

# Employer Skills Funding Guide

June 2021



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# 1. Introduction

This guide has been written to help employers in the UK to understand the range of funding available for them to develop their workforce. From apprenticeships and traineeships for young entrants, to upskilling programmes for more established employees, there is a range of support, but it is not always obvious what is there and how to access it. Devolution and local partnerships both mean that there are variations in separate systems and rules based on geography.

The guide is aimed at employers in the nuclear and science industries, although much of the funding listed is not sector-specific and in many cases will be available to all employers. It includes funding available in England, Scotland and Wales, but is not exhaustive, especially regarding regional and local funding.

The information in this document is already publicly available and is intended as a signpost. Cogent Skills, the Nuclear Skills Strategy Group and the Science Industry Partnership hope that employers will find it useful, but are not responsible for any of the programmes listed. Eligibility rules and funding availability tend to change regularly. Readers are advised to follow the links provided to find out more from the relevant authorities.

## 2. Skills Funding in England



## Apprenticeships (England)

Funding is available to pay for the training (and some additional costs) for apprentices in England.

### Description

An apprentice is a paid employee in a job with substantive, sustained high quality training in order to become competent in a specific profession. Each Apprenticeship Standard (ranging from occupational Level 2 to Level 7) sets out the Duties, Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours the apprentice will develop and learn to do throughout their training. Apprentices will be formally assessed at the end of their apprenticeship period against these criteria in a formal end point assessment, carried out by an independent body.

### Eligibility

An apprentice must be employed and registered on an approved Apprenticeship Standard. The list of Standards is available at:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>

There are no age restrictions to adults undertaking apprenticeships in England.

- **Employers who pay the Apprenticeship Levy** – Full funding is available up to the amount paid into the Levy “pot” within the digital apprenticeship service account. Funding beyond this is subject to the rules for non-Levy payers as below.
- **Employers who do not pay the Apprenticeship Levy** – Employers must pay a proportion of the costs. The rate of co-investment is 5% of the total price of the apprentice’s training, with the government covering the remaining 95% of the cost, up to the funding band maximum.

### Funding

Each apprenticeship is allocated to one of 30 funding bands, which range from £1,500 to £27,000. The band is shown on the web page for the relevant Standard on the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education as referenced above.

The band represents the maximum amount available to pay for apprentice training and assessment only. If an employer negotiates a lower price than the funding band, then the public funding will cover the lower cost only. If the negotiated price is higher, then the employer will need to find the extra funding over the maximum set by the band.

### Cost to the employer

**Wages** – Since the apprentice is an employee, the employer must pay their wages to at least the minimum wage relative to their age. There are separate minimum rates for apprentices who are under 19, or are in their first year of apprenticeship.

See Appendix 1 for information on the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates. Please note that the rates listed are the legal minima. Most apprentices earn more than these rates, and employers should be prepared to pay competitive wages to attract good apprentices.

**Training** – Any training costs beyond the funding band will need to be met by the employer.

## Incentives

Apprentices who start between 1<sup>st</sup> April and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

16-24-year-old	£3,000
25+ year old	£3,000

\*applications can be submitted after 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

Payment will be made in 2 equal instalments. The first payment will be paid when the apprentice has completed 90 days of their programme and the second is transferred after 365 days (after confirmation that the apprentice is still employed).

Incentive payments can be claimed for using the apprenticeship service account which must be set up.

These incentives are in addition to the current £1,000 that is paid to employers who recruit apprentices who are 16-18 years old, or under 25 with an education, health and care plan or who has been in the care of their local authority

The incentive payments can be used differently to levy funds; they can be spent on anything to support apprentice or organisational costs, including salary. Employers do not have to pay this money back.

## Further information

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding>

## Traineeships (England)

A traineeship is a skills development programme that includes a work placement. They are designed for young people whose preference is to find a job or apprenticeship, but who currently lack the skills, experience and behaviours sought by employers. Unlike an apprenticeship, a traineeship is a programme of learning and skills development. It is not a job. The full programme can last from 6 weeks up to 1 year, though most traineeships last for less than 6 months.

The trainee will gain English, maths, digital and work-related qualifications which can lead them on to an apprenticeship, work, further education or a Kickstart placement.

## Eligibility

Traineeships can be delivered by education and training providers that deliver provision for 16 to 19-year-olds and hold a contract with the ESFA to deliver traineeships; and by those that deliver provision through the Adult Education Budget (AEB), funded by the ESFA, to deliver traineeships for 19 to 24-year-olds.

Employers can lead the delivery of traineeships to young people where they meet the conditions in the preceding paragraph or by:

- Working in partnership with an existing funded education or training provider that meets the quality criteria; or
- Working towards becoming an approved provider in their own right for future years.

When offering a traineeship work placement, the employer must provide:

- Safe, meaningful and high-quality work experience
- A minimum of 70 hours of work experience – but no more than 240 hours for benefit claimants – over the duration of a traineeship (maximum of one year) and as agreed with the training provider
- Constructive feedback and advice to the trainee
- An interview for an apprenticeship of job in your business at the end of the traineeship if one is available
- An exit interview at the end of the traineeship with meaningful written feedback in no job is available

### Funding & Incentives

In 2020 to 2021, employers can apply for a £1000 incentive payment per learner for hosting a work placement that lasts for a minimum period of 70 hours delivered between 1 September 2020 and 31 July 2021 as part of the traineeship programme.

To claim an incentive payment, employers will need to register their details and submit a claim through an online portal on GOV.UK. The incentive can only be claimed once the placement activity has been completed. Incentive payments are capped at 10 payments per region across the 9 regions of England.

Traineeship funding from the ESFA is for traineeships delivered in England only. Devolved administrations, including Wales, receive devolved funding from government and offer their own traineeship and traineeship 'type' programmes.

### Costs to the employer

Traineeship work placements are part of a course and there is no legal requirement or expectation that trainees will be paid. Traineeships are exempt from the National Minimum Wage regulations. However, employers can decide whether or not to pay the trainee, and how much. Employers may also decide to pay for or contribute to the student's travel and subsistence costs.

### Further information

[nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk)

## Kickstart

The Kickstart Scheme provides grant funding to employers to support the creation of new jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit who are at risk of long term unemployment.

### Eligibility

All Kickstart Scheme job placements must be additional jobs. This means the job placement must not replace existing or planned vacancies, and must not cause existing employees or contractors to lose or reduce their employment.

The roles must:

- provide a meaningful experience of work, with clear duties, responsibilities and goals
- be a minimum of 25 hours per week, for 6 months
- be paid at least the National Minimum Wage for their age group
- not require people to undertake extensive training before they begin the job placement

The scheme is designed to improve employability and the chances of sustained employment. As such, all applications should also include how you will help the participants to develop their skills and experience with:

- support to look for long-term work, including career advice and setting goals
- support with CV and interview preparation
- training to develop their skills, such as team work, organisation and communications as part of the role

### Funding & Incentives

Employers of all sizes can apply for funding which covers:

- 100% of the National Minimum Wage (or the National Living Wage depending on the age of the participant) for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months\*
- associated employer National Insurance contributions
- minimum automatic enrolment pension contributions

*\*Employers can pay a higher wage and for more hours but the funding will not cover this.*

Additional funding of £1,500 is also provided to cover the costs of employability training and 'on the job' start-up costs. These can include, but not limited to: uniform; safety equipment; IT equipment; other practical materials. Employers can spread the job start dates up until 31 December 2021.

Funding will be provided until 30 June 2022 if a young person starts their job on 31 December 2021.

### Costs to the employer

No costs

### Further information

There is no minimum number of jobs an employer can apply for. Employers can apply directly to the scheme or partner with an approved Gateway. Once the application is accepted it will be sent to the local Jobcentre where a Work Coach will select a number of suitable young people who are at risk of long-term unemployment and ready for work.

Employers will then interview applicants and select the best candidate for the role.

<https://kickstart.campaign.gov.uk>



## T Level Placements

As part of the new Level 3 T Level technical qualifications, students will be required to have a 10-week placement in industry.

T Level programmes consist of four compulsory elements:

- a technical qualification, which includes: core theory, concepts and skills for an industry area; specialist skills and knowledge for an occupation or career
- an industry placement with an employer
- a minimum standard in maths and English if students have not already achieved them
- any other occupation-specific mandatory additional requirements that are needed for entry to employment or to commence an industry placement

They offer students a mixture of classroom learning and 'on-the-job' experience during an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days). An industry placement is a structured placement in the workplace for young people to develop real work skills and make a meaningful contribution to the organisation.

### Eligibility

Employers must work with the training provider to plan the industry placement to ensure it gives the student the experience they need to complete their course. Before the placement begins, the training provider and employer will agree a structured work plan which will include key activities and learning goals that are specific to the industry.

Employers can offer industry placements as a block, series of blocks, day release or a mix of these. Training providers may work with more than one employer to offer students the full duration of placement.

### Funding & Incentives

Training providers have access to funding to help with industry placements and can use this to help employers with upfront costs, such as providing protective gear or specialist equipment.

### Costs to the employer

There is no legal requirement or expectation that students will be paid. However, employers can decide whether or not to pay the student, and how much. Employers or training providers may agree to pay for or contribute to the student's travel and subsistence costs.

### Further information;

<https://employerindustryplacements.co.uk/workshops-and-webinars/tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk>

A full list of providers who have been approved to deliver T Levels can be found online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/providers-selected-to-deliver-t-levels>

## Skills Bootcamps

Skills Bootcamps are flexible training courses lasting between 12 to 16 weeks for adults aged 19 or over who are either already in work or are recently unemployed (some Bootcamps have additional eligibility criteria). They can give individuals the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and to fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

The courses have been developed in partnership with employers, colleges and local authorities, to help people develop the skills that are in demand in their local area. They include a range of digital courses and technical skills courses, such as:

- Software development
- Digital marketing
- Data analytics
- Welding
- Engineering
- Construction

So far skills Bootcamps are being delivered in:

- Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire
- Greater Manchester and Lancashire
- Heart of the South West
- Leeds City Region
- Liverpool City Region
- West Midlands

### Eligibility

In order to register for skills Bootcamps, an employer must:

- Be based in a qualifying local authority area;
- Require skills training in order to re-skill existing staff and significantly develop their role responsibilities; or
- Be looking to recruit new talent to fill existing skills gaps

### Funding & incentives

Employers can avoid many of the costs associated with recruitment by working with local skills Bootcamp providers to connect with people who are skilled and ready to start a new role.

### Costs to the employer

Employers who want to use skills Bootcamps to retrain/ upskill their existing employees will contribute 30% of the cost of the course. Existing employees may also need time to study and attend classes depending on their working hours and status, and the flexibility of the course.

### Further information

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-skills-fund#skills-bootcamps>

## 3. Skills Funding in English Regions (Local Enterprise Partnerships)

There are 38 Local Economic Partnerships in England, set up by local businesses and organisations in sub-regional areas (often covering a county or city region). Government policy is that they prioritise policies and actions on the basis of clear economic evidence and intelligence from businesses and local communities. Their interventions are designed to improve productivity across the local economy to benefit people and communities with the aim of creating more inclusive economies.

This section highlights 9 of the LEPs and their Local Growth Hub programmes. Those listed are those with particular priorities for the science and nuclear industries.

Programmes will almost always be limited to organisations operating in the area in question.

The list of all Local Economic Partnerships is available at:

<https://www.lepnetwork.net/about-leps/location-map/>

### Cambridgeshire & Peterborough LEP

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Growth Hub offers business advice which can include signposting to other nationally-available support programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development. Support is primarily aimed at small and startup businesses in the area.

They also offer targeted workshops and short courses aimed at business growth.

#### Cost to the employer

Workshops are free to small businesses in the area.

#### Further information

<https://cpcagrowthhub.co.uk/>

### Cheshire & Warrington LEP

#### Accelerate Programme

Accelerate is a programme designed to provide employees who live or work in Cheshire and Warrington the opportunity to receive funding to go towards the cost of skills training. There are over 100 courses available in topics including:

- Digital Marketing
- ISO Training
- IOSH Training
- Project Management
- Digital Skills
- Management & Leadership
- Logistics & Supply Chain

### Eligibility

Employees who live and/or work in the Cheshire & Warrington LEP area.

### Funding

The programme pays 40% of the cost of the selected courses for eligible employees.

### Cost to the employer

Wages, other employment costs, and any training beyond the funded apprenticeship provision.

### Further information

<https://candwgrowthhub.co.uk/accelerate/>

## Cumbria LEP

### Cumbria Chamber Business Solutions

Chamber Business Solutions offers a range of training and development solutions for businesses of any size throughout Cumbria

### Eligibility and Funding

Costs and levels of subsidy vary according to businesses and their needs.

### Centre for Leadership Performance

The Centre for Leadership Performance in Cumbria offers:

- Bespoke leadership consultancy for individual companies
- Leader to Leader, a multi-modular open leadership development programme aimed at executives and senior leaders.
- Workshops to build specific skills

### The Edge Programme

Funded training solutions delivered by a partnership of Cumbrian Colleges and training providers.

The Edge advisers will identify skills gaps in the business and offer a training solution which supports business growth and seeks to raise the attainment level of the learners engaged.

- A menu of funded training courses for employees of Cumbrian SME businesses
- Support for businesses of any size undergoing industrial restructure including funded training and employability support for staff at risk of redundancy

### Eligibility

- Eligible businesses must have a base in Cumbria and employ fewer than 250 employees. Those who are self-employed are also eligible for support.
- Support is prioritised to the following industrial sectors: construction; visitor economy, clean energy, advanced manufacturing; rural economy; health & social care; professional services, creative & cultural and logistics.
- Eligible employees must be aged over 16 years of age, be resident in the UK and be employed by a Cumbrian SME business.

**State Aid** – this programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund, so State Aid limits apply. The business must not have exceeded receipt of maximum value 200,000 euros of state aid in the last 3 financial years.

#### Further information

<https://cumbriagrowthhub.co.uk/>

<https://www.theedgeincumbria.co.uk/>

## Heart of the South West LEP

The Heart of the South West Growth Hub offers business advice and the Heart of the South West Skills Launchpad platform. These offer signposting to other nationally-available skills programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

There is also a range of workshops aimed at business growth and development.

Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development. Support is primarily aimed at small and startup businesses in the area.

#### Further information

<https://www.heartofswgrowthhub.co.uk/>

<https://skillslaunchpad.org.uk/skills/>

## New Anglia LEP

The New Anglia Growth Hub offers business advice and a dedicated Skills Portal platform. These offer signposting to other nationally-available skills programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

There is also a range of free workshops aimed at business growth and development.

Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development. Support is primarily aimed at small and startup businesses in the area.

#### Further information

<https://newangliagrowthhub.co.uk/skills-portal/>

## North East LEP

The North East Growth Hub offers business advice and a dedicated Skills Portal platform. These offer signposting to other nationally-available skills programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

There is also a range of free workshops aimed at business growth and development.

Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development. Support is primarily aimed at small and startup businesses in the area.

#### Further information

<https://www.northeastgrowthhub.co.uk/>



## Oxfordshire LEP

### Apprenticeships support

The OxLEP Skills Team provides information and support to young people and businesses to help them to establish apprenticeships in local businesses.

### Find Your Future platform

An interactive platform giving young people information about careers information in the LEP area, with dedicated areas for sectors including Life Sciences & Pharmaceutical, and Engineering Manufacturing & Logistics.

### Skills for Business

A support programme for small & medium enterprises to help them identify and evaluate their skills and learning needs, including upskilling current staff. These offer signposting to other nationally-available skills programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

There is also a range of free workshops aimed at business growth and development.

### Eligibility

Some programmes are aimed at small and medium enterprises in the LEP area.

**State Aid** – this programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund, so State Aid limits apply. The business must not have exceeded receipt of maximum value 200,000 euros of state aid in the last 3 financial years.

### Further information

<https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/skills>

## South East LEP

The South East Growth Hub offers business advice which can include signposting to other nationally-available support programmes described elsewhere in this Guide.

There is also a range of free workshops aimed at business growth and development.

Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development. Support is primarily aimed at small and startup businesses in the area.

### Further information

<https://southeastbusiness.org.uk/services/skills-employment/>

## Tees Valley LEP

The Tees Valley Growth Hub offers business advice which can include signposting to other nationally-available support programmes described elsewhere in this Guide. Advisers can also help employers to apply for finance to grow their businesses, which may be used for staff development.

There is also a range of free workshops aimed at business growth and development.

## Tees Valley Skills for Growth Programme

A programme offering support and advice to employers to access training and support to upskill their current workforce

- An SME employer with fewer than 250 employees and an annual turnover below €50m (approximately £38m), or a balance sheet below €43m (approximately £33m)
- Based in the Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-On-Tees)

Eligible sectors include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Chemical and Process
- Logistics
- Life Sciences
- Digital
- Energy and Renewables
- Business and Professional Services
- Health and Social Care
- Culture and Leisure
- Construction

**State Aid** – this programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund, so State Aid limits apply. The business must not have exceeded receipt of maximum value 200,000 euros of state aid in the last 3 financial years.

## Further information

<https://www.teesvalleybusiness.com/support-for-businesses/skills-for-growth/>



## 4. Skills Funding in Scotland



## Apprenticeships (Scotland)

An apprentice is a paid employee in a job with substantive, sustained high quality training in order to become competent in a specific profession. In Scotland, each apprentice will be registered on a Framework setting out the qualifications and competences they need to achieve in their occupational area.

There are three types of Scottish apprenticeship:

**Modern Apprenticeships** are available at Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework Levels 5 to 11 (equivalent to Levels 2 to 7 in England and Wales). They allow new or existing employees to work towards an approved qualification, alongside their job.

**Graduate Apprenticeships** at SCQF Levels 8 to 11 (equivalent to Levels 5 to 7 in England and Wales) incorporate a degree level qualification whilst in full-time employment.

**Foundation Apprenticeships** are not employed status like other apprenticeships, but give school pupils aged 14-18 (school Years S3-S6) experience of the world of work, helping them gain a qualification relevant to their career. Students can complete work-based elements of a Modern Apprenticeship alongside their other studies, such as Highers. They spend part of the week out of school, gaining practical experience at college and with a local employer.

### Eligibility

Apart from Foundation Apprenticeships, Scottish funding for apprentices is prioritised for those between 16 and 24, employed on an apprenticeship contract. Funding for those aged over 25 is limited to specified priority sectors, and people who need additional support.

### Funding

Modern Apprenticeship funding is routed directly to training providers and is part of their agreed funding contracts with Skills Development Scotland. Employers interested in employing an apprentice will therefore need to discuss the training provision beforehand with their local college or relevant training provider.

The Apprenticeship Levy applies across the UK, including Scotland, but HM Treasury provides the relevant portion to the Scottish government, and provider contracting system means that employers do not need to be directly involved in the use of their Levy pot to fund their apprentices in Scotland.

### Cost to the employer

**Wages** – Since the apprentice is an employee, the employer must pay their wages to at least the minimum wage relative to their age. There are separate minimum rates for apprentices who are under 19, or are in their first year of apprenticeship.

See Appendix 1 for information on the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates. Please note that the rates listed are the legal minima. Most apprentices earn more than these rates, and employers should be prepared to pay competitive wages to attract good apprentices.

**Training** – Any training costs beyond the funding rate set by Skills Development Scotland will need to be met by the employer.

### Further information

<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/>

## Flexible Workforce Development Fund (Scotland)

### Description

The Flexible Workforce Development Fund (FWDF) provides funding to create training programmes that meet employer needs. These programmes can be delivered in partnership with their local college, The Open University in Scotland (OUIs) or an independent training provider.

The aim is that employers:

- Have the flexibility to choose the training that best meets their needs.
- Can use the Fund to address priority skills gaps.
- Can access tailored training in high-quality learning environments.
- Engage and motivate existing employees by offering them high quality training to bring the greatest benefits to their organisation.

### Eligibility

Open to Apprenticeship Levy payers and to Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Scotland.

The funding can be used to cover the full costs of training or can go towards partial payment of training costs.

Levy-payers can also use the funding to make improvements to the operation of their supply chain - either nominating one or two supply chain companies to receive the funding instead of their business, or by including staff from supply-chain companies in a training opportunity.

**Ineligible** - Industry qualifications or for training to meet a statutory obligation (these remain the responsibility of employers and it is typical for them to be excluded from public funding).

**Deadline** – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021

### Funding

Levy payers: training up to the value of £15,000.

SMEs: training up to the value of £5,000.

The Scottish Funding Council administers the scheme on behalf of colleges and Open University in Scotland, while Skills Development Scotland administers it for independent training providers

### Cost to the employer

Training that costs above the funding threshold can be arranged, but employers will need to cover the extra costs themselves. Ancillary costs will also be met by employers.

### Further Information

<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/funding/college-funding/flexible-workforce-development/flexible-workforce-development-fund.aspx>

## Adopt an Apprentice (Scotland)

The Adopt an Apprentice scheme offers an incentive to Scottish employers taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.

### Eligibility

This scheme applies to people who have been on an apprenticeship but did not complete it due to redundancy. The apprentice should be taken onto a job with the same Apprenticeship Framework, so that they can complete it.

It applies to Modern Apprentices and Graduate Apprentices. Other usual Scottish apprenticeship eligibility requirements apply

The apprentice must remain with the new employer for at least 12 months (or until they complete their apprenticeship, if sooner).

**Deadline** - 24 June 2021

### Funding

£5,000 paid to the employer, intended to contribute to recruitment and wage costs.

### Cost to the employer

Wages, other employment costs, and any training beyond the funded apprenticeship provision.

### Further information

<https://neu-apprenticeships-web-prd-master-staging.azurewebsites.net/for-employers/adopt-an-apprentice/>

## 5. Skills Funding in Wales



## Apprenticeship Funding (Wales)

An apprentice is a paid employee in a job with substantive, sustained high quality training in order to become competent in a specific profession. Welsh Apprenticeship Frameworks are developed by employers through their Standards Setting Bodies against the Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for Wales (SASW). They set out the required competence and knowledge qualifications, Essential Skills Wales qualifications, any Additional Occupational Requirements and (optionally) information on Employee Rights and Responsibilities.

Frameworks are available at Foundation Apprenticeships (Level 2), Apprenticeships (Level 3) and Higher Apprenticeships (Level 4 and above). The full list of Frameworks can be found on the Apprenticeship Certifications Wales Online database:

<https://acwcerts.co.uk/web/frameworks-library>

### Eligibility

Apprenticeships in Wales are open to all ages, with extra support given to 16-19 year olds in transition from full time education.

### Funding

Apprenticeship funding in Wales is routed directly to training providers and is part of their agreed Work Based Learning funding contracts with Welsh Government. Employers interested in employing an apprentice will therefore need to discuss the training provision beforehand with their local college or relevant training provider.

The Apprenticeship Levy applies across the UK, including Wales, but HM Treasury provides the relevant portion to the Welsh Government, and provider contracting system means that employers do not need to be directly involved in the use of their Levy pot to fund their apprentices in Wales.

### Cost to the employer

**Wages** – Since the apprentice is an employee, the employer must pay their wages to at least the minimum wage relative to their age. There are separate minimum rates for apprentices who are under 19, or are in their first year of apprenticeship.

See Appendix 1 for information on the National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates. Please note that the rates listed are the legal minima. Most apprentices earn more than these rates, and employers should be prepared to pay competitive wages to attract good apprentices.

**Training** – Funding rates are fixed between training providers and Welsh Government. Any training costs beyond the funding rate will need to be met by the employer.

### Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/apprenticeships>

## Apprenticeship Incentives (Wales)

Incentives to help businesses to recruit young people, disabled people and those who have been made redundant, in Wales.

### Eligibility

Employers must operate in Wales and apprentices must be registered on a Welsh Apprenticeship Framework.

**Deadline** – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021

### Funding

#### 16-24 year olds

- £4,000 for each new apprentice recruited aged under 25 where the contract of employment is for at least 30 hours per week.
- £2,000 for each new apprentice recruited aged under 25 where the contract of employment is under 30 hours per week.
- Payments will be limited to a maximum of ten apprentices per employer.
- This incentive applies to apprenticeships delivered at Levels 2-5 only.

#### 25 and over

- £2,000 for each new apprentice recruited aged 25 and over where the contract of employment is for at least 30 hours per week.
- £1,000 for each new apprentice recruited aged 25 and over where the contract of employment is under 30 hours per week.
- Payments will be limited to a maximum of ten apprentices per employer
- This incentive applies to apprenticeships delivered at Levels 2-5 only.

#### Re-employment of Redundant apprentices

- £2,600 for the re-employment of redundant apprentices to allow them to complete their training, where the contract of employment is at least 30 hours per week.
- £1,300 for the re-employment of redundant apprentices to allow them to complete their training, where the contract of employment is less than 30 hours per week.
- The incentive applies to apprentices made redundant between 23 March 2020 and 30 September 2021.
- The incentive for employing redundant apprentices applies to all redundant apprentices irrespective of age.
- The apprentice must continue to follow the same Apprenticeship Framework Pathway.
- This incentive applies to apprenticeships delivered at Levels 2-5 only.

#### Incentive payment for employing Disabled People

- £1,500 for each new apprentice recruited.
- Payments apply to all apprentices identified as disabled irrespective of age.
- Payments can be claimed in addition to the 16-24, 25 and over and redundancy incentives.
- This incentive applies to apprenticeships delivered at Levels 2-5 only.

### Exceptions

- Zero hour contracts are ineligible
- Shared Apprenticeship models are ineligible

### Cost to the employer

Wages, other employment costs, and any training beyond the funded apprenticeship provision.

### Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/skills-and-training-programmes/apprenticeships/funding-available>

## Skills for Employers & Employees programme (North Wales)

Financial support to raise employee skills and knowledge through subsidised training and development. Vocational training is available in a range of key sectors including: Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering and Construction, Health and Social Care, Land-based, Energy and Professional Services.

### Eligibility

Six counties of North Wales:

- Flintshire
- Wrexham
- Denbighshire
- Conwy
- Anglesey
- Gwynedd

Employers identify the skills gaps and training opportunities of their workforce, with support from Employer Engagement and ESF teams. Approved providers manage courses on employers' behalf, according to the training plan.

**State Aid** – this programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund, so State Aid limits apply. The business must not have exceeded receipt of maximum value 200,000 euros of state aid in the last 3 financial years.

### Funding

A proportion of training costs will be paid subject to employer organisation size (see next section below), according to the agreed training plan.

### Cost to the employer

- micro and small businesses pay 30% of the training costs.
- medium sized businesses pay 40% of training costs
- large businesses pay 50% of training costs

All normal employment costs and expenses will apply.

### Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/skills-and-training-programmes/workplace-skills/see-skills-employers-and-employees>



## Upskilling@Work (East Wales, West Wales, Valleys)

Subsidised training to enhance skills and increase productivity in the workplace, and provide accredited qualifications.

Employers work with Business Wales to identify suitable staff for the programme, and develop a training plan to increase generic, technical and transferable skills from Entry Level 1 to Level 6.

Upskilling@Work has programmes (titled SO1 and SO2) operating in 2 regions - east Wales and west Wales and the Valleys.

Both operations are identical but they target staff at different levels of skills competency:

- SO1 provides training at Entry Level and Level 2 for employees who have no or low qualifications.
- SO2 provides training for employees to increase their technical or job specific skills from Level 3 to Level 6.

If the training is on the approved list of courses, and is delivered by a participating further education college, then it can be offered at a reduced cost.

Applications can be made for funding of courses not on the list.

### Eligibility

Businesses of any size operating in:

- **West Wales and the Valleys** - Bridgend, RCT, Caerphilly, Merthyr Tydfil, Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen
- **East Wales** - Monmouth, Newport, Cardiff, Vale of Glamorgan and Powys

### Funding

A proportion of training costs will be paid subject to employer organisation size (see next section below), according to the agreed training plan.

### Cost to the employer

- small employers pay 30% of the training fees
- medium sized companies pay 40% of the training fees
- large organisations will pay 50% of the training fees

All normal employment costs and expenses will apply.

### Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/skills-and-training-programmes/workplace-skills/upskillwork>

## Skills for Industry 2 (South West Wales)

Subsidised, sector specific, work relevant training in South West Wales. Sectors include:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Automotive
- Care
- Construction
- Creative Industries
- Energy
- Engineering
- Financial and Professional Services
- Food
- ICT
- Science
- Tourism

There are two strands (S01 and S02).

S01- staff with low or no qualifications to help them up to Level 2

S02 - Level 3 and above.

Training providers give advice and support and develop a training plan.

## Eligibility

Companies in the specified sectors in South West Wales

## Funding

A proportion of training costs will be paid subject to employer organisation size (see next section below), according to the agreed training plan.

## Cost to the employer

- small employers pay 30% of the training fees
- medium sized companies pay 40% of the training fees
- large organisations will pay 50% of the training fees

All normal employment costs and expenses will apply.

## Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/skills-and-training-programmes/workplace-skills/upskillingwork>

## METaL (Materials and Manufacturing Education Training and Learning) (Wales)

Materials and manufacturing work- based learning to the manufacturing sector across Wales.

METaL offers technical courses in subjects, including: Introduction to Materials Engineering, Manufacturing Technology, Computer Aided Design, Advanced Imaging, Practical Metallurgy.

Course are tailored with the support of Swansea University staff to individual business needs.

### Eligibility

Welsh businesses in the manufacturing sector.

### Funding and cost to employers

Courses are subsidised so that they cost £300 - £350 each. Businesses need to commit staff time from their work to participate (3-day course).

**State Aid** – this programme is part-funded by the European Social Fund, so State Aid limits apply. The business must not have exceeded receipt of maximum value 200,000 euros of state aid in the last 3 financial years.

### Further information

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/skillsgateway/skills-and-training-programmes/workplace-skills/metal>

## 6. Free and subsidised resources



## The Skills Toolkit

Free courses to help employees learn new skills or change jobs. Includes general skills and more sector-specific skills. The Skills Toolkit is hosted by the UK Government through the National Careers Service. All courses are available online for free through the government portal.

### Courses include

- digital design and marketing
- computer science and coding
- practical maths
- computer essentials
- personal growth and wellbeing
- professional development
- business and finance

Courses are not accredited, although most do have a certificate of completion available.

### Providers include

Google, Open University, Cisco, FutureLearn, University of Leeds, Microsoft, Carnegie Mellon, Virtual College, Good Things Foundation, Accenture, Lancaster University, LinkedIn, King's College London, Learning Curve Group, Institute of Coding

### Further information

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/find-a-course/the-skills-toolkit>

## OpenLearn from the Open University

The Open University offers several hundred short courses at introductory level (from 4 to 40 hours) for free through its OpenLearn platform.

Courses include (selected relevant examples)

- Basic science
- Statistics
- Software development
- Digital communications
- Information security
- Mathematics for science and technology
- Corporate responsibility for industrial accidents
- Project governance and Project Management Offices

Courses include a certificate of completion.

### Further information

[www.open.edu/openlearn](http://www.open.edu/openlearn)

## UK Learns from Pearson

Pearson offers several hundred short courses at introductory level (from 4 to 24 hours) for free through its UK Learns platform.

### Courses include (selected relevant examples)

- Understanding Computer Systems
- Systems Engineering: Challenging complexity
- Management and Leadership (Introductory courses)
- Introduction to cyber security
- Introducing Engineering

Courses include a certificate of completion.

### Further information

<https://www.uklearns.pearson.com/>

## FutureLearn

FutureLearn offers a range of several hundred short courses (4 to 24 hours) available for free. There are also paid options that include access to more courses, certificates of completion, and accredited assessments (up to online degrees and postgraduate expert level).

### Courses include (selected relevant examples)

- Principles of Engineering
- Scientific Writing
- Digital communications
- Information security
- Data Science
- Mathematics for Machine Learning and AI

### Further information

[futurelearn.com](https://futurelearn.com)

## 7. Appendix – National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage

For the fiscal year 2021/22, the rates for National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage are:

Age	National Minimum Wage (£ per hour)	National Living Wage (£ per hour)
16-18	<b>4.30</b>	
19-23 and in first year of apprenticeship	<b>4.30</b>	
18-20 (after first year)	<b>6.56</b>	
21-22 (after first year)	<b>8.36</b>	
23 and over (after first year)		<b>8.91</b>

Please note that the above rates are the legal minima. Most apprentices earn more than these rates, and employers should be prepared to pay competitive wages to attract good apprentices.

Rates may change due to legislation. The latest rates are available at

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>