Foreword

Like many countries, England has identified in apprenticeship a model of vocational learning which has not only stood the test of time, but is also relevant to the requirements of modern economies. England has committed itself to a very ambitious programme to develop apprenticeship, with a new funding arrangement in the form of an employer levy, and major reforms of the apprenticeship system including the development of new apprenticeship standards created in close consultation with employers, and an overall aim of increasing both the quality and quantity of apprenticeships. The energy which England is currently investing in these reforms is impressive and encouraging. But many challenges remain in implementing current reforms effectively, and realising the goal of a world class apprenticeship system.

This OECD report, Apprenticeship in England, United Kingdom, supports the reform efforts, by comparing the reforms in England with the experience and example of other countries. Among many recommendations, the report argues for more general education in all apprenticeships for young people; an increased emphasis on supporting work-based learning; and clear logical relationships between apprenticeship and the technical qualifications now under development. Degree apprenticeships potentially represent an important opportunity, but they need to involve a real integration of study in a university with work-based learning, not just a part-time degree plus a job.

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