

THE BIG READ ... apprenticeships

The tutors...

THERE are 27 tutors at the College of Further Education who help teach the apprentices and Mrs Harradine says they are the unsung heroes. Rick Upham teaches the electrical diploma. He said he has seen an increase in the number of mature students taking up apprenticeships. 'We have got a new NVQ course that we are teaching this year. It is a global course. We have had 12 people enrol for an apprenticeship this year and we have 70 still completing their apprenticeship. I would say at least a quarter are over 18 and a fifth are 25 and upwards. A lot of the mature apprentices have been in the trade for years but haven't got a qualification, so they come to us.' Trevor Barnard is the programme manager for construction. 'In Guernsey we take a broad range of ability,' he said. 'We have a 96% pass rate and the ones who drop out are usually the ones who have made the wrong choice of career. Our students often tell us they enjoy coming to the college - there is a wonderful rapport here.'

The apprentice appeal

Richard Moore - trowel trades



Richard Moore was jointly named Apprentice of the Year. (1179213)

RICHARD MOORE finished his five-year apprenticeship in trowel trades this year. The 22-year-old, who works as a stonemason at Granite Le Pelley, jointly won the Apprentice Of The Year with Antoinette Martin. He was also named the Building Trade Federation Apprentice of the Year. 'It was nice to have won - I'm glad all my hard work has been recognised,' said Mr Moore, who now has an advanced diploma in trowel trades. Mr Moore, who used to live in Alderney,

began his apprenticeship after completing his A-levels at the Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre. 'I didn't really know what I wanted to do when I finished school,' he said. 'I did my A-levels and did work experience here. I liked it, so I decided to take it on. I love doing stonework because you do the decorative things - what you do is what you see when it's finished.' Mr Moore has now started studying for a BTEC Higher National Diploma in building studies.

It might not be quite the ruthless business battle overseen by Lord Sugar in the reality TV series, but many of Guernsey's aspiring apprentices have a fight on their hands to find an employer. But the opportunity to earn while you learn is still attracting more school-leavers than ever to seek out an apprenticeship, as **Anna Brehaut** reports

THE recession and the cost of off-island education is attracting more school-leavers to look for apprenticeships, according to the Guernsey Apprenticeship Scheme manager.

And as a result, Alma Harradine is hoping more employers will sign up to the scheme. Currently, there are 350 apprentices in Guernsey and between 300 and 350 employers.

But Mrs Harradine said she has received a number of calls from people wanting to start an apprenticeship but who are unable to find a job.

'I think the big reason apprenticeships are so popular is that they allow islanders to work and gain a qualification at the same time,' she said.

'If you can do the bulk of your training on-island, then it saves a lot of money and you're earning while you're learning.

'To be an apprentice, you do need to find a job. This year we have had quite a few people calling who can't find a job.

'I can help anyone wanting to be an apprentice by providing them with a list of the employers registered with us.'

Mrs Harradine said there was always a bigger demand for jobs as an apprentice than there was supply.

'For those who can't find a job it is heart-breaking, but I always tell

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Guernsey Apprenticeship Scheme manager Alma Harradine

them to persevere - there are no age restrictions.'

She said one area where they could do with more employers was painting and decorating.

'Signing up with the apprenticeship scheme is a win-win for an employer,' said Mrs Harradine.

'This is because the States of Guernsey pays for the course, which is over £1,000 a year, and we also give the employer a financial subsidy for the one day a week that they are losing the apprentice while they are learning at college.'

She added that, so far this year, nine new employers have come forward to join the scheme.

Each apprentice attends the College of Further Education for one day a week. Training frameworks for each trade category have been developed with the assistance of the local trade associations.

The apprenticeships range from three to five years long.

The scheme currently offers 24 skills, which include hairdressing, catering, painting and associated trades, horticulture, building and construction and engineering.

For trades where training cannot be done on-island, such as panel beating, paint spraying, jewellery and electronics, the apprentices can go off-island. Funding is provided by the States, through the Education Department, for tuition costs, travel and accommodation within a set budget.

Payment costs incurred beyond the budget amount are agreed through negotiation between employers and Mrs Harradine.

The Education Department holds an employer contract with all employers signed onto the scheme. The department also has a learning agreement with the apprentice, while the employer has a contract of employment with the apprentice.

Jenny Hall - painting and decorating

BEING able to take part in a painting and decorating apprenticeship was a life-saving experience for Jenny Hall. The 26-year-old, who finished her five-year course last year, said without the apprenticeship scheme she did not know what she would have done. Miss Hall was the first woman to complete a painting and decorating apprenticeship in the island. She is now working for Ravenscroft Construction and is enjoying every minute of it.

'I was at a loose end before - I had tried working in shops and office work but I didn't like any of it,' said Miss Hall.

'Then one of my friends came along and told me about the apprenticeship scheme. She said she had always liked painting and decorating.

'As a kid I was always painting my bedrooms and was always artistic - I have never been one to just sit down.' Miss Hall had done a link course while at St Peter Port Secondary School in engineering.

Being the only girl on her apprenticeship course did not put her off.

'There is always a bit of banter but it's



Jenny Hall was the first woman in Guernsey to complete a painting and decorating apprenticeship. (1179212)

always friendly.' She said she would recommend the apprenticeship scheme to others.

Antoinette Martin - architectural technology



Architectural technologist apprentice Antoinette Martin is three years into her five-year apprenticeship. (Picture by Tom Tardif, 1177957)

ANTOINETTE MARTIN began her apprenticeship as an architectural technologist after finishing her A-levels. And she has not looked back since. 'I had never been that fussed about going to university and when I did work experience, I found out I could do what I wanted to do as an apprenticeship,' said the 21-year-old. 'I didn't know that they offered apprenticeships for architecture

because they never really spoke about it at school.'

Miss Martin went to Les Beaucamps High and studied for her A-levels at the Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre. She is currently three years through her five-year apprenticeship and is undertaking the higher national certificate in the built environment. She works for Cresswell, Cuttle and Dyke and hopes to complete a degree in

architectural technology when she has completed her apprenticeship.

Miss Martin was jointly named the Apprentice of the Year with Richard Moore. 'I really enjoy it - you're earning while you're learning and everything you learn at college you can put into practice at work. 'It's really useful to your work life.' She added that finding employment was not easy but she persevered.

'For those who can't find a job it is heart-breaking, but I always tell them to persevere - there are no age restrictions'

Guernsey Apprenticeship Scheme manager Alma Harradine

Jordan de Carteret - trowel trades

TROWEL TRADE apprentice Jordan de Carteret travels the extra distance to become a tradesman.

The 18-year-old from Sark has to make the 20-minute journey to Guernsey in his own rib once a week to ensure he doesn't miss a class. Despite the extra effort, Mr de Carteret would not want to do anything else. 'I really, really enjoy it - we learn so much, the tutors are great and at the end of the day it will help me to get a job anywhere in the world,' he said.

'This year I have the class on a Tuesday so I come down every Monday evening - sometimes it does get a bit rough, especially in the winter, but I prefer using my own rib rather than a scheduled boat.'

Now in his fourth year of the five-year course, Mr de Carteret plans to return to his homeland, where he would like to continue to work for his employer, Phil Goodwin.



Jordan de Carteret travels from Sark once a week to attend classes. (1179214)

'The things I have learnt at college have really helped me when working with Phil so I would

definitely recommend anyone to take a course, even if you are from Sark - it is well worth it.'

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