



Apprenticeships, A Guide for Employers

Revised February 2022

Employing an apprentice is a big step, but you are not on your own. Apprentices are a vital investment in the future and, a well-managed programme, can help enhance productivity, improve business performance and help you to develop a committed and competent workforce. Every organisation needs to consider succession planning in order to maintain consistency of knowledge and experience. The social capital that apprenticeship programmes drive can also help you to win work. You can employ apprentices at different levels, from school leavers and university graduates to people who want to further their careers or change career direction completely. Not only is the apprentice gaining from the experience, as an employer you are too. It's a mutually beneficial relationship which helps the apprentice learn and develop new skills that directly improve your business; helping both to grow. If you are thinking about taking on an apprentice FIS have prepared this handy guide.

Options

Work with a College – Colleges can help with selection and recruitment and will deliver the necessary training. You, as the employer, will receive any government incentive payments and grants from CITB or Local Enterprise Partnerships. Ensure you know exactly what the college program is, when the apprentice needs to attend, and what the college is expecting from you. You will be responsible for the apprentice for 80% of the training programme, when they are working for you on site.

Work with an Independent Training Provider (ITP) – As working with a college above plus, this option may provide more flexibility as to when the apprentice needs to attend training and any additional training, not in the apprenticeship program, necessary for your organisational needs. As above ensure you understand what is expected from you. FIS have members who are Training Providers, independent and colleges please see: [FIS Training Directory](#)

Become and Employer Provider – Build a training centre and train your own employees or those of [connected companies](#) and use the apprenticeship service to pay for the apprenticeship training. For more details please see: [Becoming an apprenticeship-training provider](#). This option gives the employer total control.

Contract with a Flexi-job Apprenticeship Agency (FAA) – The agency employ the apprentice, so you will not be eligible for

any incentive payments, funding or grants. You will pay the agency to manage, including time on site, and train the apprentice. The agency will tell you when the apprentice needs to attend training or may visit site to deliver the training needed. This is ideal for work conducted using Labour Only Sub-Contacts (LOSC). There are FIS Training Provider members who are Flexi-job Apprenticeship Agencies, give us a call, if you would like to find out more.

FIS held a webinar where three employers described their experiences of employing apprentices across three of the options above. To listen and view the slides please go to: [FIS webinar recordings Building an Apprentice Workforce](#).

Recruiting and Managing an Apprentice

Speak with your local college and present your opportunity to them, colleges often have people on training courses who are looking for employment. To widen your vacancy coverage FIS can guide you through advertising. FIS have a network of Approved Training Providers who may also be able to help [Member Directory - FIS \(thefis.org\)](#), but here are some of the main points you may wish to follow:

- Design your apprenticeship job specification and general apprenticeship vacancy advert for distribution. The [Apprenticeship Standards](#) may help, use the 'keyword' search on the left of the screen to locate the appropriate standard.
- To access funding employers must open an account with the National Apprenticeship Service: [Create an account to manage apprenticeships](#) this includes apprenticeships in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- The apprenticeship vacancy can be advertised with the Construction Industry Training Board [CITB Find an Apprentice Register a Vacancy](#)
- Employers can upload the vacancy to [FIS Jobspot](#). Vacancies will appear on all FIS social media platforms.
- Vacancies can be registered on <https://talentview.org/construction> This site links individuals, employers and training providers.
- Employers should ensure the vacancy appears on their own website and social media channels where applicable and don't forget Job Centre Plus.

If an organisation is charging you for advertising an apprenticeship vacancy or selecting apprentices for you, ensure you know exactly what you are paying for.

Bear in mind if your head office is in a different region to the contract that requires apprentices, you should advertise in that area. For example, if you are based in Oxford and your contract sites are in central London, it will be very difficult to

get an apprentice to site via public transport for a 07:30 start time.

Alternatively, the CITB have Advisors who can walk you through the whole process. You can find your local Adviser by checking the CITB website: [About CITB Apprenticeships](#) or telephoning 0344 994 4010 or email customerengagement@citb.co.uk.

The CITB Advisor will discuss your requirements and help advertise your vacancy via the National Apprenticeship Service website. The Advisor may also provide a list of suitable candidates. They can also assist in setting up interviews and support the interview process.

CITB have also developed a 'How to find and recruit an apprentice, an employers guide to apprenticeships, please see: [How to Find & Recruit an Apprentice - CITB](#)

Shared Apprenticeships Scheme

The Shared Apprenticeship Scheme allows apprentices to complete a full apprenticeship programme by working with a number of different employers, to gain the skills required.

A collaboration between CITB and various regional partners; it has been established in response to industry demand, as a way of providing contractors with an opportunity to support and benefit from offering work experience and training. For details see: [Shared Apprenticeship Scheme](#) This scheme follows the Flexi-job Apprenticeship Agency process described above as the CITB regional partners are agencies.

Higher Apprenticeships

Higher apprenticeships provide an opportunity to gain qualifications at level 4 or above, with most apprentices working to achieve a vocational qualification, HND, or foundation degree.

A higher apprenticeship can take from one to five years to complete, and involve part-time study at a college, university, or training provider. All of the information in this document applies, but you will generally work with a university and the time the apprentice spends with you will be more like a work placement.

Claim Funding

Please check with the nation you are based in for funding applicable to your apprenticeship and identify what an employer may need to pay:

- England and Northern Ireland – [Employing an apprentice get-funding](#)

- Scotland – [Scottish Apprenticeships how are they funded](#)
- Wales – <https://gov.wales/apprenticeships>

CITB Grants

Employers can claim a CITB Apprenticeship Grant for employed apprentices, following approved construction-related apprenticeship programmes of two years or more. Employers must be registered with CITB and up to date with any levy payments. Even if you do not pay the Construction Levy you may be eligible for CITB Grant: [CITB what you can get funding for](#).

The Construction Industry Levy is used to support construction employers to make sure industry has the skilled workforce it needs. This includes supporting employers with the costs of having an apprentice, such as wages, travel, tools etc. For details on travel and subsistence grant available from CITB please see: [Funding Travel to Train](#)

The CITB levy is in place to cover these apprentice costs as well as a wide range of other benefits to you, such as; funding for skills initiatives, grant support for training, promoting the industry to keep a flow of incoming talent, research to identify what skills needs are coming and to develop quality standards. Please contact FIS if you need any assistance.

The Government Apprenticeship Levy and CITB Levy are not the Same

The Government Apprenticeship Levy is the mechanism where funds to cover apprenticeship training costs are generated from large employers, rather than from general taxation. This levy is only designed to cover training fees and end point assessment fees.

Only employers that pay more than £3m in wages are liable to pay the apprenticeship levy. Levy-paying employers contribute 0.5 per cent of their pay bill into a fund each month, which can be reinvested in apprenticeship training for their business. For full details please see: [Pay Apprenticeship Levy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

For details of the funding process in England please see: [Apprenticeship Funding](#). This may apply to organisation based in the other home nation whose apprentices work in England for at least 50% of their time.

Pledging and Receiving Unspent Levy

Levy paying employers can now also transfer up to 25% of their levy to other employers [Guidance for transferring apprenticeship levy funds](#) and it can be specified which occupation, sector or industry can receive the funds available. This helps to make sure the system is flexible, meets the needs of employers and also helps smaller businesses to

invest in more training opportunities. Organisations that do not pay the apprenticeship levy must reserve apprenticeship funding before the apprentice starts training [How to reserve funding](#). Funds can be reserved by training providers with the employer permission.

Employers can view and search for funding opportunities: [Search funding opportunities](#)

Employers who [pay the apprenticeship levy](#) and have unused apprenticeship funds can find employers who want to receive a transfer and pledge funds in a number of ways.

For example, you could:

- work with employers you currently know.
- get in touch with other employers in your sector.
- get in touch with the local College, Training Provider or University.
- work with regional partners, Local Enterprise Partnership, Chambers of Commerce and/or Regional Authority.

Taking on an Apprentice for The First Time

Here are some of the basic points to consider, a lot of these tasks can be completed concurrently:

- present your apprenticeship proposal once you have identified your apprenticeship need.
- identify which apprenticeship option suites your organisation's needs.
- if you are an Apprentice Levy Payer, register and activate your 'Digital Apprenticeship Service' (DAS) account: [Government Guidance Manage Apprenticeship Funds](#).
- prepare for the recruitment process. *See above.*
- prepare an interview which may include literacy and numeracy testing.
- depending on the option chosen identify a training provider:
In England [Find Apprenticeship Training](#)
In Scotland [Find a Learning Provider](#)
In Wales [Careers Wales](#)
In Northern Ireland [NI Direct Find Apprenticeship Training](#)
- prepare your apprentice for their first steps on site.
- prepare your site supervisor(s) for onsite apprentices, get them coach and mentor training if needed. Employers are responsible for 80% of the apprentices training time.
- in England work with your chosen Training Provider to prepare for the 20% off site training requirements, in Scotland and Wales prepare for workplace assessment.

- ensure you are demonstrating and promoting your commitment to any section 106 contractual criteria and social value.

If you are partnering or contracting with a College, Independent Training Provider, Flexi-job Apprenticeship Agency or a University ensure you confirm the service they will provide and what your responsibilities are. Ensure you're getting value for money.

For further information and guidance please contact info@thefis.org or give us a call on 01217 070077.

The FIS monitor changes to funding status, eligibility changes and government apprenticeship levy policy changes continually. This document is live and will be updated accordingly in real time. This is a Guide FIS cannot be held liable for any incorrect information.