



How to register and use the apprenticeship service as an employer

A Guide for Employers



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How to register and use the apprenticeship service as an employer

To access funds to pay for apprenticeship training you need to register on the apprenticeship service.

If your annual pay bill is more than £3 million you will pay the apprenticeship levy.

You can [use this tool](#) to estimate if your organisation will pay the apprenticeship levy and how much funding you will receive.

You will need to work out how much apprenticeship levy you are due to pay each month and submit it to HRMC through the PAYE process.

If you do not pay the levy, you will [fund your apprentices](#) in a different way.



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1. Before setting up your apprenticeship service account

To set up an account you will need:

- your organisation's Government Gateway user ID and password

Your payroll or finance department should have your organisation's Government Gateway information if you don't already know it.

If your organisation has a payroll agent, don't use the agent's login details.

You will need to register for [HMRC's online services](#) if you don't already have Government Gateway credentials.



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2. Setting up multiple connected organisations in your account

You can add [multiple connected organisations](#) to the same account, if you want to manage all of your connected organisations in this way. You should register every organisation that will make an agreement with a training provider for apprenticeship training.

If you have set up your account with multiple connected organisations your transfers allowance will be worked out as a total of all the organisations within that account.

You cannot use a single PAYE scheme across multiple connected organisations.

You cannot move funds between the accounts once they are set up.



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3. If you pay the apprenticeship levy

If you pay the apprenticeship levy, you will need to work with your:

- payroll department to understand how much apprenticeship levy you are due to pay each month and submit to HMRC through the PAYE process
- finance department for strategic decisions on how you will spend your levy funds
- HR or training department to discuss your apprenticeship strategy

How much funding you will receive if you pay the apprenticeship levy.

The amount of funding entering your account each month is calculated by:

- the levy you declare to HMRC through the PAYE process
- multiplied the proportion of your pay bill paid to your workforce who live in England
- plus, a [10% government](#) top-up on this amount



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4. How funding works if you do not pay the apprenticeship levy

Non-levy paying employers share the cost of training and assessing their apprentices with the government - this is called 'co-investment'.

For new apprenticeships starting on or after 1 April 2019 you pay 5% towards the cost of apprenticeship training. The government will pay the rest (95%) up to the [funding band maximum](#) direct to your training provider.

All apprenticeships that started before 1 April 2019 will continue at the previous co-investment rate of 10%.

You will need to:

- agree a payment schedule with the training provider
- pay them directly for the training

You could be eligible for [extra funding](#) depending on both you and your apprentice's circumstances.



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5. Apprenticeship account roles and permissions

You need to think about who you want to have access to your apprenticeship service account. You can control what each person can do.

You can give staff members permission to:

- approve apprenticeship data
- approve costs for training which are agreed with the training provider
- reconcile payments to training providers
- reconcile payments coming into the account
- sign the agreement with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)



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6. Registering on the apprenticeship service

Once you are ready to register on the apprenticeship service, you need to [set up your account](#).



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7. Using your account

After you have registered, you will need to follow the instructions given in your apprenticeship account.

As an employer who pays the levy, you'll be able to:

- sign your ESFA employer agreement
- add PAYE schemes you want to use for apprenticeship funding
- add your organisations contracting with training providers
- invite other members of your team to join the account
- add apprentices (you can request your training provider does this)
- search for [apprenticeships and approved training providers](#)
- manage and view the transactions in your account
- [transfer a maximum of 25%](#) of your unused annual funds to other employers

You must approve apprentices added to your account, so your training provider gets paid.

The data they submit must match what you have approved.

Before the end of each month, you should agree with your training provider a deadline for adding, checking and agreeing apprentices, to make sure the data is correct.

As an employer who's in receipt of a transfer, you'll be able to:

- sign your ESFA employer agreement
- add apprentices (you can request your training provider does this)
- invite other members of your team to join the account
- manage and view the transactions in your account



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8. Managing cohorts and apprentices

Before you approve your cohorts make sure that:

- you're checking the correct cohort or apprentice
- the apprenticeship details are what you agreed with your training provider
- the total price for training and end-point assessment are correct (excluding VAT)
- you are able to pay the difference from your own budget if the price of training is more than the [funding band maximum](#)

Changing apprentice details

You can make changes to apprentices' details:

- before you've approved the cohort with your training provider
- before the apprentice starts

Once the apprentice has started, you can only change:

- the cost of the training, but only in the first month and your training provider will need to change the information they submit to the ESFA
- the date of birth and name of the apprentice

If the apprentice wants to change apprenticeship, you will have to stop the current apprenticeship and start a new one. You, or your training provider, will need to add the new apprenticeship details and cost.

Make sure that you and your training provider approve any changes that have been made.



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9. Advertising apprenticeship vacancies

If you pay the apprenticeship levy you can use the recruitment section of the apprenticeship service to create adverts for your vacancies.

These will be posted on [find an apprenticeship](#) for candidates to apply.



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10. How payments work if you pay the apprenticeship levy

Payment process for apprenticeship accounts:

1. 19th of the month - declare your levy to HMRC.
2. 23rd of the month - funds appear in your account.
3. By 4th working day of the following month - approve apprentices. This approval is authorisation for the release of funds.
4. By 4th working day of the following month - providers submit their Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data returns - which will show the actual training that's taken place.
5. On or after 5th working day of the month - funds released from your account.
6. 11th working day of the month - providers receive payments from the ESFA.

If you don't see the correct funds in your account, check that:

- you're logged into the correct account
- the correct PAYE schemes are added to the account
- your HMRC declarations are submitted by the 19th of the month

Managing payments

You can manage payments in your account by using stop or pause.

Stopping payments

You can stop payments if the apprentice:

- didn't start the apprenticeship
- decided to leave after starting the apprenticeship
- the wrong apprenticeship information was approved

If you stop payments for an apprentice, you must make sure that you select the right stop date in the apprenticeship service. Any outstanding payments up to this date will be paid. Once an apprenticeship is stopped, payments are permanently stopped for that apprenticeship.

An apprentice can only be on one apprenticeship at any time. You cannot start a new apprenticeship within the start and end dates of the previous apprenticeship.

Pausing payments

You can temporarily pause payments to your training provider. When you resume payments, they will continue from the point that they were paused.



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11. Help

You can contact the National Apprenticeship Service for advice or help using the service.

Telephone: 01494 513300

Or email: chat@5stars.org.uk

Alternatively, you can speak with the Apprenticeship Service directly:

Telephone: 0800 015 0600

Or email: helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk