

## **New sector voice for manufacturing apprenticeships launched**

On the 8<sup>th</sup> February, the Minister for Skills, Alex Burghart MP announced the launch of a new partnership between industry and Government to grow the number of high-quality apprenticeships in the manufacturing sector.

**The Minister said: “*The group has my full support in its vital agenda to grow the number of high-quality apprenticeships, the opportunities for young people, the number of manufacturing SMEs offering apprenticeships, and apprenticeships in new and Net Zero sectors.*”**

Chaired by Anita Davenport-Brooks of the Lander Group, Apprenticeships in Manufacturing (‘AiM’) has nine member organisations representing employers across the manufacturing sector.

**Anita said: “*I am excited and honoured to be part of the AiM Group and look forward to working with the members to grow the number of high-quality apprenticeships in the manufacturing sector. I believe that apprenticeships bring a valuable return on investment, not only financially but in every area of any business and I am passionate about the benefits they bring for individuals too. I have seen apprentices with differing abilities grow, develop and obtain substantive roles and there is common agreement that apprenticeships develop sustainable talent. I want to see AiM achieving on its objectives and growing more of this wonderful skilled talent for our sector.*”**

Covid has created unprecedented challenges for the manufacturing sector, not least on employers’ plans for hiring apprentices and training the existing workforce. The Department for Education has started to build new partnerships between industry and government with the aim of challenging and addressing these barriers. AiM will strengthen this partnership through committed, skills-focused organisations working collaboratively.

**Bhavina Bharkhada, Head of Policy & Campaigns, Make UK, said:**

**“*Make UK are delighted to be a founding member of the Department for Education’s Apprenticeships in Manufacturing group. Apprenticeships and apprentices are the lifeblood of UK manufacturing, innovating, creating and making our future a reality. Through collaboration and coordination, the AiM will be the collective voice for promoting manufacturing engineering apprentices amongst SMEs, boosting apprentices across the country in our sector, and leading the way in developing apprenticeships ready for our digital and green future.*”**

The nine members of AiM are: Cogent Skills, Engineering and Machinery Alliance (EAMA), Enginuity, Food and Drink Federation (FDF), Furniture Interiors Education

Skills & Training Alliance (FIESTA), Make UK, National Skills Academy for Food and Drink (NSAFD), UK Fashion and Textile Association (UKFT) and the UK Metals Council (UKMC)

The group has close links with the National Manufacturing Skills Taskforce and is supported by the Department for Education, BEIS, DEFRA, DWP and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

**Dr Pam Murrell, CEO of the Cast Metals Federation and Director of the UK Metals Council, said:**

***“The UK Metals Council is very supportive of anything that can help to encourage the pipeline of talent into our industry and facilitate the take-up of apprentices to the wider manufacturing sector, and by our SMEs in particular. We can offer interesting and rewarding jobs for those coming into the metals sector as part of the circular economy for metals, and as a foundation industry underpinning so much of our modern lives. We are keen to play our role in AiM as a sector that is so critical to the supply chain for the UK’s net zero targets and wider levelling-up agenda.”***

**Jack Semple, Alliance Secretary, the Engineering and Machinery Alliance of Trade Associations, said:**

***“EAMA is very pleased to be an active part of Apprenticeships in Manufacturing. It is a timely initiative that will help to strengthen apprenticeships and skills across the machinery and component supply chain, which is so vital for the future.”***

Employers who are considering starting or expanding apprenticeships for their business, can find out more at [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)