



Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Traineeships

Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships, sustainable employment, and further learning

**Framework for delivery
Version 2 – November 2020**

Covers the period 1 September 2020 to 31 July 2021

This document provides guidance on the delivery of Traineeships. This is a Version 2 of the document published on 31 August 2020. We have highlighted those sections where changes have been made.



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Executive summary

1. In July 2020, the Chancellor provided additional investment for a reformed and expanded traineeship programme to help young people, who are expected to be disproportionately affected by the economic fallout of coronavirus (COVID-19), into work.
2. The key developments are:
 - funding to provide 30,000 new traineeships
 - an increased funding rate for Adult Education Budget (AEB) funded traineeships for those aged 19-24
 - maximum duration of a traineeship extended to one year where learners need it
 - young people with an existing Level 3 qualification become eligible for a traineeship
 - a more flexible work placement element of between 70 and 240 hours, which can be done with multiple employers if needed
 - an increased line of sight to occupational standards to support progression into apprenticeships and sector specific jobs
 - inclusion of digital skills where needed
 - employers who make new work placement opportunities available may also receive an incentive payment of £1,000 per learner, for up to 10 learners in each of the 9 regions. More details are set out in the Employer Incentive Payments section of this guidance.
 - greater collaboration locally to link traineeships with local labour markets, Jobcentre Plus and local careers advisors.
3. This Framework for Delivery provides employers, education and training providers, and young people with information about how all traineeships should be delivered from 1 September 2020.
4. The period 1 September 2020 to 31 July 2021 is not a traditional funding or academic year. After the Chancellor's announcement in July, we needed time to develop new processes. In this document the term 'traineeships in 2020 to 2021' refers to the period from 1 September 2020 to 31 July 2021.
5. Annex A provides a summary of the areas where the Framework has changed for traineeships in 2020 to 2021.
6. This Traineeships Framework for Delivery (the Framework) should always be read alongside the [ESFA funded adult education budget \(AEB\): funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021](#) (The ESFA AEB Funding Rules) or [The ESFA 16-19](#)

[education funding guidance](#) (The ESFA 16-19 Funding Guidance), especially how they affect the delivery of traineeships.

What are traineeships?

7. Traineeships were introduced in 2013. They are an education and training programme with work experience for young people whose preference is to find a job or apprenticeship but who 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.

8. Traineeships are a focused, flexible offer with a direct line of sight to employment. They allow young people to continue in learning with a work-based programme of training designed to help them to develop the skills and experience needed to secure apprenticeships and other sustainable employment. In doing so, traineeships aim to reduce the proportion of young people not in employment, education and training and raise the participation of 16 to 18-year-olds in education and training.

9. The aim of traineeships is to secure young people's progression to a positive outcome as quickly as possible - where they are not ready to take this step without the preparation that the traineeship provides. A traineeship will be considered achieved when the learner progresses to one of the defined outcomes.

10. Since 2013 traineeships have had a positive impact. In 2016/17, 62% of trainees progressed into an apprenticeship, employment or further learning in the year following the study¹. The report [Estimating the impact of traineeships June 2019](#) found:

- 75% of trainees started in an apprenticeship, employment, or further learning within 12 months of starting the traineeship.
- 33% of trainees started an apprenticeship within 12 months of starting a traineeship, compared with 7% of the matched comparison group.

11. Traineeships also contribute to social mobility, encouraging participation from under-represented groups. In 2018/19, 28% of trainees were from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds compared to 12.5% of apprentices and 23% of trainees identified themselves as having a learning difficulty and/or disability compared to 11% of apprentices².

12. We will continue to review learner information on disability, gender, ethnicity, and other relevant characteristics to ensure that all young people who meet the criteria are able to access and benefit from traineeships and we will monitor progress on this.

¹ [Outcome based success measures](#) – 2016/17 cohort – published January 2020

² [2018/19 SFR Table 7](#)

Who are traineeships for?

Age range

13. Traineeships are available for young people aged 16 to 24³ and for young people with Education, Health and Care Plans⁴ or Learning Difficulty Assessments up to academic age 25.

Target group

14. In the economic fallout of coronavirus (COVID-19) young people will be at substantial risk of unemployment and of becoming and remaining not in education, employment, or training (NEET). A traineeship should improve the quality of their options for entering an apprenticeship, other sustainable employment, or further learning.

15. The core target group for traineeships in 2020 to 2021 will be young people who, regardless of their background:

- are not currently in employment and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it.
- are age 16 to 24 and qualified up to and including a full Level 3,⁵ and
- providers and employers believe they have a reasonable chance of being ready for an apprenticeship or other employment within 6 months of completing a traineeship.

16. Being ready for an apprenticeship or other employment within 6 months of completing a traineeship is linked to the definitions for successful outcomes. They allow trainees up to 6 months to achieve a defined successful outcome if they cannot progress to one straight away.

17. Traineeships are not intended for:

- the most disengaged young people, who require very intensive support.
- those who already have the qualifications, skills and experience needed to start an apprenticeship or find work; or
- those already in employment.

³ For the detailed definition of the 16-19 age range please refer to the ESFA 16-19 education: funding guidance, and the AEB Funding and Performance Management Rules for the 19-24 inclusive age group.

⁴ Under the Children and Families Act 2014, Education, Health and Care plans began to replace Learning Difficulty Assessments from September 2014 in all local authorities.

⁵ The level of attainment for a full Level 3 is confirmed in the [ESFA funded \(AEB\) funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021](#)

18. A traineeship may be an option for young people with some previous employment but who lack the skills, experience and behaviours sought by employers. The traineeship in this case would aim to equip the trainee to secure sustainable employment in an apprenticeship or elsewhere.

Funding principles

19. The Education and Skills Funding Agency fund traineeships for 16- to 18-year-olds (and 19- to 24-year-olds, and up to age 25, with an education health and care plan) through the ESFA's young people's funding methodology for study programmes.

20. We fund traineeships for 19- to 24-year-olds through the ESFA's Adult Education Budget funding methodology.

21. Traineeships are not part of the AEB which has been apportioned to mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) and the Greater London Authority (GLA) from August 2019 and have remained a nationally funded and contracted programme with funds provided by ESFA, regardless of where trainees reside in England.

22. More details on funding can be found below in section 'How are traineeships delivered and funded?'

Apprenticeships

23. Apprenticeships are jobs that provide high quality training to ensure that an apprentice can achieve full competency in their occupation and prepare them for a successful career.

24. As a type of study programme for young people who want to progress to an apprenticeship or other employment relatively quickly, traineeships are a key route for preparing young people to compete for and succeed in apprenticeships.

25. Traineeships in 2020 to 2021 will continue to provide a supported transition to apprenticeships by preparing young people for occupational standards and through closer links to local labour markets.

26. Participation in a traineeship cannot guarantee progression to an apprenticeship.

16 to 19 study programmes

27. For 16 to 19-year olds, study programmes ensure that every young person undertakes a programme of education with qualifications and other activity focused on employment and career goals that reflect their ambitions and capabilities. For some this will mean taking substantial academic or vocational qualifications; for some it will mean an apprenticeship; and for others a traineeship, work experience or other employment-focused training will be more appropriate.

28. Learners who have not achieved a GCSE grade 9 to 4 (equivalent to A*-C) in English and maths will need to continue to study these subjects towards achieving those qualifications as part of their study programme.

29. As with other study programmes and apprenticeships, young people undertaking traineeships are meeting their duty to participate in education or training. Since 2013, young people have been required to participate in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. This can be

- full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider.
- full-time work or volunteering (20 hours or more) combined with part-time education or training leading to relevant regulated qualifications; or
- an apprenticeship, traineeship, T Level or supported internship.

30. A supported internship, rather than a traineeship, may be more suitable for young people with complex needs who require additional support to learn in the workplace. [Supported internships](#) are a type of study programme specifically aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 with a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan, who want to move into employment and need extra support to do so. They are available as employer-based provision, supported by job coaches. Through supported internships, young people have the opportunity to move directly into paid employment.

31. Providers delivering traineeships to 16 to 19-year olds will want to read this Framework alongside the [study programme principles](#) and the ESFA 16-19 Funding Guidance.

32. This document applies to traineeships in England only and should be read along with the funding guidance and rules published by the ESFA affecting the delivery of traineeships from 1 September 2020 onwards.

What do traineeships provide?

High level offer

33. For starts from 1 September 2020⁶, traineeships will be made up of four core elements:

⁶ Prior to 1 September 2020, the Traineeships Framework for Delivery 2025 to 2016 applies alongside temporary flexibilities introduced for the period 23 March 2020 to 31 August 2020: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-maintaining-further-education->

- i A focused period of work preparation training with a training provider, covering areas like CV writing, interview preparation, job search and inter-personal skills.
 - ii A high-quality work experience placement with an employer to give the young person meaningful work experience and an opportunity to develop workplace skills.
 - iii A basic skills element with English, maths and digital where needed.
 - iv Flexible vocational learning and qualifications with a focus on preparing the trainee for occupational standards within apprenticeships or occupation specific employment, depending on the needs of the young person and linked to the local labour market. This learning does not replace the 20% off the job training once they start an apprenticeship but should be recognised prior learning.
34. Providers and employers have the freedom to bring these four core elements together in the best way to engage and support individual trainees.
35. At a high level we expect providers to do the following.
- Base their traineeship offer on strong knowledge of the local labour market.
 - Work collaboratively with employers, Jobcentre Plus, careers advisors and other local partners on referrals and links to job opportunities.
 - Work with young people from the outset to assess their individual needs and tailor a programme that meets those needs against the core elements, including consideration of timing, duration, options for flexible learning and progression to local opportunities.
 - Provide vocational learning that is sector focused and prepares the trainee for occupational standards, and therefore apprenticeship opportunities and sector specific employment, depending on the needs of the young person and linked to the local labour market.

Work experience placements and employer involvement

36. The purpose of traineeships is to prepare young people for employment so that they can progress successfully to apprenticeships and other sustainable work.
37. The involvement of employers is crucial to the success of traineeships. A work experience placement with an external employer in the sector in which the young person is interested is critical to making traineeships attractive and effective.

38. Work experience in traineeships should give the young person exposure to a real workplace so they can develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, attitudes, and behaviours they need to succeed at work. Ideally this should be with an external employer (or employers if multiple placements are needed), external to the learning environment and at an external site. There are very few exceptions to this that will be funded⁷. For example, local authorities with a training arm where the direct provision of training is clearly not the local authority's core business, work experience within departments which are separate to the training arm counts as external work experience.

39. In these cases, providers will need to make a judgement about whether their work placements genuinely provide students with the experiences they need to develop the work-related attributes expected of a traineeship. Ultimately Ofsted make judgements about the suitability of these arrangements through inspection and grading of provider.

40. Simulated activity in an artificial environment may form a helpful part of work preparation training but will not count as work experience for the purposes of traineeships.

41. Our expectation is that work experience placements will last a minimum of 70 hours. Longer placements may be necessary to prepare young people for work, but these would need to be based on clearly identified learner needs.

42. There is flexibility to support providers and employers to design programmes which meet the needs of young people and enable work experience placements to take place alongside the other training elements of the traineeship. For young people in receipt of benefits, the work experience placement can last up to 240 hours (or extended if the offer of an apprenticeship place is accepted) at a maximum of 30 hours a week.

43. Work experience placements do not have to be done consecutively. In some cases, such as where young people are undertaking their work experience in small or medium sized enterprises, it may be appropriate for them to undertake multiple shorter placements in different organisations. This would need careful planning to ensure it adds up to the high-quality work experience we expect for all trainees.

44. Providers and employers will be free to agree how the placement fits best with the other components⁸. Some young people may need to focus primarily on English, maths, digital and work preparation learning and skills at the beginning of their traineeship before moving into the work experience placement. Others may benefit from starting

⁷ For details refer to the ESFA funding guidance and rules

⁸ Where the trainee is claiming benefits, providers and employers should also work with Jobcentre Plus. Initial contact details available at <https://www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus>

their work experience with a supportive employer early in the traineeship, with work preparation and English, maths and digital built in alongside.

45. We expect providers to offer ongoing support to employers and young people as needed throughout the work experience placement. This will enable continuous learning and reflection for trainees, with the work experience element both reinforcing acquired skills and giving individuals experience that will help equip them for future employment.

46. In Annex B we have included the principles for good quality placements as part of traineeships from the March 2015 version of this document. It will be for providers and employers in partnership to agree how these principles are implemented in traineeships. We will share more guidance and examples of good quality work placements from September 2020 onwards on [the traineeships collection](#) on GOV.UK.

47. We expect most providers will name the employer providing the work placement in advance of the young person being enrolled, as a placement with a named employer is likely to attract many young people to take up opportunities. Or if there will be more than one placement, the employer for the first one.

48. However, we recognise that providers may need a short period of time to work with individual young people before confirming the employer who will offer their work experience placement. Time may be needed to assess prior attainment and to identify individual aspirations and areas of interest. We will, therefore, continue to offer the flexibility for providers to name the employer for the work experience placement (or at least the first employer if there will be more than one work placement) after the traineeship has started. We expect to see most work placements agreed within four weeks of the traineeship starting. Now that traineeships can last up to year, we recognise work placements may take longer to confirm for some young people, but an employer must be identified on the ILR within 60 days.

Exit Interview

49. We expect all traineeship programmes to offer an exit interview with the work experience host at the end of the placement.

50. Where possible, the young person should receive a real job interview where an apprenticeship or other post has become available. However, we recognise that this will not always be feasible. In these cases, a formal exit interview with the employer who provided their placement will help the young person to practise and prepare for future opportunities.

51. In either case, young people should receive meaningful written feedback from the employer reflecting the time spent on their placement to help them improve their performance.

Work preparation training

52. The content of the work preparation training is for providers and employers to design and agree. They are best placed to decide the work preparation that trainees need. We expect this to include any personal and social skills that the young person needs to develop to get the most out of their work experience and prepare them for future employment.

53. It is important that work preparation training covers both the skills that young people will need to find and secure employment (for example, job search techniques, CV writing and interview skills) and the skills and attributes that they need to sustain employment (such as planning, time-keeping, team working, self-confidence, resilience and strength of character).

54. Where you deliver non-regulated learning as part of work preparation training, you must ensure it is eligible for funding by checking the ESFA AEB Funding Rules or the ESFA 16-19 Funding Guidance as appropriate.

55. Work preparation training should also include preparation for the specific work experience placement the young person will be undertaking.

English and maths

56. Employers are clear that literacy and numeracy are crucial employability skills, so English and maths form a key part of traineeships.

57. Achieving a Level 2 qualification, and in particular a GCSE grade 9 to 4 or A* to C, in both maths and English helps learners to progress to further study, training and skilled employment. The ESFA's [maths and English condition of funding](#) ensures that all 16 to 19 year olds have the best chance of achieving this standard, and get the necessary support to do so.

58. Students on a traineeship programme are subject to the condition of funding in the same way as students on other study programmes.

59. All young people taking part in a traineeship are expected to study English and maths. Unless they have already achieved them, young people aged 16-19 are expected to continue to work towards achieving a GCSE grade 9 to 4 (equivalent to A*-C) in English and maths, by studying an approved qualification. These are GCSEs and certain other qualifications, known as 'stepping stone' qualifications, confirmed in the [math and English condition of funding guidance](#). For young people aged 19 or above, a functional skills qualification alone at Level 2 may be more appropriate. Providers should refer to the relevant funding rules.

60. A change⁹ is being made to [the maths and English condition of funding](#) from the academic year 2020 to 2021 that will apply to students on traineeship programmes. We have removed the element of the condition of funding that treats ALL traineeships as part time. Traineeships will now be treated in a consistent way with other provision in that we will look at trainees' planned hours to determine if they are full or part time.

61. It is important that all trainees are stretched when doing their English and maths. Where taught, English and maths should therefore build on the level of the qualification already achieved, so a student who has achieved a GCSE grade 3 (equivalent to a D) or a Level 1 qualification should be taught at Level 2 rather than Level 1, for example.

62. Providers should aim to support young people to complete their English and maths qualifications within their traineeship where possible. The extended duration of up to a year for traineeships in 2020 to 2021 will help where it may take longer for a young person to achieve these crucial elements. Where needed however, we would expect young people to continue and complete these qualifications after the formal traineeship is achieved. For instance, this could be as part of further study towards employment, or as part of their apprenticeship. Providers will need to comply with the relevant funding guidance and rules in this area.

63. More information on the entitlement within study programs is available in the [16-19 funding: maths and English condition of funding](#), including the qualifications approved for teaching to 16 to 19 year olds who meet the condition of funding

64. More information on the entitlement for individuals aged 19 and over, including the qualifications on which eligible learners must be enrolled, is available in the ESFA AEB Funding Rules.

Digital skills

65. You should assess the digital skills of trainees aged 19 and over and where needed, you should support them to attain digital skills up to and including Level 1.

66. From 1 August 2020, the Department for Education has introduced a new legal entitlement to full funding for adults aged 19 and over, with no or low digital skills, on specified digital skills qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1. There is more information on the new entitlement in the ESFA AEB Funding Rules.

67. Alongside the new entitlement, the Department for Education is reforming basic digital skills qualifications, introducing new Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs). More information is available on [Digital qualifications: evaluation progress](#).

⁹ The updated version will be published here <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-of-funding>

EDSQs are the only qualifications funded under the entitlement in 2020/21. The first of the new EDSQs is now available. Awarding organisations are currently developing others which will be added to Ofqual's [Register of Regulated Qualifications](#) once approved.

68. The new entitlement applies to 19 to 24-year old traineeships. Any adult with low or no digital skills (i.e. less than level 1) is therefore eligible for full funding of specified digital skill qualifications under the entitlement. The only qualifications specified under the entitlement are EDSQs.

69. While more EDSQs yet to be approved, learners can study other level 1 and below digital skills qualifications. They will not be fully funded under the digital entitlement and you should check on [Find a Learning Aim](#) for qualifications we will fund.

70. Providers should aim to support these young people to complete their EDSQ or other digital qualification within their traineeship where possible. Where needed however, we would expect young people aged 19 to 24 to continue and complete these qualifications after the formal traineeship is achieved. For instance, this could be as part of further study towards employment, or as part of their apprenticeship. Providers will need to comply with the relevant funding guidance and rules in this area.

71. The ESFA AEB Funding Rules confirm that we will fully fund non-regulated learning for learners, including those assessed at pre-entry level with significant learning difficulties and/or disabilities as part of a personalised learning programme, where assessment has identified the learner cannot undertake provision identified above.

72. You must assess, enrol, deliver, and record learning under the entitlement as confirmed in the section on the digital entitlement for those aged 19 or over in the ESFA AEB Funding Rules, and in line with rules generally where you use qualifications which are not EDSQs

73. The new digital entitlement is for learners aged 19 or older. For eligible learners supported by the [16 to 19 education funding guidance](#), the study programme can include information technology ('digital') skills where information advice and guidance processes have identified a need for them. These should be delivered in accordance with the funding guidance.

74. A traineeship could also support the development of any digital skills that are part of an occupational standard published by The Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education being linked to in the flexible content (see below).

75. As the digital content is new to traineeships, we will find and share examples of good practice in delivering digital skills as part of traineeships.

Flexible Vocational learning and preparation for Occupational Standards

We aim to share further information to support providers and employers with delivering traineeships that prepare the (young person/learner/trainee) for occupational standards and therefore, apprenticeships and other employment.

76. In addition to the core elements, providers and employers retain the flexibility to add elements to traineeships depending on the needs of young people and the labour market.
77. We encourage providers to work with employers in those sectors where job opportunities exist.
78. To further support the transition from a traineeship to an apprenticeship, or sector focused employment, these additional elements of vocational learning should be occupationally focused where possible.
79. Depending on the needs of a young person and linking to the local labour market, content should prepare the learner for occupational standards, and therefore apprenticeship opportunities and sector specific employment.
80. This content does not, however, replace the 20% off the job training requirement of any apprenticeship that follows.
81. In planning the occupationally focused element of a traineeship, the provider should also consider the duration of any apprenticeship the learner may progress to. The vocational learning in the traineeship should prepare the learner to progress successfully to the apprenticeship without putting at risk the minimum duration of a year.
82. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (The Institute) owns occupational standards¹⁰ which are available on their [website](#). These occupational standards are used in combination with end-point assessment plans as apprenticeship standards. On [Find a Learning Aim](#) you can check which standards we fund as The Institute website will include, for example, standards which are in development.
83. The nature and intensity of the occupationally focused learning will depend on many factors including the trainee's background and preferences, the length of the traineeship, and employment opportunities in the local labour market.

¹⁰ Apprenticeship standards on the Institute website
<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/>

84. The flexible content of traineeships could include high quality and relevant vocational qualifications, skills required by the local labour market or sectors/employers, business, commercial and enterprise skills, or ICT skills. These are examples only and are not designed to be prescriptive or exhaustive. Providers and employers should look to design traineeship programmes that are appropriate for the local labour market needs.

85. This flexible element does not replace any of the 20% off the job training requirement of an apprenticeship. It should however be considered when assessing any recognised learning through documentation or certification for the learner, alongside qualifications gained.

86. As with English and maths qualifications, providers should aim to support young people to complete any vocational qualifications within their traineeship where possible.

87. If they have begun but not yet completed them, we would expect young people to complete these qualifications after the formal traineeship is achieved. For instance, this could be as part of further study towards employment, or as part of their apprenticeship. Any providers delivering qualifications to completion will need to comply with the relevant funding guidance and rules.

Duration

88. The length of a planned traineeship should reflect the needs of the learner – allowing them to get substantial training and experience, while giving employers and providers the flexibility to tailor programmes to the needs of the individual.

89. Traineeships can last between 6 weeks and 12 months. Providers must assess the needs of learners and be able to evidence the outcomes of that. The programme of learning should allow the trainee to progress as soon as possible to a defined traineeship outcome. How long this takes should be reflected in the planned hours.

90. For traineeships in 2020 to 2021, the maximum duration has been extended to 12 months for those learners who are further away from the labour market or need more significant support. However, we expect most trainees, including those aged 19-24, to complete their traineeship within 6 months.

91. Where young people successfully progress earlier than anticipated, this will count as achieving the traineeship. For example, they may through what they have learned apply successfully for an apprenticeship, other employment or planned learning before the traineeship ends. There is a requirement to report the destinations of trainees which is set out in the Outcomes and Progression section.

92. Providers may wish to work with young people who are not yet ready for a traineeship, either as part of their wider 16 to 19 study programme or through their AEB

allocation for those aged 19 to 24, to help them prepare for and move into a traineeship. In doing so providers must comply with the ESFA funding rules and any associated guidance for 16-19 or adult education and ensure there is progression in learning levels.

Achieving a traineeship

93. A young person's traineeship will be achieved when the learner progresses to one of the defined outcomes. The primary measure of success for traineeships is securing positive outcomes for participants in the form of apprenticeships or sustainable employment.

94. Whilst we want most young people to progress from their traineeship into an apprenticeship, sustainable employment, or further learning, we recognise that this will not always be the case.

95. For these young people, traineeships will have significantly increased their skills and given them work experience and a reference to include in their CV, putting them in a much stronger position to find work. In these instances, we expect the provider leading the traineeship to ensure that young people are in contact with organisations that can help them find work or training opportunities and that they are supported to complete English and maths qualifications that they started on their traineeship.

96. We continue to believe that written feedback from the employer where the young person undertook work experience, together with confirmation of any qualifications completed with their provider, is the right form of recognition for achieving a traineeship and will have greater currency in the labour market than a separate mandatory certification process. We also encourage providers and employers to award locally recognised certificates for traineeships, that recognises their achievements and learning.

How are traineeships delivered and funded?

97. The Education and Skills Funding Agency fund traineeships for 16- to 18-year-olds (and 19- to 24-year-olds, and up to age 25, with an education health and care plan) through the ESFA's young people's funding methodology for study programmes¹¹.

98. We fund traineeships for 19- to 24-year-olds through the ESFA's Adult Education Budget funding methodology.

99. Providers delivering traineeships must therefore do so in accordance with the [16-19 education: funding guidance](#) for 16-19 traineeships or the [Adult education budget \(AEB\) funding rules 2020 to 2021](#) for 19-24 traineeships.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/delivering-traineeships-through-efa-funding>

100. Trainees are subject to the 16 to 19 English and maths condition of funding¹². Any trainee starting a traineeship of 150 hours or more, aged 16 to 19, or aged 19 to 25 if they have a Learning Difficulty Assessment or Education and Healthcare Plan, and do not hold a GCSE grade 9 to 4 or A* to C or equivalent qualification in English and/or in maths, are required to study these subjects as part of their traineeship programme.

16 to 19 funded traineeships

101. Education and training providers who currently hold a contract or grant with the ESFA to deliver provision through the ESFA's young people's funding methodology for study programmes can deliver traineeships within the study programme arrangements based on funding per student¹³. We have published updated guidance on [In-year growth for academic year 2020 to 2021](#).

102. Education and training providers who currently deliver traineeships for 16 to 19-year-olds and hold a standalone traineeship contract with the ESFA can deliver traineeships in line with the relevant sections of the ESFA AEB Funding Rules. Details on accessing growth funding are set out in Annex C of the [AEB funding and performance management rules](#).

103. We are currently considering opportunities for providers to access funding to deliver 16 to 19 traineeships. There is guidance on [16 to 19 education \(Non Apprenticeship\): market entry](#).

19 to 24 funded traineeships

104. Traineeships remain a national programme with funding provided by ESFA irrespective of where learners reside in England. It is separate from other ESFA funded AEB and managed as a distinct allocation line within Grants and Contracts.

105. Education and training providers who currently deliver traineeships for 19 to 24-year olds using their traineeship line of funding within their grant allocation can continue to do so. Education and training providers who currently deliver other AEB grant funded provision, but not traineeships, can request a traineeship allocation at performance management reviews.

106. Details on accessing growth funding and a new traineeship allocation are set out in Annex C of the [AEB funding and performance management rules](#).

107. Providers funded through an existing procured AEB Contract for Services contract will no longer be able to provide traineeship starts for 19 to 24-year olds from 1 August

¹² Further details are available at <https://www.gov.uk/16-to-19-funding-maths-and-english-condition-offunding>

¹³ Further information is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/16-to-19-education-funding-allocations>

2021. Providers with an existing Contract for Service that wish to deliver 19 to 24 traineeship starts from 1 August 2021 must successfully secure a contract through the traineeship ITT procurement process. This expiration applies to Contracts for Services only and not grants, which do not expire. Therefore FE Colleges who are funded through a grant funded allocation can continue delivering traineeships as per their grant arrangements and funding rules.

108. The traineeship ITT procurement application window ran from 7 October 2020 to 17:00 GMT on 28 October 2020. The procurement has been launched to expand the traineeship provider market and meet increased demand to ensure national coverage during recovery from coronavirus (COVID-19). Successful providers will have a separate contract enabling them to access the additional funding announced by the Chancellor.

Funding – employer routes

109. 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 AEB, funded by the ESFA, to deliver traineeships for 19 to 24 year olds.

110. 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 provider¹⁴ in their own right for future years.

111. We want employers to take part in traineeships and offer work experience placements because they see the value of the programme to their organisation and sector.

112. For traineeships in 2020 to 2021, Employer Incentive Payments are available to support engagement. More information is available in the section on Employer Incentive Payments below.

113. Traineeships are applicable for a wide range of employers. In many cases, those employers will also offer apprenticeships. This provides an excellent opportunity for those businesses to plan their pipeline of skilled staff over multiple years. For 16 to 19¹⁵

¹⁴ If you are interested in becoming an approved provider further details are available at <https://www.gov.uk/16-to-19-education-market-entry/> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfaregister-of-training-organisations>

¹⁵ Throughout this document the term 16-19-year-old also refers to those young people age 19 to 25 who are subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA) or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) issued by their home local authority.

year olds, traineeships are part of [study programmes](#)¹⁶ to ensure simplicity in funding and to enable young people to move between learning options. For 19 to 24-year olds, traineeships are part of the existing flexibilities within the Adult Education Budget.

Employer Incentive Payments

114. For traineeships in 2020 to 2021, the government is funding a new employer incentive payment, to encourage employers to provide high-quality work placements for trainees and help with the cost of this. These could be administration costs for example or buying any Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) needed for trainees.

115. The employer incentive payments will be available for work placements that take place and are completed between 1st September 2020 up to 31st July 2021. This will allow the incentive to be claimed for Trainees who may have started on programme before the 1st September 2020 but were unable to access a work placement due to the impact of covid-19 until after 1 September 2020.

116. The incentive payments will be available to all employers providing traineeship work placements, both for the first time and to those delivering or expanding an existing offer to make new opportunities available.

117. The incentive payment is not intended to fund every traineeship work placement that an employer offers and we would like to see employers utilising the incentive payments to develop work placement programmes that will build a pipeline to opportunities in their business now and in the future.

118. There is no limit to the number of traineeship work placements that an employer can offer. The incentive payment will be £1,000 per trainee, up to a maximum of 10 incentive payments within each of the 9 regions¹⁷. Employers can apply for the payment on completion of the work placement up to a maximum of 10 trainees within each of the 9 regions.

119. Employers can claim a maximum of ten incentive payments per region in the 9 regions listed below.

- East Midlands
- East of England

¹⁶ This excludes traineeships delivered by 16-19 traineeship providers with a standalone traineeship contract and without study programme funding'

¹⁷ Office For National Statistics Local Authority District to Region (April 2029) Lookup in England
https://geoportal.statistics.gov.uk/datasets/3ba3daf9278f47daba0f561889c3521a_0/data

- London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West
- West Midlands
- Yorkshire & Humber

120. The total work experience hours that a trainee accesses must last at least 70 hours. The training provider can arrange for the trainee to access work placements in different organisations where they wish to explore different sectors and organisations. Where this is the case, work placements must last at least 2 weeks, with each employer, and at least 70 hours in total with each placement supporting progression linked to their learning plan. The employer can still access the incentive payment following completion of the work placement where multiple placements are delivered for the benefit of the trainee.

121. Employers will be able to register their details and claim for the incentive payments through an online portal which will be made available on GOV.uk. We will update the sector once this available. Employers will only be required to register once, which will then allow them to apply for the incentive payment for up to 10 trainees per employer in each of the 9 regions that they deliver in.

122. The payments will be made directly into the employer's bank account once we have processed the claim. Please note that there may be a delay of at least 1 month before the employer receives the payment from us following the completion of the work placement. This is due to the timing of updated data returns and a monthly payments process.

123. Providers will need to ensure that the ILR is updated and timely returns are submitted to the Agency to allow these checks to be made and payments to be processed.

124. The new employer incentive funding has been agreed for the period of 1 September 2020 up to 31 July 2021, subject to availability of funding, as part of HM Government's coronavirus (COVID-19) response. Any decision to continue with employer incentive payments will be made with HM Treasury as part of the Spending Review process.

Connected Companies and Schools

125. Connected companies and charities will be capped at a maximum of 10 payments in each of the 9 regions.

126. For voluntary-aided schools, foundation schools, free schools and academies, the governing body is the employer. So, the cap will apply to each governing body.

127. For other maintained schools, the local authority is the employer. The cap will apply to the local authority and not each individual school.

Employment status and financial support for trainees

128. Young people taking part in traineeships are by definition not yet ready for sustainable employment. Throughout their traineeship, they will develop core skills needed in the workplace and benefit from gaining work experience in a real working environment where they can apply these skills.

129. 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.

130. Young people taking part in traineeships are undertaking education and training and, where they qualify, may benefit from our existing programmes of financial support, including the [16 to 19 bursary fund](#) and [learning support \(within the AEB funding rules guidance\)](#); and from applying for [learner support](#) funding for 19 to 24 year olds.

131. Access to Work funding¹⁸ from the Department for Work and Pensions is available for young people for the work experience placement of their traineeship if they have a disability or health condition that affects their ability to do a job, or means they have to pay extra work-related costs. An Access to Work grant can help pay for travel when young people are unable to use public transport, and workplace support workers, including job coaches.

Outcomes and progression

132. As with other programmes, it is mandatory for further education providers to record young people taking part in and completing traineeships through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR). This includes the requirement to report the

¹⁸ Further information on eligibility and applying for Access to Work funding is available on the Preparing for Adulthood website: <http://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/what-we-do/supported-internships/access-to-work-fund>

destinations of trainees. Further detail is available in the guidance and information on [data collection for further education providers](#).

133. As learner progression to apprenticeships and employment will be reflected in, for example, outcome-based success measures, providers should ensure that their data submissions reflect learner progression. This will also help to demonstrate the overall performance of the programme, which all parties will be able to use to communicate its benefits in future.

134. For traineeships for 16 to 18-year olds, the definitions for successful outcomes are confirmed as part of the [Guidance](#) on ESFA Funded 16-18 traineeships. Successful outcomes will be within 6 months of leaving/completing a traineeship. The trainee will:

- have had 8 consecutive weeks of employment/self-employment of 16 hours a week or more (if 16 or 17 years old with RPA compliant amount of training) or
- have started on an apprenticeship by passing the qualifying period to count in funding terms or
- have started on a further learning course at Level 2 or Level 3 by passing the qualifying period to count in funding terms - the further learning should include a substantial qualification recognised in the [DfE performance tables](#).

135. For traineeships for 19 to 24-year olds, the definitions for successful outcomes are confirmed as part of the [Adult Education AEB Funding Rules 2020 to 2021](#).

- an apprenticeship start that meets the minimum qualifying days evidenced by ILR records or a self-declaration by the learner
- a job, including being self-employed, for at least 16 hours a week and for 8 consecutive weeks within 6 months of leaving a traineeship, evidenced by a declaration from the learner or their employer
- progression to another English or maths qualification, which is a level higher than that achieved in the traineeship
- further learning recognised in the 16 to 19 performance tables (for 19- to 24-year-olds, this includes qualifications as part of the legal entitlement), that:
 - meets minimum qualifying days (set out in paragraph 67 of the ESFA AEB Funding Rules), or
 - a learner self-declares they are studying a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification of at least 150 guided learning hours.

136. If a young person continues their learning after their traineeship rather than going into employment, we will accept that destination as an acceptable outcome from traineeships. There must however be evidence that the learning they do is substantial in

the form of a qualification recognised in the performance tables and of maximum value to support their future employment prospects.

- For 16 to 18 provision a successful further learning outcome will be the study of a substantial qualification at Level 2 and/or 3 recognised in the performance tables.
- For 19 to 24-year olds, progression will need to be a regulated substantial qualification at Level 2 or above that the ESFA has approved for funding outside of an apprenticeship.
- If new English and maths qualifications are started after the traineeship was completed, they will need to be at least a level higher to those achieved through the traineeship to progress the trainee towards achievement of a GCSE grade 9 to 4 (A*-C).

137. Acceptable further learning outcomes are defined in the ESFA rules and guidance.

138. The [Statistics: outcome-based success measures Collection](#) on GOV.UK sets out how outcome-based success measures cover destinations (into employment and learning), earnings and the progression of learners. The latest set of [outcome-based success measures](#) includes data on traineeships.

139. Key information and guidance about qualification achievement rates (QAR) and minimum standards are available in the [Qualification achievement rates and Minimum Standards Collection](#) on GOV.UK. This includes information on our approach to this during coronavirus (COVID-19).

Ensuring quality

140. There are no unique provider eligibility requirements for traineeships beyond the requirements within the relevant funding rules.

141. We are keen to ensure that traineeships remain a high-quality training route for young people and employers.

142. Research by the Learning and Work Institute, some of which was commissioned by the Department for Education, focused on understanding the characteristics of high-quality traineeships, how best to ensure people can access this provision, and how to support progression into further learning and employment.

143. The outcomes of the research¹⁹ are available on the [Learning and Work Institute website](#).

¹⁹ Outcomes of research available on the Learning and work Institute website at <https://learningandwork.org.uk/what-we-do/apprenticeships-technical-education/traineeships-pre-apprenticeships/>

144. We hope to make case studies and other examples of good practice available with a focus on the reformed traineeship programme – delivering digital skills for example, linking to occupational standards and effective local collaboration. This may be as guidance on GOV.UK or for example, through webinars.

145. To ensure a greater focus on getting the best traineeship outcomes for young people, data on progression from traineeships will be used in:

- Provider funding.
- Publishing provider-level job outcome rates to inform young people's and employers' choices; and
- Outcome based success measures for providers based on progression to employment.

146. As with other forms of education and training provision, [The Education Inspection Framework](#)²⁰ applies to the traineeships programme, which is therefore subject to inspection by Ofsted.

Increasing opportunities and referrals

This section is subject to potential further amendment and clarification. We are talking to key stakeholders like The Department for Work and Pensions and the National Careers Service to explore how we can work together to support and maximise young people's engagement in Traineeships.

147. Traineeships are now an established, quality programme. This was recognised by the Chancellor in July 2020 when he included them in his Skills Recovery Package and policy paper [A Plan for Jobs 2020](#). He provided investment to triple the number of traineeship places in 2020 to 2021 academic year and provide an improved offer.

148. Traineeships should continue to form part of the core offer for young people aspiring to apprenticeships or other employment. Many young people will proactively seek out traineeship opportunities where they have not yet been successful in finding work.

149. There is a key role for organisations working with young people to refer them to traineeships programmes where appropriate and available. Local authority services for young people, schools, colleges, Jobcentre Plus Work Coaches, National Careers Service advisers and National Citizen Service providers have an important role in referring interested young people onto traineeships. We will continue to work with these

²⁰ The education inspection framework on the Ofsted website
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/801429/Education_inspection_framework.pdf

partners to provide an effective programme with which young people will want to engage.

150. The completion of a traineeship is not a standalone destination for a young person but a preparation for an apprenticeship or other sustainable employment. It is to this end that employers and providers have a key role in raising awareness of traineeships, engaging young people, and supporting them to enrol and succeed on the programme.

151. Eligible providers can also advertise their traineeships opportunities for free on Gov.uk²¹, using [Find a Traineeship](#)²² and through local Jobcentre Plus.

Fit with the benefit system

This section is subject to potential further amendment and clarification. We are talking to The Department for Work and Pensions to clarify how the reformed Traineeship programme fits with the benefit system.

152. Many young people who want to take part in a traineeship aged 18 to 24 will be claiming JSA or Universal Credit. Traineeships can provide a high-quality route to help them gain the skills they need to find work. We have deliberately designed the programme to have the flexibility to enable providers to meet the requirements of most young people who are claiming benefits. This enables young people to continue to receive Universal Credit or other unemployment benefits whilst taking part in a traineeship. When providers and employers design traineeships locally and intend to offer places to benefits claimants, providers must still consult Jobcentre Plus to ensure a suitable fit with the benefits system and local labour market requirements.

153. All eligible young people will be able to participate on a full-time basis and maintain their entitlement to benefit, as necessary. To support an increase in referrals from Jobcentres, providers are encouraged to inform their local Jobcentre Plus of any traineeship opportunities they may have.

How do I find out more?

154. You will find a range of information for employers, training providers and young people in the [Traineeships Collection](#) on GOV.UK.

155. We will update this information when needed and look to add information which supports engagement with and delivery of high-quality traineeships. This will include

²¹ Full details available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traineeships-operationalinformation/traineeships-supporting-information>

²² Find a Traineeship at <https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>

information from our ongoing contact with providers, employers, and representative organisations.

Annex A: Policy changes affecting delivery of traineeships from 1 September 2020²³

Who are traineeships for?

Extend the eligibility criteria to 19 to 24-year olds with a Full Level 3. Learners aged 19 to 24 are now eligible if they have a Level 3 qualification or below. Previously, learners aged 16-24 (25 with EHCP) qualified up to Level 2 were eligible. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020.*

What do traineeships provide?

Extend the maximum duration to a year. Traineeships should last between 6 weeks and twelve months with the actual length of the planned traineeship planned to reflect the needs of the learner. Previously, traineeships could last a maximum of six months. *This change was implemented from 23 March 2020 due to the impact of covid-19 and is continuing from 1 September 2020.*

How are traineeships delivered and funded?

Reduced minimum hours for work placement. Traineeships must have a work placement offer of between 70 and 240 hours work placement, undertaken with multiple employers as needed. Previously the work placement minimum requirement was 100 hours. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020.*

Digital skills as part of work preparation training. Digital skills should be assessed and provided as part of a traineeship in line with an individual learner's needs. This may have happened within traineeships in the past without being specified in this guidance. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020.*

Sector focused vocational learning that prepares the trainee for occupational standards. Vocational learning should be linked to occupational standards to support progression into apprenticeships. How this is done is flexible and it does not replace any of the 20% off the job training requirements if a trainee moves into an apprenticeship. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020.*

Greater collaboration with Jobcentre Plus and other partners. Providers must underpin their offer of traineeships with a strong knowledge of the local labour market

²³ Date correct unless otherwise stated

and close collaboration with Jobcentre Plus and other local partners, to strengthen referrals and link traineeships with job opportunities. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020.*

Employer incentives payments in 2020 to 2021. Employers providing new work placements can be paid £1000 per trainee. There is no limit to the number of traineeship work placements that an employer can offer. The incentive payment will be £1,000 per trainee, up to a maximum of 10 incentive payments within each of the 9 regions. Employers can apply for the payment on completion of the work placement. These payments are new and aim to incentivise employers to provide work placements and help to meet the costs of doing so. *This change was implemented from 1 September 2020. Employer incentives are currently only agreed for work placements from 1 September 2020 until 31 July 2021, until the funding made available for payments is all used. We are reviewing the impact of the new incentive payment as part of considering continuation in future years*

Annex B: Providing good quality work placements

Principles for good quality work experience placements

We will share more guidance and examples of good quality work placements from September 2020 onwards on [the traineeships collection](#) on GOV.UK.

(From the 2015 Framework for Delivery document)

- **Choice and relevance** – Placement matched to the trainee’s areas of interest and aspiration, with young people undertaking high quality work experience rather than observation or mundane tasks.
- **Organisational readiness** – Commitment from senior managers or owner/manager and a low ratio of trainees to experienced staff.
- **Good preparation** – Thorough pre-placement preparation by the provider, employer, and prospective trainee and, if relevant, an understanding of the trainee’s personal circumstances that might affect their workplace behaviour.
- **Written agreement** – Made between the trainee, employer and provider setting out mutual expectations and commitments, including the training plan and arrangements for reviews.
- **A planned placement** – A structured induction, clear objectives and integrated off-the-job training, with an identified mentor or buddy.
- **Feedback and review** – Regular constructive feedback from managers and formal reviews at key stages with the manager, provider, and trainee.

Provider viewpoint on good quality work placements

(From Findings from Traineeships: First Year Process Evaluation, March 2015)

From the provider’s viewpoint there were four key facilitators to providing a good quality placement:

- i. Quick movement from classroom to work experience placement to maintain the trainee’s engagement and enable the trainee to put the theory learnt within their work preparation sessions into practice within the work environment.
- ii. Regular contact to oversee that the employer is providing learning and development; these were conducted via informal phone calls, regular face-face visits, and more formal assessments and reviews.

“We go out and meet all of our employers, they are given a traineeship handbook and we explain about traineeships. Employers are quite vocal as well,

so as soon as there are any issues, they will always come straight to us.”
(Provider – Childcare/Business Administration)

- iii. Structured workbooks and progress diaries filled in by trainees alongside their employers to provide a joint record of aims and achievements.
- iv. Mentoring and supervision provided by the employers (including by staff such as existing apprentices) to allow the trainee to reflect on their ‘on the job’ experience and discuss their longer term development of skills or qualities required for employment.

Annex C: Frequently asked questions

This section and Annex C is new in Version 2

Why is it not an option to do a shorter traineeship; for example, for 3 weeks?

The minimum duration of a traineeships continues to be 6 weeks, as any less is not considered sufficient time to gain the skills and experience that they young people are expected to achieve within a traineeship. Young people who only require 3 weeks support are closer to the labour market and require less intervention. It would not offer the taxpayer value for money to use funding for this group who require minimum support.

Can someone over the age of 24 do a traineeship?

The Traineeship programme is for young people aged 16-24. The only exception is for those aged 25 with an EHCP (Education & Health Care Plan). We are not making any changes to the age range of eligibility for the programme. This is a programme that helps young people overcome lack of work experience as a barrier to progression. It is therefore most appropriately targeted at young people at the start of their careers and to avoid increases in NEET numbers (international definition).

Is delivery of traineeships still restricted to providers with a latest Ofsted inspection grade of Outstanding or Good?

There are no unique provider eligibility requirements for traineeships.

Can training providers working across borders deliver traineeships into Wales or Scotland?

No, 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.

I am a multi-sited employer, am I limited to only supporting 10 placements per region?

No, employers can offer more than 10 placements per region but the incentive payment that is available will be £1000 per trainee, up to a maximum of 10 trainees within each of the 9 regions. So, for a national employer who offers placements in all 9 regions, the payments would be capped at a maximum of 10 per region.

I am unable to offer a 70-hour work placement, can I still claim the incentive payment?

We would encourage employers to develop a robust quality work placement that allows the trainee to develop skills and knowledge of the workplace which is why we have a minimum requirement of 70 hours. But we also understand that employers may be limited

to reduced hours so there is flexibility to allow the trainee to complete these hours across a number of different employers as long as the total hours across these employers meets the minimum requirements. The training provider can arrange for the trainee to access work placements in different organisations to allow experience across different sectors. Where this is the case, these work placements must last at least 2 weeks where delivered over consecutive days, with each employer. The employer can still access the incentive payment following completion of the work placement where multiple placements are delivered for the benefit of the trainee.

How do I ask a question about traineeships?

If you have a question about traineeships, please send it to us on our [general enquiry contact form](#).



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