

Case study: BMS Progress





BMS Progress has been delivering apprenticeships since 2019, specialising in sales and management standards. It successfully partners with employers across many sectors – from construction to FMCG, helping them to invest their Apprenticeship Levy to achieve excellence in sales capability and build their talent pipelines. Senior leaders at BMS acknowledge the critical role that Aptem Apprentice, as an award-winning delivery platform, plays in their ability to customise programmes at scale, while remaining compliant with ever-changing regulations.

Implementing an end-to-end delivery system to support growth

MIS and Data Manager, Emily Bowler was involved in BMS's Aptem implementation from the beginning. "We were looking for a system that would support our delivery of apprenticeships from start to finish. At that point, we were new to apprenticeships and wanted a system that would manage the process for us, making sure we didn't miss anything. Aptem was the obvious solution. We now just use one system to manage the full process, from onboarding through to reporting." The Aptem/BMS Progress partnership has now been in place for nearly four years, and with more apprenticeship standards on the horizon, they are well set up for growth.

Functionality that does the heavy lifting of apprenticeship delivery

Emily highlights a number of Aptem Apprentice features that have become a critical part of their programme delivery.



Onboarding

“The onboarding functionality within the system is great – it enables us to get learners onto programme quickly and efficiently,” explains Emily. One of the key features of the onboarding wizard is the Skills Radar tool which enables users to self-assess against predefined competencies. This self-assessment is then used to prompt a conversation with the learner’s work coach and employer who will also assess the level they are currently at. “This functionality is a huge bonus for us. It’s vital for accurately monitoring progress and making sure we are claiming the correct amount of funding.”



ILR management

Emily explains the ease of using Aptem’s ILR management functionality: “I submit the data uploads to the ESFA every month. All the data is captured within the ILR on Aptem. All I have to do is click a couple of buttons and the batch upload is ready to submit. It’s as straightforward as that. It’s seamless. Some of my colleagues have worked with other systems and it’s often a different story where you have to combine one system with another to get the data that you need. For me, this part of Aptem works so well.”



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Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager, BMS Progress



Process Automation Trackers

Process Automation Trackers is one of the newer features that the BMS team has used to streamline their processes. Being able to keep all the information within the system rather than across different spreadsheets, makes it easier for them to process withdrawals or breaks in learning. Rachel Venter, Aptem's Customer Success Manager for BMS Progress agrees that this functionality is increasingly important for customers. "As Ofsted focuses its attention on reliable data collection that can be shared with employers, it's great to see providers using the sophisticated tracking that's available within the system."



Reporting

Emily and the BMS team run many reports through Aptem. She shares an example of how the system's reporting capabilities are enabling them to undertake some analysis into when and why learners are withdrawing from programme. "It's so quick to do on Aptem;" she explains, "it pulls off the exact data you need. That's especially useful if you're jumping into a meeting and need some stats to shape the conversation and discussions around continuous improvement." All of the senior managers have reports in Aptem that they regularly refer to, for example one colleague who manages all the development coaches runs caseload reviews, looking at how her team is supporting learners and where the opportunities are for improvement.

Using data held within Aptem to predict learner outcomes

The team has been looking at withdrawals within the first 42 days, with a view to deciding if and how they should tweak their initial assessment phase. They look at those learners to see if anything was flagged at the first interview, or whether there was any information given by the manager that builds up a picture of likelihood to complete the programme.



Every circumstance is different, probably for every single learner, but with enough data you can start to draw meaningful conclusions.

Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager, BMS Progress

- ✔ Aptem’s reporting capabilities enabling BMS Progress to undertake analysis into when and why learners withdraw from programme.



A partnership approach to the continuous development of Aptem

The BMS team values the continuous development that goes into Aptem, citing the roll-out of new features and enhanced functionality as a critical success factor for ongoing successful, compliant delivery.

In summer 2022, ahead of the new ESFA funding rules, the team took part in a consultation with Aptem's Product Owner, Martyn Wood. "It was incredibly useful to be part of the discussions around how the system is being developed to adapt to the new rules. We really felt like we had a voice. It's important for technology providers to work with the organisations they serve, taking a consultative, partnership approach

to understanding the impact of new regulations and industry developments, and ensuring that the development roadmap supports those needs."

When asked about the impact of these regulatory changes, Katie Rooney, Quality Manager and Designated Safeguarding Lead at BMS feels that the organisation is in safe hands with Aptem. She concurs that when new changes come into play, they are 100% reassured through the knowledge and expertise of the Aptem team.



The rules can be complex, but we know that Aptem will be there to support us; interpreting new rules in our language and relating it specifically to our business.

Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager,
BMS Progress

The funding rules 22/23 changes – a summary of the Aptem approach:

In late May 2022 the ESFA announced some far-reaching and significant changes to the apprenticeship funding rules.

There was limited time (3 weeks) to respond to the draft proposal, and two months (which was actually two weeks once the changes were confirmed) to apply some significant changes to Aptem so that BMS and other customers could apply the rules from 1 August, 2022.

The Aptem approach:

- ✓ BMS attended a series of customer roundtables and that enabled Aptem to prioritise the changes that mattered to them.
- ✓ Through Aptem's partnership network – AELP, FIN and UVAC, concerns and questions about the proposed funding rules were submitted to ESFA.
- ✓ BMS were invited to a webinar ran by the Aptem Implementation team who demonstrated enrolling learners in Aptem and how to remain compliant with the new rules.

In addition they were able to use a series of resources published on the Aptem Help Centre:



Questions they could ask themselves to start preparing in advance of 1 August



An eligibility review template and guidance on how to build a review



On demand webinar demonstrating a draft eligibility review



Post the rules being finalised in late July and implemented from 1 August, Aptem has continued to share resources, including guidance on adopting the new compliance documentation.



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Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager, BMS Progress

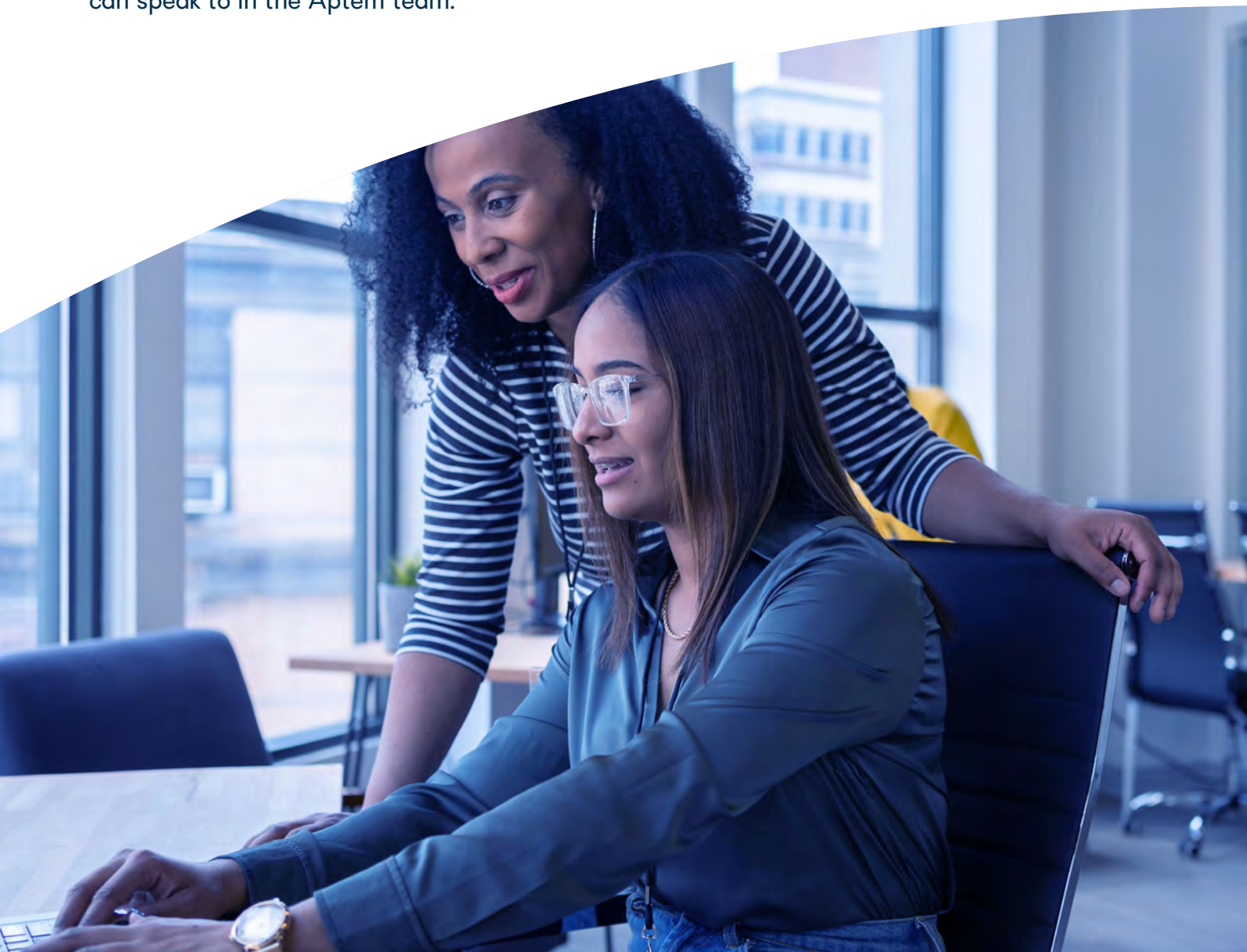
Ongoing support from the Aptem team

“During implementation I spoke with our Consultant multiple times a day. Even after that period ended, I was still able to call him if I had an issue. And now we have our dedicated Customer Success Manager in Rachel, with whom we have really useful monthly catch ups,” says Emily. “From day one the Aptem support has been excellent. Whether we need to discuss how we use the system day-to-day, or have broader conversations around anything apprenticeship-related – Odata, changing regulations, reporting, we have experts we can speak to in the Aptem team.”



The reporting part of Aptem works so well. Some of my colleagues have worked with other systems and it’s often a different story where you have to combine one system with another to get the data that you need.

Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager,
BMS Progress





It just works! Aptem is a lifeline for the smooth running of our apprenticeship provision.

Emily Bowler, MIS and Data Manager, BMS Progress



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