Traineeships questions and answers

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Programme Q&A

Q1: **What is the main aim of traineeships?**

A: The aim of the traineeship programme is to secure a young person's progression to an Apprenticeship or sustainable job.

Q2: **What type of learners are traineeships aimed at?**

A: The core target group for traineeships will be young people who:

- are not currently in a job and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it;
- are aged 16-18 who has not yet achieved a full Level 3 or 19-24 and have not yet received a full Level 2;
- are aged up to academic age 25 and in receipt of a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA);
- are unemployed on the first day of a traineeship who has little work experience but is focused on work or the prospect of it;
- providers and employers believe has a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

Q3: **What learners are traineeships not intended for?**

A: The most disengaged young people, who require very intensive support;
- Those who already have the skills and experience needed to start an apprenticeship or find work;
- Those already in a job.

Q4: **What core elements are required as part of the traineeship?**

A:

- High quality work placement
- Work preparation training
- English and/or Maths where required

Alongside these core elements providers and employers have the flexibility to offer other general training including appropriate vocational qualifications to fit learner's requirements. Providers and employers will have the freedom to bring these elements together in the best way to engage and support individual trainees.

Q5: **Is English and Maths a requirement if the learner has already achieved the required GCSE grade C in English and Maths?**

A: No
Q6a: If the 16-18 learner has not achieved the minimum GCSE grade C in English and Maths what are the requirements?

A: Where a 16-18 learner has not achieved the minimum GCSE grade C in English and Maths they must be supported to progress, and based on assessment of the learner’s need, be enrolled in one of the following qualifications:

- English and Maths GCSEs or i-GCSEs
- Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2 Functional Skills
- Foundation, intermediate or advanced Free Standing Maths qualifications registered with Ofqual
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualifications registered with Ofqual

Please note: All learners need to be working towards Functional Skills Level 2 if not already achieved. However providers can use other English and Maths qualifications under a Programme of Study to support that progression.

- A learner who has already achieved a Functional Skills qualification at level 2 must be working towards the achievement of a GCSE grade A* to C.

Q6b: If the 19-24 learner has not achieved the minimum GCSE grade C in English and Maths what are the requirements?

A: Where a 19-24 learner has not achieved the minimum GCSE grade C in English and Maths they must be supported to progress, and based on assessment of the learner’s need, be enrolled in one of the following qualifications:

- English and Maths GCSEs or i-GCSEs
- Entry level, Level 1 or Level 2 Functional Skills
- Foundation, intermediate or advanced Free Standing Maths qualifications registered with Ofqual
- English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) qualifications registered with Ofqual

Please note: All learners need to be working towards Functional Skills Level 2 if not already achieved.

- A learner will not be required to undertake English and Maths if already achieved Functional Skills qualification at level 2 or GCSE A* to C in English and Maths.

Q7: Is there a maximum duration for the traineeship programme?

A: Yes, the maximum duration for a traineeship programme is six months from registration with the provider but the hours required to achieve the traineeship will be based on the agreement with the employer, provider and learner and recorded on the Individualised Learner Report (ILR).

The hours agreed will vary considerably depending on each learner’s requirements.
Q8: Is there a minimum/maximum term for work placement as part of a traineeship?

A: Yes, each learner is required to carry out a minimum of 6 weeks work placement but the learner must spend no less than two weeks during their traineeship with a single employer. The work experience should not constitute more than five months of the traineeship in total.

Q9: How does the Department for Education (DfE) define ‘high’ quality work experience?

A: Their definition is:

- Purposeful, substantial, offers challenge and is relevant to the young persons’ study programme and/or career aspirations.
- It is managed well under the direction of a supervisor in order to ensure that the student obtains a genuine learning experience suited to their needs.
- It ensures that time is well spent: the employer has prepared a structured plan for the duration of the work placement that provides tangible outcomes for the student and employers.
- It provides up-front clarity about the roles, responsibilities and the expectations of the student and employer.
- It is reviewed at the end: the employer provides some form of reference or feedback based on the young person’s performance during their time on the work placement.

Q10: Does the Employer have to provide an interview at the end of the work placement as formal recognition of the work experience?

A: Yes, all learners must be offered an interview with their main employer at the end of the work placement in the form of either:

- A formal interview and feedback where there is a job or Apprenticeship vacancy, or
- An exit interview, feedback and written reference from the employer who provided the placement.

Q11: When would a traineeship programme be classed as complete?

A: The traineeship programme would be classed as complete if:

- the learner moves into employment, an apprenticeship or further education or training; or
- all elements of the learner’s traineeship programme have been completed; or
- the learner reaches the six months on the programme.
Q12: Is there any formal recognition of completing a traineeship?

A: Yes, all learners must be provided with a formal reference from their main employer at the end of the work placement, together with confirmation of any qualifications completed with their provider, is the right form of recognition for completing a traineeship.

Providers and employers are free to award locally-recognised certificates for traineeships.

Q13: What happens if a trainee does not secure employment?

A: The primary measure of success for traineeships will be securing positive outcomes for participants whilst recognizing not all will achieve employment.

Traineeships are expected to focus first and foremost on supporting young people into apprenticeships and other sustainable employment.
Traineeship Funding Q&A

Q1: Where do we find detailed funding guidance for traineeships?
A: 
⇒ For 16-18 age range please refer to the EFA funding guidance
⇒ For 19-24 age range please refer to the SFA Funding rules.

Q2: Will the Ofsted grade 1 (Outstanding) or 2 (Good) rule be strictly implemented for traineeship provision?
A: Yes, however a subcontractor can be a grade 3 (requires improvement) as long as the prime is a grade 1 or 2.

Q3: Will this apply to all subcontractors?
A: No, they must be existing subcontractors to a prime grade 1 or 2. Any subcontractors that are grade 4 (Inadequate) will not be funded under any circumstances.

Q4: Can providers subcontract foundation learning?
A: Foundation Learning (FL) does not carry over into 2013/14 and the provider would therefore be subcontracting their Study Programme allocation, on this basis the Grade 1 and Grade 2 conditions would only apply where they switched provision from FL to traineeships

Q5: Could 16-18 learners complete a full time study programme of 600 hours in the allotted 6 month timeframe?
A: Yes, however it would not be a wise move. If the learner did not gain employment following the traineeship there would be no hours left to go back onto a full time study programme for the rest of the academic year.

Q6: If a 16-18 learner moves provider mid year, is the new provider entitled to the full 600 hours again?
A: No, a learner is entitled to 600 hours in any full academic year so if they change providers mid way through the year the hours left move with the learner.

Q7: Does a provider gain funding for work experience under traineeships?
A: Yes, work experience is an integral part of the traineeship. However there is no obligation for the employer to pay wages.

Q8: Is the funding accessible for providers who do not have an EFA contract?
A: Yes, if they have a 16-18 apprenticeship contract.
Q9: How would a provider gain funding under this method?

A: If the provider has an existing agreement with the EFA and a 16-18 apprenticeship funding agreement with SFA they will be able to access funding through their agreement.

If the provider does not hold an EFA contract but does have an SFA contract they would need to speak to the SFA relationship manager who would permit a proportion of their apprenticeship contract allowance for this need. The current budget allocation from the EFA is £12 million.

Q10: If a contract holder has both an EFA and SFA apprenticeships contract, can they choose which contract to use for funding traineeships?

A: The contract holder must use their EFA contract for the primary source of funding.

Q11: If a learner is converted early on in their Study Programme to a Traineeship, is this classed as an additional aim or transfer of main aim or a new learning programme?

A: Planned hours are per student and only where the core aim is changing should there be a need to alter the ILR – bear in mind there will be discrete coding for a Traineeship and the core aim for this should always be work experience.

Q12: How is a traineeship funded under Programme of Study (POS) when the full time rate is for 600 hours?

A: Traineeships are in general classified as a part time programme and will attract a rate of £6.67 per hour.

Q13: Are the 600 hours provided to deliver the Programme of Study and traineeship together or would additional time be allocated for the traineeship?

A: Each learner can attract up to 600 hours of funding potentially, i.e. £4000. It is left to the provider to decide how long any individual learner should be on a programme and whether it is converted to a Traineeship during its course or not. Participation for longer than 600 hours will not attract further funding.

Q14: Can a learner move down onto a study programme after completing a six month traineeship without positive progression?

A: Each learner is allocated a Full time Study programme of 600 hours in any full academic year.

As Traineeships are in general classified as a part time programme they should be deliverable within the 600 hours and leave enough room for progression within the same academic year.
If the learner traineeship does not lead to a planned progression route then the learner can be transferred to another Study programme but this will not attract any extra funding in the same academic year if 600 hours has already been used up.

**Q15: How does a provider express an interest in offering the traineeships?**

**A:** If the provider holds an EFA mainstream contract or a 16-18 Apprenticeships contract, and is at Ofsted Grade 1 or 2 overall, they will be able to code learners as Traineeships within their contract. No expression of interest is therefore required, as those providers that meet the quality criteria for traineeships will be automatically invited.

**Q16: Is there a cap on the amount of apprenticeship funding that providers can use for Traineeships?**

**A:** The EFA has a current allocation of £12 million set aside for traineeship delivery for those with a 16-18 apprenticeship contract. Further allocation will be subject to affordability.

**Q17: Is there any financial support for trainees while in a work placement?**

**A:**

✧ Employers are not required to pay young people for the work placement under the traineeship. Traineeships fall under an exemption to the National Minimum Wage. Employers can consider providing trainees with support to meet the trainee's travel and meal costs.

✧ Young people taking part in traineeships, where they qualify, will be able to access existing programmes of financial support, including the £180 million 16-18 Bursary Fund and Discretionary Learning Support funding for 19-24.

**Q18: Are there direct employer routes available?**

**A:** Yes, there are opportunities for employers to lead the delivering of traineeships and one of these is the Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot:

✧ UK Commission for Employment and Skills offer England employers the chance to bid on investment for their employer-led solutions (including traineeships).

Employers were required to submit bid applications for co-investment from this fund.

The fund, Employer Ownership of Skills Pilot, is currently closed for all new applications but for more information and to gain any future submission openings please visit [http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/investment](http://www.ukces.org.uk/ourwork/investment)

**Q19: Would a learner loose JSA benefits undertaking a traineeship?**

**A:** It should be noted there will be no relaxation of DWP benefit restrictions.