

# THE EARWIG

UPDATES FROM WEST BERKSHIRE TRAINING CONSORTIUM



## Dear Members

Momentum is building for our 2019 Apprentice Graduation & Rising Stars Awards which take place on Wednesday 15th May 2019 at Arlington Arts Centre. I'm delighted that sponsors, once again, have enthusiastically backed the event meaning we can celebrate the very best in employers, mentors and learners. Those eligible to graduate should have completed their WBTC apprenticeship between April 2018 and April 2019, so there will be some studying furiously, as I write, so that they can don their academic robes and graduate in front of family, friends and employers. Once more we also have eight award categories for the Rising Stars Awards, and you can find more information on how to nominate below.

Also, in this edition we celebrate the achievements of three learners who have excelled recently, we also look at the lessons learned from unwanted 'hugs' in the workplace, and how employers can prepare for hayfever season.

Matt Garvey  
Managing Director



## THERE'S STILL TIME TO NOMINATE

Nominations for our 2019 Rising Stars Awards close on 22nd March 2019. Once more, there are eight categories. All of us at WBTC would like to thank this year's sponsors, without whom we wouldn't be able to have the ceremony.

Judges will be looking for interesting stories that shine a light on role models. Winners will usually have demonstrated an innovative approach to training, overcome obstacles to succeed or gone out of their way to help others.

Nominees for the two apprentice categories must have achieved their apprenticeship between April 2018 and April 2019 (ie: be eligible to graduate).

You can make a nomination by [clicking here](#), or contact karenm@wbtc-uk.com for more information and assistance.

### EMPLOYER CATEGORIES

- Large Employer of the Year** (250+ employees)  
(Sponsored by Newbury Weekly News)
- Medium Employer of the Year** (50 - 249 employees)  
(Sponsored by EJBC Chartered Accountants)
- Small Employer of the Year** (10 - 49 employers)  
(Sponsored by Boomerang Creative)
- Micro Employer of the Year** (9 or fewer employees)  
(Sponsored by Vectorworks)

### INDIVIDUAL CATEGORIES

- Workplace Mentor of the Year**  
(Sponsored by Benchmark Furniture)
- Great Start Learner of the Year**  
(Sponsored by James Cowper Kreston)
- Apprentice of the Year (19+)**  
(Sponsored by SPX Flow)
- Apprentice of the Year (16-18)**  
(Sponsored by Sovereign)

## LEARNER OF THE QUARTER

Congratulations to Reece Griffin of SAICA PACK Ltd, who is our latest WBTC Learner of the Quarter. Reece has already completed an Intermediate & Advanced Apprenticeship, and is currently a Higher Apprentice in Engineering attending Basingstoke College of Technology.

Reece was nominated by Claire Richards, who said, "Reece has grasped every opportunity to develop himself and is an absolute shining example of Apprenticeships at their best. He has grown in confidence and is now a multi-skilled engineer across mechanical and electrical - these multi-skilled engineers are very few and far between. Reece's employer speaks very highly of him and he now has not only progressed in his job role and onto his Higher Apprenticeship, but is now mentoring their new Apprentice.

We have received no negative feedback from the college, attendance is always above 90% and he meets his deadlines, often with distinctions. Reece is an absolute pleasure to work with, he has great ethics and behaviours and should get recognised for his commitment and hard work, a real example of an excellent apprentice who has fully engaged in his own learning and development."

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Reece being congratulated on achieving his Advanced Apprenticeship in Engineering.

## WELL DONE, ELLA!

Ella Cox is the winner of our termly Attendance Award. Ella is on our Great Start programme, and is studying maths and English, having completed Work skills and Safeguarding. Ella also volunteers with The Dogs Trust. Ella has been with us since July and has shown commitment and dedication with an attendance record of 99%! Well done Ella.



## PROMOTE YOUR ORGANISATION THROUGH THE EARWIG

Please feel free to send any promotions or good news about your organisation to The Earwig, and it will get a feature for free. It could be a new service you are offering, great work with your employees or a charity event you are hosting.

Email me via [matt@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:matt@wbtc-uk.com)



## SAFEGUARDING & PREVENT DUTY CUDDLE AND STRIFE



**The Ted Baker chief executive, Ray Kelvin, has resigned following allegations of inappropriate behaviour towards staff, in a recent high profile news story.**

Kelvin, who started the company more than 30 years ago, took a voluntary leave of absence from his role in December after allegations of misconduct, including 'forced hugs' and 'ear-kissing', were made against him.

The claims are being investigated by an internal independent committee, which commissioned a law firm to look into the allegations and the company's policies, procedures and handling of human resource-related complaints.

Kelvin, who has denied all allegations of misconduct, agreed to resign with immediate effect from his positions as the chief executive and a director of Ted Baker, the firm has said.

The incident raises the question: 'how should people in the workplace know where to draw the line?' When does that friendly greeting with a colleague become an unwanted invasion of personal space or even, as with the case of Mr. Kelvin, an interpretation of sexual harassment?

Well, it perhaps starts with having a clear policy in place in the first instance. Some companies will doubtlessly be rethinking their approach to the cultures within their offices, or even revisiting or drafting new HR policy to address the issue of personal boundaries around shows of greeting and/or affection. HR experts would recommend it is always best to have a firm policy in place before an incident occurs, and that this policy has been clearly communicated to staff.

Of course, there are people who have close friends that they work with, with whom hugs would seem a normal gesture, and on rare occasions within work culture this may be acceptable. However, it is clearly about companies asking themselves: 'what are we about and what image do we wish to project?' It is at this point where standard perceptions of professionalism need to be discussed and the aim being an approach which will not be discriminatory or threatening against any staff member.

In the case of Ray Kelvin, there are allegations of hugs which lasted 10 seconds, and stroking of ears, etc, which by professional standards, most people would deem to be highly inappropriate for the workplace.

If you would like further advice and guidance then contact [martyn@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:martyn@wbtc-uk.com)



## PARLIAMENT TRIP 2019

Our annual trip to Parliament was another successful venture. Participants enjoyed a guided tour of the place and got to see Prime Minister's Question Time as the PM took queries on Brexit. Well done to the following for taking part and learning more about our vibrant democracy.

- Brooke Dury
- Cameron Doswell
- Denise Lewis
- Ella Cox
- James Bishop
- Jezanne Sahota - Bayer Plc
- Justin Haycock
- Lauren Galgey
- Lucy Milsom - Bayer Plc
- Ryan Marcham - Newbury Building Society
- Tom Banning
- Yasheesh Sood - Bayer Plc
- Zoe Petts



## HEALTH & SAFETY NEWS HAYFEVER AT WORK



**Spring is almost upon us and for some that signals the start of hayfever season. One in five sufferers of hayfever will take time off work because their symptoms are so bad. So what can employers do to help their staff and minimise time away from work?**

**Keep the windows closed:** Good quality air conditioning is much better than having the windows open during the summer period. Opening windows allow the minuscule pollen particles to find their way in and settle around the office.

**Consider flooring:** Plush carpets tend to harbour both dust and pollen, which creates a problematic environment for hay fever and dust allergy sufferers alike. Sweepable and moppable floors are better for pollen free working conditions. If there are carpets, ensure they are thoroughly vacuumed on a daily basis by the cleaning staff.

**Remove plants and flowers:** Whilst they can make an office look nicer, these should be removed from working areas, as people seemingly forget that flowers create pollen.

**Remove soft furnishings:** In the age of the trendy office, cushions and beanbags have become common. It may be beneficial to remove these during the hayfever months, or at least ensure they are vacuumed daily.

**Store coats and jacket separately:** It would be great to have a separate cloakroom for coats and jackets. Clothes pick up small pieces of pollen each time you go outside, these small particles are then deposited into the working space, especially if your staff are in the habit of hanging their coats on the back of their chair.

**Allow flexible working:** If these measures have not helped, consider offering flexible working on high pollen days, allowing staff to work from home or starting/finishing early. Pollen counts are different throughout the day. If the 9am pollen is high, an 8am or 10am start may be preferable when levels are lower. The Met Office website is an excellent source of information, and offers a pollen count map to help you to plan.

You can read more about this by [clicking here](#).

## CHAIRMAN'S AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENT



**This category recognises exceptional endeavours in overcoming barriers in learning and it goes to Oliver Thornton of 3M.**

Oliver's nominator, Andrea Wood, said, "I am nominating Oliver Thornton for the successful completion of his Apprenticeship. Oliver struggled through his Apprenticeship, finding the exams very challenging. He failed most of the exams first time. He was doing well at work but struggled with the formal tests. He was also doing well with the portfolio he was building for his End Point Assessment. When it was time to decide to put Oliver through End Point Assessment, I was really concerned as he had struggled so much in his exams first time, but Oliver wanted to take the EPA alongside everyone else in the class. Oliver was also called up for Jury Service at the same time as the sessions were taking place for EPA practice. Oliver said that he had always wanted to do Jury Service and was excited about having the opportunity to do this. I explained that I was concerned that if he accepted the Jury Service, that he would miss the preparation sessions for End Point Assessment and this could affect his Apprenticeship achievement. Oliver took this feedback on board and worked really hard to study for the final exam and deferred his Jury Service.

The results showed how hard he did work for the End Point Assessment, as he passed with a Distinction. Out of the 13 people in his class, he had been the person struggling the most with his exams and he was one of three to come out with a Distinction. Oliver deserves to win the award for the hard work he put into his Apprenticeship, and he is also very happy to have secured a permanent position in January 2019 with 3M."

## WORKSHOPS, COURSES AND ACTIVITIES

Most of the training workshops below are free of charge to WBTC members, which means apprentices, work place mentors or any other staff can attend. To book please use the email address against each event. Spaces go fast, so please let us know ASAP if you wish to make a reservation by emailing [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com)

We operate a £50 no-show fee for anyone who doesn't attend, without notice, on any free of charge course. This will be invoiced care of the employer. WBTC have enhanced the confirmation process as follows

- We'll confirm your attendance by email and send a meeting request that you can import to your outlook or webmail calendar.
- We'll confirm your space with your employer and **call** you 2-3 days prior to the event.

**Remember, if you are an employer that has an apprentice, is on one of our qualifications or hosts a work experience student, then you are a member. This will entitle you to subsidised, or free, access to our one-day workshops and enrichment activities. To book please email [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com) If you are unsure if a course is right for you, then please ask. You can email [claire@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:claire@wbtc-uk.com) who'll be happy to provide more information on content and structure.**

### APRIL

#### TIME MANAGEMENT

Procrastination is the thief of time. Do you find yourself writing long to-do lists and struggling to get things done? Do interruptions derail your best laid plans? Do you sometimes struggle to differentiate between urgent and important.

This very popular session is for all employees, regardless of experience or seniority, in a business. You'll understand ways to get more from your time to hit those key priorities and make sense of life and work.

Venue: WBTC  
 Date: Friday 4th April 09:30 - 16:00  
 Contact: [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com)  
 Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £199 for non members



### MAY

#### HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

This popular one day course is ideal for health and safety purposes, and equips delegates with the skills and confidence in the workplace. **Full details are on this link.**

Venue: WBTC  
 Date: Friday 17th May 09:30 - 16:00  
 Contact: [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com)  
 Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £199 for non members



### JUNE

#### PRESENTATION SKILLS

This popular workshop is aimed at anyone who needs to present information in a formal setting. It could be used by sales people giving presentations, for those who run staff training events, for employees presenting ideas to colleagues or just those who wish to be more confident.

Venue: WBTC  
 Date: Friday 7th June 09:30 - 16:00  
 Contact: [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com)  
 Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £199 for non members



#### FIRST AID CERTIFICATE

This level 3 qualifications equips staff with the skills to be a nominated 'First Aider'. This is an incredibly useful skill to help keep customers and staff safe from accidents to illness. It is a very popular course so early booking is essential.

Venue: WBTC  
 Date: Friday 21st June 09:30 - 16:00  
 Contact: [karenf@wbtc-uk.com](mailto:karenf@wbtc-uk.com)  
 Cost: **FREE for WBTC members** £199 for non members



# WBTC

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