Conduct a larger scale study to ascertain EM communities' perceptions of apprenticeships, bearing in mind that EM communities are not a homogenous group and a complex mix of cultures, religions, with varying affiliations and differing family and education values.
- Work with schools to widen world view of career choices and routes to work out of school and either train career advisors or hold open days to educate and expand students depth of knowledge in this area.
- Myth Busting – campaign on apprenticeships that focuses on types, the fields of work covered, their value in the labour market and career development and progression as well as dispelling the notion that apprenticeships are male orientated.
- More intense engagement with EM parents either through schools career fairs or EM community open days to help them develop a more rounded understanding of apprenticeships as a choice after school and also help align perceptions to alternative status to university rather than below par.
- Have more visible EM apprentices in promotion and advertising campaigns and develop EM apprentices as 'brand ambassadors' to engage with schools with a high EM presence and within the community.
- Develop a dedicated and easy to navigate website that allows the user to check if apprenticeships are for them through answering a series of questions of their chosen career path.
- Develop a project with a partner organisation that has an acute understanding of EM communities across Scotland to deliver the work above.

Appendix A

Introduction CEMVO Scotland & SDS: Fiaz Khan.

Facilitation: Fiaz Khan, CEMVO Scotland and Naheed Asghar, Pollokshields Development Agency.

Duration: 1 hour discussion

Overview

What the interview will entail and why we're doing it

Gathering information about people's perceptions on apprenticeships to help SDS improve its services. We will be recording but confidential as per the consent form. We want to increase BME participation in apprenticeships. We do recognise that the term BME does not necessarily reflect enough of the individuals that make up the overall heading. We apologise if this is not in line with your thinking, but we need to use a term to capture all the work we do in this area as opposed to listing each ethnic minority individually, for reporting purposes. We sincerely hope this does not cause any offence.

How we will use the info

We will record the session; no names will be recorded, and the information will be summarised by CEMVO and then presented back to SDS. If anyone in the group is not 16 years old, we will not record the session but make notes instead.

Consent and data protection

Everyone should have signed the consent forms and returned this to CEMVO prior to this discussion.

Section 1: General information about our sample	Reason/Prompt
	CEMVO to ask these questions in the 15-minute set up so they are not recorded given their sensitive nature.
Are you an individual or a parent / in school or work	
if a parent - did, they do Higher education?	We just want to understand what parents own career pathway as and if it has an impact on perceptions
Age	We want to know age so we can see if there are any difference in perception due to age. Not asking the age of the parent
Gender	We want to know if there is any difference between gender and their perception of apprenticeships
Ethnic Group	We want to improve participation recognising the differences across BME

Section 2: Understanding apprenticeships	Reason/Prompt
Have you heard of apprenticeships?	
Yes: How did you hear about them?	
Can you describe what an apprenticeship is?	
No: move to the next section. CEMVO can briefly explain what an apprenticeship is	An apprenticeship is a real job where you learn, gain experience and get paid. As well as gaining practical skills and experiences in the workplace, you spend time with a learning provider such as a college or university. By completing an apprenticeship, you'll have a recognised qualification and the skills and experience to progress in your career.
Section 3: Barriers	Reason/Prompt
Would you consider doing an apprenticeship?	For Individual
Would you like your child to consider doing an apprenticeship?	For parent
If yes - why?	
If no - why?	Parveen this are some prompt for you depending what response you get. These are key questions so might need prompts. Is it about the lack of understanding, about the makeup of apprenticeship, is it about not knowing what kind of apprenticeships are available, is it as a result of bad experience or hearing about bad experiences of others? Is it that you haven't heard of anyone doing one in the field you are looking for? Do you not see an apprenticeship as valuable as going to college or uni? Is the rate of pay too low compared with other routes. It is seen as just a training route
Section 4: Overcoming barriers	Reason/Prompt
What might make you more likely to consider an apprenticeship?	Prompts could be if you could see people in similar circumstances, if you hear where the apprenticeship leads to career wise, if you understand better about the application process. If you knew what was available in the geographical area you live in
How do you make decisions about your future/career - where do you go for information?	For Individual
How do you and your child make decisions about their future/career - where do you go for information?	For Parent

Section 5: Features and benefits	Reason/Prompt
<p>These are some of the features of Apprenticeship. Which do each of you in the group find the most important and why?</p>	
<p>Get qualified – achieve a nationally recognised and accredited qualification</p> <p>Gain skills – gain transferable real-life skills that are valued by employers and industry</p>	
<p>Get paid – you will be in paid employment while gaining your qualification and, as your learning is funded, there is no cost to you</p> <p>Easy to access – accessible to new and existing employees who are looking to upskill or retrain</p>	
<p>A wide range of industries – available in a wide range of growth industries that offer strong career prospects for the future</p>	
<p>Earn while you learn – gain a qualification while in paid employment</p>	
<p>Progress your career – develop transferable, industry-recognised skills and experience that are valued by employers and universities</p>	
Section 6: Career aspirations	Reason/Prompt
<p>What do you want to do when you leave school?</p>	<p>For Individual</p>
<p>What do you want your child to do when they leave school?</p>	<p>For Parent</p>



CEMVO Enterprises CIC
95-107 Lancefield Street, Glasgow G1 8HX

Tel: 0141 423 23258
www.cemvoenterprisescic.org.uk