

New Leadership appointments at the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network

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- New Chair, Vice Chair and co-Vice Chair appointed
- The network of over 560 employer advocates for apprenticeships
- The new appointments will work towards encouraging even more employers to engage with apprenticeships

Today, 25 November, the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (AAN) has announced three new members of its leadership team. They will be responsible for accelerating its mission to connect more employers with apprenticeships; while inspiring young people to take advantage of the opportunities technical education offers to boost their careers.

The AAN comprises of over 560 employer ambassadors (35% are SMEs) and around 400 apprentice ambassadors (current and past apprentices) who volunteer their time and efforts to act as advocates and champions of apprenticeships. They use their influence and their compelling personal stories to encourage more employers and young people to engage with high-quality apprenticeships.

Minister for Skills Alex Burghart said:

The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network plays a vital role ensuring employers and individuals recognise apprenticeships as a key route to business and career success.

Skills, schools and family are the core of our mission as a government, and these ambassadors will help us to keep delivering for the next generation.

I would like to thank all the Network members for their commitment to apprenticeships, and particularly the newly appointed leadership team for stepping in to the pivotal role of leading and growing the exceptional ambassador network.

Anthony Impey MBE – a serial entrepreneur and experienced business leader with a track-record of starting, scaling, and operating businesses in the tech and skills sectors – takes over as Chair for a period of 3 years.

Anthony is currently the Chief Executive Officer of Be the Business – an organisation working to boost productivity amongst the UK's 5.9 million small businesses. He is an accomplished board-level executive with extensive experience of apprenticeships and skills policy. As well as being an Ambassador for over 9 years, Anthony has served as Deputy Chair of the London AAN. He is also a member of the Secretary of State's (for Education) Business Engagement Forum that aims to develop skills policy that meets the needs of

employers. In addition, Anthony also served as Chair of the DfE's Apprenticeship Stakeholder Board for 5 years.

He received his MBE in 2018 for his services to apprenticeships and small businesses. He spent 5 years at the Federation of Small Businesses leading its skills and apprenticeship policy. He also authored the Open University's Business Barometer report on skills and apprenticeships in 2020.

Anthony said:

I am absolutely delighted to have been invited to take on this role and lead the AAN at this critical time.

The Network's role to encourage and inspire more employers – of all sizes- to get involved in apprenticeships has never been more important. These are tough times for employers, and apprenticeships need to play a big role in building a high-skill, high-wage economy. The AAN's reputation, relationships, and successes are all vital to make this happen.

I'm looking forward to working with my fellow leaders regionally and nationally to shape the future and drive the reach of the Network.

Finally, I would like to thank former Chair Jason Holt CBE whose tireless work means I'm taking over a trusted and respected body.

Kathryn Marshall has been appointed as Vice Chair.

Kathryn joined Lloyds Banking Group in 1995 and currently leads on delivering its apprenticeship strategy and is responsible for the delivery of thirty different programmes from level 2 to level 7 across the Group. Having seen so many colleagues benefit from completing apprenticeships, Kathryn started the level 7 Senior Leaders Apprenticeship to experience the benefits of applied learning through an apprenticeship. Externally, Kathryn is an active member of the Apprenticeship Diversity Champions Network, and Chair of the Financial Services Trailblazer Group.

Kathryn said:

Having been an Ambassador for the past 4 years, I am truly excited to secure the role as Vice Chair. I'm looking forward to working alongside all current and future Ambassadors to promote apprenticeships and drive up opportunities and quality.

Leading the apprenticeship delivery in Lloyds Banking Group has given me the chance to see first-hand the benefits that apprenticeships bring to individuals and organisations of all sizes.

Emma Beauchamp has taken on a new role as co-Vice Chair. This new position has been created to enable an Apprentice Ambassador to lead on national issues – especially as we complete the integration of the Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network (YAAN) with the AAN.

Emma is well-known to the Network through her work as Chair of the YAAN in the North East. She has been an Ambassador since 2018.

Emma said:

I feel very proud and honoured to have been offered this position. This is a great platform to lead and serve our Ambassadors in inspiring the next generation of apprentices.

I'm keen to use my own insights from working in an SME to ignite interest in other SMEs to engage with apprenticeships. I've always had a strong passion for apprenticeships; ever since completing my own. I am all about championing the apprenticeship route for what it is; which is an equally valuable and worthwhile alternative to university, or a great way into a new career.

Emma joined Gestamp as a Commercial Apprentice in 2016, before later moving to Northumbria Optical Coatings Ltd as a Technical Sales Engineer in the Photonics industry.