

GERMAN INDUSTRY UK

THE VOICE OF GERMAN BUSINESS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM



Major Survey amongst German Business on Vocational Training in the UK

2023

Companies and banks who took part:



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GERMAN INDUSTRY UK (GIUK) has been at the forefront of German business in the UK, one of Germany's most important markets and locations worldwide for nearly 50 years. We are a private organisation of 100 members of the board of German businesses in the UK. They represent some 200 businesses, employing more than 200,000 people.

Objective of the Survey

GIUK's mission is to support German business in the UK. This includes lobbying the British Government on matters of concern to German business.

Vocational training is one of German business' main constraints to their UK growth.

Well educated and skilled apprentices are vital for the success of business across all sectors. Education and skills directly impact productivity and productivity has always been the most important measurement of overall business performance and economic strength.

GIUK has previously conducted three major surveys on this topic, the first in the summer of 2007, the second in the spring of 2012 and the third in spring of 2020.

The main themes of these earlier surveys were:

1. The general level of work readiness of young British applicants for technical and commercial positions was at best satisfactory.
2. Employers have to invest heavily in in-house training to get new recruits to a satisfactory performance standard.
3. The German Dual Vocational Training Scheme approach is beneficial to any company's efforts in this area.

GIUK has been lobbying a number of Skills Ministers over the years and is now in contact with the Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP, the new Minister for Skills in the Department for Education who was the main Speaker at a recent GIUK Panel Discussion in London on Apprenticeships and Skills, with other influential and experienced speakers on the panel, in from Make UK and the German Vocational Training body.

In order to focus our lobbying efforts we have collated the updated views of German business in the UK during the last few months. We had a very positive response across our membership, amongst them major companies such as DHL, Eon, Lufthansa, Miele, MINI, Rolls-Royce, Siemens and ThyssenKrupp.

The results of this recent survey reflected similar challenges to the previous surveys with some evidence of progress under way.

The following executive summary is intended to promote further dialogue with government and across all UK vocational training stakeholder groups.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF 2023 SURVEY FINDINGS:

The primary concern of respondents was the variability of quality of training providers and the suitability of vocational curricula across the UK (and sectors) in meeting both trainee needs and employer demand.

The respondents recognised the progress made by IfATE and see the need to further drive:

- Consistency in training delivery & quality across the diverse provider landscape
- Curriculum development in closer collaboration with sector specific employers.

It was noted that with more consistent core of training delivery standards and curriculum, colleges could still expand into sector specific niches to match regional employment needs, as is the case in the German Dual Vocational system.

Respondents recognised that there has been improvement in the breadth of Commercial Vocational apprenticeships available and this remains an important trend for employers.

The results made clear that there is much to be gained from implementing aspects of the German Dual Vocational System in the UK, and that those employers who have invested in bringing this approach to the UK (through in-house schemes) are able to achieve much better outcomes.

Our respondents also recognised the significant achievements made in development of degree apprenticeships but felt that much more emphasis on frontline skill apprenticeships was required by government, to support employers in attracting motivated career starters.

Overall, respondents hope that the UK Government will draw further experiences from the German system to improve the quality, consistency and relevance of apprentice training provision and give both career starters and employers the necessary productivity boost.

The examples of where the philosophy has been 'transplanted' through in-house schemes (by larger German employers in the UK) evidences that it can be done successfully and with increased government focus in the above areas, such efforts could ignite a national improvement in outcomes.

This desired improvement in outcomes would reduce the financial burden on employers of all sizes who seek to increase apprenticeship roles and would likely drive-up employer demand, whilst better serving career starters at their crucial entry point into the world of technical and commercial work.