

Employer Fact Sheet for Funding in England

From 1st August 2026

(Small and medium-size employers with an annual payroll of less than £3 million)

Apprenticeships

Apprentice minimum wage to be paid to learner. This is a minimum only, and employers can pay more if they wish. Please note after the first year this can change dependent on the age of the apprentice, and please be aware that minimum rates can change annually from 1st April. Always see the GOV UK for current rates: [National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates - GOV.UK](#)

Apprenticeships typically last 13-18 months for L2, and 18-21 months for L3 and L4 depending on prior experience, including End Point Assessment.

If you employ a 16-24 year old apprentice:

The government will fully fund small and medium non-levy paying Employers the total cost of the apprenticeship funding, but you must pay the correct salary for the learner.

If you employ a 25-year-old apprentice or someone older:

The government will fund small non-levy paying employers 95% of the total cost of the apprenticeship funding and the employer must fund the remaining 5% in a contribution. You must also ensure you pay the correct salary for the learner.

If you are looking to secure funding to enable you to accommodate a new apprentice 25 years of age or above, please contact us to discuss our Levy Share option that can potentially cover the 5% employer contribution fee.

Incentive Payments*:

NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) HIRING INCENTIVE: £2000

- This is paid in two instalments, £1000 after the first 90 days on programme and £1000 after 365 days on programme. The payment takes approximately 2 months to come through after eligibility is confirmed.
- The learner must be aged 16–24.
- The learner must have started employment within 90 days of enrolment.
- The employer must be a small or medium employer – under 200 employees and less than £3m annual pay bill.
- This incentive is for apprentices that enrol after 1st October 2026.

YOUNG APPRENTICE PAYMENT: £1000

- This is paid in two instalments, £500 after the first 90 days on programme and £500 after 365 days on programme. The payment will take approximately 2 months to come through after eligibility is confirmed.
- The learner must be aged 16–18 or 16–24 with an active EHCP.

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Continued

Incentive Payments Continued*:

YOUTH JOBS GRANT: £3000

- This is not just for apprentices, but for any staff member.
- The young person must be aged 18–24 when employed.
- They must have been claiming UC, unemployed and looking for work for at least 6 months.
- First payment is £1800 paid after 6 weeks employment.
- Second payment is £1200 after 18 weeks employment.
- To apply, employers must complete an online application and meet all criteria:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-jobs-grant>

**All incentive payments are subject to terms and conditions, including eligibility requirements.*