One in four Brits ‘fell in’ to their current job, reveals new research from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Rather than make an active decision about the career they wanted to pursue, a quarter (25 per cent) of the people questioned left their careers to chance. When asked why they do the job they do, only a third of respondents (33 per cent) said they were passionate about it, and four out of ten cited money as being their main motivator.

The research also revealed that one in ten (10 per cent) are in their current job because they didn’t get the qualifications they needed to pursue the career they wanted, and one in six (16 per cent) work to support their passion outside work. A similar amount of respondents (15 per cent) said their job was a stepping stone to the career they really want.

This research is published as the Learning and Skills Council announces finalists for this year’s national Apprenticeship Awards. This year’s apprentice finalists did not risk leaving their future to chance and chose to do a variety of Apprenticeships in sectors including Engineering, Construction, Hospitality, Health and Beauty and Telecommunications to get the career they wanted.

The Awards, now in their fourth year, are hosted by the LSC and are designed to recognise the hard work and commitment of young people currently on, or who have recently completed an Apprenticeship, and employers who are successfully using Apprenticeships to improve business performance.
This year’s Awards attracted over 1,000 entries, from apprentices and employers all vying to be named Apprentice or Employer of the Year at the ceremony taking place on Wednesday 20th June at the London Hilton on Park Lane, where TV presenter Nick Knowles will announce the 2007 winners.

Nick commented: “My experience in broadcasting, particularly on DIY SOS, has helped me to appreciate the importance of learning new skills. I’m very proud to have been asked to present this year’s Apprenticeship Awards. It’s a prestigious event and I’m looking forward to meeting all this year’s finalists.”

Stephen Gardner, Director of Apprenticeships at the Learning and Skills Council says: “At a time when our nation’s skill levels need to be improved, apprentices are excellent examples of people who are making plans for their futures by learning the skills and knowledge they will need. Their dynamic attitude to work is recognised by the LSC’s national Apprenticeship Awards. The Awards are now in their fourth year – a positive sign of the outstanding contribution individuals and UK business are making to raise skills levels and improve productivity and competitiveness nationally.”

“Oh on behalf of the LSC, I would like to congratulate each and every finalist for their hard work, development and commitment to their Apprenticeship programmes. They have worked extremely hard to raise their skills levels and I hope they prove to be positive role models to others who choose to undertake Apprenticeships. I look forward to meeting each and every one of them.”

To find out more about the Apprenticeship Awards, visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk/awards or call the Awards team on 0870 143 6983.

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Notes to editors:

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Omnibus research conducted by BMRB, who spoke to 819 respondents in England between 11 - 13 May 2007.

The Apprentice Category Finalists

Young Apprentice of the Year
Abbigail Kewin, Tyne & Wear (Arts & Design)
Craig Lewis, Tattenhall, Chester (Hospitality)
Alice Victoria Le Good, Southampton (Engineering)

Apprentice of the Year
Christopher Gary Taylor, Rochdale (Painting & Decorating)
Victoria Nebbett, Ashtead (Hairdressing)
Jonathan Pearson, Preston (Food & Drink Manufacture)

Advanced Apprentice of the Year
Lucy Rouillon, Edgeware, Middlesex (Business Administration)
Gareth Moor, Morpeth, Northumberland (Construction)
Michelle Grandon, Lancashire (Telecoms Engineer)

Personal Achiever of the Year
Shaun Anderson, Hull (Electrician)
Fiona Fay, London (Business Administration)
Zenel Lika, Atherstone, Warwickshire (Mechanical Engineering)
The Employer Category Finalists

Micro Employer of the Year
Complete Computer Systems, Leeds
The Crown, Rotherham
Blue Flame, Stockport

Small Employer of the Year
The Dinnington Dental Practice, Sheffield
Farthings Veterinary Group, Horsham
Craig Hambling Ltd, Accrington

Medium Employer of the Year
Duke of Cornwall Hotel, Plymouth
Slack and Parr Ltd, Kegworth
Kesslers International, London

Large Employer of the Year
Heathrow Airport Ltd, London
BT, London
Metsec plc, Oldbury

Confirmed award sponsors are:
- City & Guilds (premier)
- QCA (Apprentice of the Year sponsor)
- Openreach (Advanced Apprentice of the Year sponsor)
- British Gas (Personal Achiever of the Year sponsor)
- BAE Systems (Young Apprentice of the Year sponsor)
- L’Oreal (Gift sponsor)