



Department
for Business
Innovation & Skills

Provider Funding Guidance Higher
Apprenticeships

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Contents

Provider Funding Guidance Higher Apprenticeships 1

What is a Higher Apprenticeship? 3

Benefits to employer 3

Benefits to individual..... 3

Costs 3

 If the individual is aged 16-18 4

 If the individual is aged 19+ 5

More information: 5

Withdrawn

What is a Higher Apprenticeship?

A Higher Apprenticeship is a way for young people and adult learners to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and a real future.

Higher Apprenticeships incorporate a work-based learning programme for an employee leading to a nationally recognised qualification at Level 4 and above, with Level 4 and 5 being equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma or a Foundation Degree, Level 6 equivalent to a Bachelor degree and Level 7 equivalent to a Master's degree.

Benefits to employer

Hiring apprentices helps businesses to grow their own talent by developing a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

Higher Apprenticeships deliver for businesses and help them grow by:

- Reducing training and recruitment costs
- Increasing productivity and their bottom line
- Developing a skilled, motivated and qualified workforce
- Improving customer service results
- Providing a financial return on investment.

Benefits to individual

Higher Apprenticeships deliver and offer ambitious existing Apprentices and employees as well as A-Level school leavers, a chance to earn as they learn.

Higher Apprenticeships are available at Levels 4 to 7 and offer learners a clear pathway to achieving professional level, job specific skills while remaining in employment and earning a salary.

Costs

Higher Apprenticeship frameworks can include Further Education (FE) qualifications, Higher Education (HE) qualifications, professional qualifications or a combination of the three.

The cost for individuals of a Higher Apprenticeship will vary depending on the qualifications taken, the amount that the employer is willing to pay and the age of the individual. A table showing what funding is available by age group and qualification is shown below:

	16-18	19+
Higher Apprenticeship frameworks which include FE Qualifications		
Levels 4 - 6	Fully funded	Co-funded
Level 7	No Government funding	No Government funding
Higher Apprenticeship frameworks which include HE Qualifications		
Levels 4 - 6	HE Tuition Fee Loan	HE Tuition Fee Loan
Level 7	No Government funding	No Government funding
Higher Apprenticeship frameworks which include Professional Qualifications	No Government Funding	No Government Funding

In all cases employers pay salary costs in recognition that their business will reap some productivity benefits. We also expect employers to fully fund the training costs associated with Higher Apprenticeships where they can.

If the individual is aged 16-18

The cost of FE qualifications up to Level 6 within a Higher Apprenticeship framework will be fully funded by Government providing the young person and the suite of qualifications is eligible. If the individual has prior learning then the funding must be reduced in accordance with that learning.

Full funding is offered to provide an incentive to employers to take on a younger person, and reflect their relative inexperience in the workplace.

The cost of HE qualifications is either met by the employer or by the individual taking out an HE tuition fee loan if they are eligible .

Where the Higher Apprenticeship has a professional qualification this cost is met by the employer or individual.

If the individual is aged 19+

The cost of FE Qualifications up to Level 6 within a Higher Apprenticeship framework may be funded and when they are they will be part funded by Government providing the individual and the suite of qualifications is eligible. If the individual has prior learning then the funding will be reduced in accordance with that learning.

The cost of HE qualifications is either met by the employer or by the individual taking out an HE tuition fee loan if they are eligible*. Where the Higher Apprenticeship has a professional qualification this cost is met by the employer or individual. The individual may be eligible for a Professional and Career Development Loan (PCDL) to help fund their professional qualification (for a maximum of 2 years).

More information:

HE Tuition Fee Loans

To find out whether an individual may be eligible for an HE tuition fee loan, they will need to contact Student Finance England at <http://www.practitioners.slsc.co.uk/>. Higher Education Institutions may also be able to offer advice and information.

PCDLs

A further funding option available is a Professional and Career Development Loan (PCDL). These are bank loans to pay for courses and training. An individual may be able to borrow up to £10,000 (for a maximum of 2 years).

Loans are usually offered at a reduced interest rate and the government pays interest while the individual is studying.

Further information for individuals is available at www.gov.uk/career-development-loans/overview

* And the course must also be designated for HE support purposes

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