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Department
for Education

**Skills for
Growth 2023**
[#skillsforlife](#)


Department for
Business & Trade

Skills for Growth

Information for ongoing guidance and support with DfE skills initiatives

June 2023

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Summary

This document provides information and guidance from the Department for Education to help large employers navigate skills initiatives and understand where to go for further support and engagement opportunities.

Employer focus: our offer to business

| | | 16-19 | 19-23 | 24+ | Support for key sectors |
|-----------------|---|--|--|-----|--|
| Work-based | Skills Bootcamps (Level 3-5) | | Flexible training courses for aged 19 and over to fast-track specialist skill development, for existing or new talent for your business. (No cost if co-designing courses for new employees; 30% co-funding arrangement if training existing employees, 10% for SMEs) | | Skills Bootcamps are available in digital, technical, construction, and green skills, as well as pathways to accelerated apprenticeships. |
| | Apprenticeships (Level 2-7) | Paid employment for over 16s, combining work and study in a job allowing you to develop your workforce and business. Minimum duration of 12 months and 20% off-the-job training, leading to full competence in the occupation. Funding available to employers of all sizes. (Employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy pay 5% of costs) | | | Flexi-job apprenticeships widen access to apprenticeships in sectors where shorter contracts and employment patterns are the norm, e.g. digital, construction, creative. |
| Classroom-based | T levels (Level 3) | T Levels – Introducing 24 T Levels over 2020-2025 that sit within a framework of 11 technical education routes. Provide a 45-day (315 hours) industry placement. (Fully funded) | | | T Levels are already in delivery in construction, engineering & manufacturing, health and digital occupational routes. Creative & design T Levels will launch in September 2023. |
| | Free L3 Quals (Level 3) | | Free Courses for Jobs – high-value Level 3 for adults without full L3 qualification. Eligibility expanding from April 2022 to unemployed adults, or those earning under National Living Wage. (Fully funded for eligible adults) | | Free Courses for Jobs are available in high-value subjects across the economy. |
| | HTQ's (Level 4-5) | | Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) are new or existing level 4 and 5 qualifications approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education as covering the knowledge, skills and behaviours employers need. We are rolling out HTQ cycles from 2022 until 2025. | | Digital HTQs launched in September 2022. Digital, construction, and health and science routes will follow in 2023, and engineering & manufacturing HTQs will first be taught 2024. |
| | IoT's (Level 3-6) | Institutes of Technology are collaborative interventions between FE and HE providers, and employers. Provision is responsive to local labour market demand. IoTs specialise in L4/5 provision in STEM subjects. Wave 1 cohorts started in September 2019. There are now a total of 21 Institutions. | | | IoTs are delivering provision across STEM subjects, including advanced manufacturing and engineering, construction and infrastructure, digital, agri-tech, and health and social care. |

Now is the time to invest in skills

There has never been a better time to invest in skills. We know that recruiting the right people is one of the most important ingredients for the success of your business: but right now, we in England and our international competitors face acute skills shortages.

The global race for talent is truly on; now is our chance to nurture a talent pipeline for the future.

This is why we want to bring education and business closer together as partners in skills development. The government has been laying the foundations in recent years by rolling out a raft of reforms to make the skills system employer focused, high-quality and fit for the future.

This ambitious skills agenda is backed by **£3.8 billion of investment** over this Parliament – all with the aim of strengthening further and higher education so that skills training aligns with employers' needs.

This includes supporting more people to complete an **apprenticeship** or a **Higher Technical Qualification**, rolling out more **T Levels**, and expanding **Skills Bootcamps**. Our reforms mean that government-backed training programmes can help you to develop talent from the top to the bottom of your business.

But we need business to invest to unlock the full potential of government reforms. It is essential that businesses prioritise growing their own workforce from the wealth of untapped talent we have in this country. As it stands, UK employers invest half as much in training their workforce as their European counterparts.

The guide sets out the wide range of government-backed training that is available to meet your current and future skills needs. It shows that your employees can train and learn while they work, meaning that you can get the skills you need in your workforce sooner.

Now is the time to take advantage of available support and invest more in your employees' skills to drive growth, productivity and innovation in your business.

[To continue the conversation, please let us know your future plans and engagement preferences.](#)

Key link

To find training and employment schemes, please visit:

<https://find-employer-schemes.education.gov.uk>

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a productive way for employers to drive better business performance and develop the workforce they need offering a high-quality and effective route into more than 650 occupations, including digital, health, engineering, and construction.

Apprenticeships are jobs with training leading to an assessment that shows the apprentice has achieved the key professional skills, knowledge and behaviours required.

Apprenticeships are for all ages and can be for those entering an occupation or business for the first time, or those who are more experienced. Visit the main apprenticeships website for a wealth of information and guidance for employers for apprentices in England: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/>.

There is a comprehensive [step-by-step guide](#) to help you deliver successful apprenticeships. Find out about the 9 key priorities and what support is available to you. This includes details about benefits and funding; finding the right training course and training provider; and recruiting and supporting your apprentice to completion.

In order to meet specific sector/occupation/training needs, [flexible apprenticeship models](#), such as flexi-jobs and accelerated apprenticeships, provide employers with options to front-load training or accelerate apprenticeships from other training courses or experience.

Employers can promote their vacancies on the free government apprenticeship recruitment website, Find An Apprenticeship (FAA) which has over 1 million users per week performing searches on it (with 244k new registrations from prospective apprentices in 2022 alone).

To ensure that everyone has a fair chance to benefit from an apprenticeship and that employers have the widest talent pool to draw from, you can access more information about additional funding and support opportunities for [young people](#), [learners with learning difficulties or disabilities \(LLDD\)](#) and [care leavers](#).

[Transferring levy funds](#) is a great way for large employers to support smaller businesses. Employers can decide which sectors, skills or local areas they'd like to fund (for example, by transferring funds to businesses in your local area or to those in your supply chain).

The Apprenticeship Service has produced a number of [support webinars](#) and videos to guide employers through key elements of initiating and developing an apprenticeship programme.

Talk to an advisor

For further apprenticeship support and general queries, you can call the **Apprenticeship Helpline**: 08000 150 600 or email using the following details:

W: <https://help.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb>;

E: helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk

Contact The Apprentice Ambassador Network

For more information about their work and how can they support you and your apprentices in your apprenticeship journey, or to become an ambassador to advocate apprenticeships please visit: <https://engage.apprenticeships.gov.uk/aan>

Registering your details here will allow you to sign-up to receive up-to-date information about apprenticeships: [Sign up to stay connected \(apprenticeships.gov.uk\)](https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/sign-up)

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)

IfATE is the voice of employers in the skills system. They were launched in 2017 to support thousands of employers to shape apprenticeships and technical education, which is the best way of driving up quality and making sure it matches businesses' skills needs.

When businesses are aware that apprenticeships and technical qualifications were created by employers, they have more confidence and are more likely to participate in the skills system. 90% believe that employer involvement leads to more valuable qualifications for the workforce.

IfATE, which is an arms-length body sponsored by the Department for Education, gathers insights and expert guidance from groups of large and small businesses to identify what knowledge, skills and behaviours must be learned for a given occupation. These guide apprenticeships, T Levels, Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) and will increasingly influence wider technical qualifications as the skills system is simplified and unified to match up to the same set of employer-defined standards. Further details on the organisation can be found on their website: www.instituteforapprenticeships.org

For detailed information on apprenticeship standards and assessment plans, please visit: [Apprenticeship search / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](#). This will allow you to review the knowledge, skills and behaviours that learners need to achieve for occupations within your sector.

You can review the [occupational maps](#) on the IfATE website for apprenticeships and technical qualifications relevant to your business.

You can also consider if your business could take an active role in [IfATE's trailblazer groups](#) where you can participate in the development of apprenticeships and technical qualifications that are important to your business.

T Levels

T Level information and support

Employers have told us that they face a skills shortage that could impact the future success of your businesses. In response, the government has worked alongside hundreds of employers to design [T Level courses](#) that deliver the skills your organisations need. They offer employers early access to a talent pipeline for entry-level positions, through hosting students on industry placements. By September 2023, there will be 19 T Level courses, covering 11 skill areas including digital, construction, engineering, and health.

T Levels are a new qualification for students aged 16 to 19 in England who've finished GCSEs. They're an alternative to A levels and apprenticeships, giving young people the technical and practical skills needed to be an asset in the workplace. They combine classroom learning with a substantial industry placement.

The DfE has an information hub with [T Levels and industry placement support for employers](#):

- Search for your local education provider
- How plan an industry placement
- How to support students during their placement
- Case studies to show the business benefits of T Level placements
- Access to webinars

Employer support fund for T Level industry placements

If you're looking to provide industry placements at your organisation before 31 March 2024, you could claim for legitimate costs such as:

- set-up costs
- equipment
- staff training

Find out more about the [employer support fund](#).

T Level Recordings and webinars

Book onto future sessions [Placement approaches – developing the right model for your organisation – T Levels and industry placement support for employers](#)

T Level conferences and workshops

In partnership with Cyber Security Council we will be hosting T Level workshops. During each workshop you will hear from employers, providers and students on the significant opportunities T Levels have brought them and some of the challenges facing the cyber security industry that T Levels could help to address.

Register now and shape the conversation.

📍 Birmingham - 5th July <https://lnkd.in/eYTPMzxD>

📍 Manchester - 20th September <https://lnkd.in/e9a-jYQa>

Skills Bootcamps

Overview and evaluation

Skills Bootcamps are free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks for those aged 19 or over. They are co-designed and shaped with employers to respond to skills shortages and high growth sectors. These are currently available in digital sectors, including digital marketing or coding; technical areas like construction, logistics or engineering; and in green skills, including solar energy or agriculture technology.

They give people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills, with an offer of a job interview with an employer on completion.

The [Evaluation of Skills Bootcamps: wave 2 implementation report](#) showed that employers felt that Skills Bootcamps helped to increase the diversity of their organisation and supported them to recruit underrepresented groups.

Benefits of Skills Bootcamps

They help your business:

- develop a loyal and talented workforce with the skills you need to quickly futureproof your business in a rapidly changing labour market
- improve your productivity; learners are motivated to learn new skills, provide new ideas and a fresh perspective
- recruit staff with the right training and skills from the outset
- get access to a pipeline of skilled adults by working with existing Skills Bootcamp providers

Available courses and provider information

Skills Bootcamps are available in:

- digital courses such as digital marketing or coding
- technical training in areas like construction, logistics (HGV driving) or engineering
- green skills, for instance solar energy or agriculture technology

Employer involvement in the design and delivery of Skills Bootcamps is essential, we would encourage any employer that would like to shape the design and content of Skills Bootcamps courses, to work with their local FE College or training provider to bid to deliver through the next national competition in July 2023 - [Prior Information Notice \(PIN\)](#).

Alternatively, if an employer has vacancies or is struggling to recruit in the skill areas that align with Skills Bootcamps delivery, they can contact training providers already delivering courses to identify suitable talent for those roles. Employers can find information on current Skills Bootcamps delivery here - [Skills Bootcamps \(education.gov.uk\)](#).

Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs)

Overview

Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) are flexible, high-level qualifications developed with employers and are a high-quality addition to technical training routes, alongside apprenticeships, and degrees.

They are:

- New and existing Level 4 and 5 qualifications (such as Higher National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees, Diploma Higher Education)
- approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, against employer-led occupational standards

HTQs available

HTQs are designed for students aged 18 and over who are looking for high-skilled jobs in a range of sectors, although they can also suit those looking to retrain or upskill.

HTQs in digital occupations are now being taught in a variety of subjects leading to careers such as [network engineer](#), [software developer](#) and [data analyst](#).

From September 2023, HTQs in construction and health and science will also be available, leading to occupations such as [construction site supervisor](#) and [nursing associate](#).

By the end of the rollout in 2025, HTQs will be available in a wide range of occupations.

The Department for Education has a [list of higher technical qualifications](#) and the name and location of the provider to contact if you require further information.

[Find out how other businesses use HTQ](#)

Institutes of Technology (IoTs)

Overview

Institutes of Technology are a response to evidence showing that the education and training system produces too few people with the higher-level technical skills that the economy needs. IoTs are designed to be prestigious, high-quality education providers created through innovative collaborations between further education colleges, universities, and employers and backed by £300m of capital funding to create industry standard facilities. IoTs will provide a pipeline of learners into key sectors such as manufacturing, engineering and transport with an acute shortage of technician level STEM skills.

There are currently 21 Institutes of Technology (IoTs) across England. IoTs are collaborations between FE providers, universities and local employers that have entered into a partnership designed to meet the local skills gaps in priority sectors in each region. The focus is on training in STEM subjects at Level 4 and 5. IoTs are characterised by their industry-standard specialist equipment that prepares learners for employment in a technical environment.

Employers interested in finding out more about how you can work with their local IoT, please get in touch with the IoT Network:

[Contact | Institutes of Technology](#) where there is a 'contact us' form on the website

Benefits for employers

- Strong employer engagement in the design and delivery of the technical curriculum, and strategically at board level, ensures that the provision is responsive to local labour market needs, creating a pipeline of learners who can start work with higher occupational competency.
- IoTs bring education and business closer together, encouraging collaboration between existing education providers - colleges and universities - with businesses to create unique partnerships which will meet the needs of local businesses now and in the future – helping to boost productivity and economic growth and widen participation from learners of all backgrounds.
- Being **employer-led**, Institutes of Technology can tailor their provision to react quickly to the current and evolving technical skills needs of employers in the areas they serve.
- Employers involved in the IoT collaboration will have the opportunity to ‘home-grow’ their future workforce, ensuring they have access to a local technically skilled recruitment pool.

- They can also upskill or reskills their existing workforce by shaping the curriculum to best suit their needs, adopting agile approaches to ensure industry trends are quickly translated into the training environment.
- Large and small employers will benefit from having a new type of employer-led institution on their doorstep that can train their current and future workforce – helping to boost productivity and economic growth whilst ensuring it is ready for future technological change, changing working practices.
- Over 100 (107) employers are engaged directly, including Microsoft, Nissan, Bosch, Babcock, Fujitsu and many more. This number will continue to grow.
- Currently 90% of provision is aligned to three core STEM-based technical routes, 50% Engineering & Manufacturing, 30% Digital and 10% Construction – other specialisms include Energy, Agri-tec, Cyber Security and Health and Life Science

Multiply

Overview

A new government-funded programme to help adults improve their numeracy skills. Those aged 19 and over without Maths GCSE at grade C (or equivalent) can access free numeracy courses through Multiply to build confidence with numbers and gain a qualification.

Multiply includes courses for beginners to more advanced courses such as GCSE Maths, Functional Skills Qualifications, or equivalent.

Benefits of Multiply

Multiply is helping employees build confidence with numbers for life and work. Improving your employee's numeracy skills can help improve the quality of your workforce and encourage better productivity. By encouraging your staff to increase their numeracy skills, you are likely to see a reduction in numeracy related mistakes.

Multiply helps with:

- support for new recruits lacking confidence with numbers
- building employee and employer confidence with numbers in life and work
- motivating your employees to pursue different forms of training in the workplace
- supporting your employees to progress within your organisation

Available courses and additional support

Multiply offers fully funded and flexible courses for anyone aged 19+ without a Level 2 qualification (or equivalent) in Maths. We recommend contacting local providers, such as Further Education colleges, as there may be offers that aren't captured on [Find a course](#).

Read more about [Multiply - Skills for Life](#) or contact multiply.localallocations@education.gov.uk for more information.

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs)

Overview

Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs), which are led by employer representative bodies (ERBs), are engaging and bringing together businesses and providers to agree local skills priorities. It is our expectation that by being employer-led and locally owned, LSIPs will be uniquely placed to shine a spotlight on the skills employers need most in the workplace but may be struggling to find in their local area.

Local Skills Improvement Fund

With ERBs designated to lead the development of LSIPs in all 38 areas of England, the recently launched £165m Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) will enable FE providers to transition their provision so that it matches LSIP priorities.

Designated employer representative bodies

Find which [designated employer representative body](#) (ERB) is responsible for developing the local skills improvement plan for their area.

It is recognised that many employers will operate across more than one LSIP area and where this applies we would advise they engage with all LSIPs with which they have a material interest.

We expect most areas of the country to have LSIP published by summer 2023. Following their publication, LSIPs will be reviewed regularly to ensure the skills needs of the specified area are still being met and that the plans remain up to date and relevant.

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC)

Overview

Set up by government in 2015, The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC) aim to make sure every young person can find their best next step out of education and into the world of work. Core to that is the bridge between employers and schools and colleges.

There are lots of ways employers can support young people, working with individual schools and colleges or working with Careers Hubs on a larger local and regional scale. As well as directly supporting young people, there are key benefits to businesses, from personal development for staff, to identifying new talent and building pipelines for the future.

Become a Cornerstone Employer

Cornerstone Employers are a flagship community of local and national businesses across England, working with Careers Hubs to support clusters of secondary schools and colleges and empower careers provision in an area. Find out more about becoming a Cornerstone Employer below:

[Become a Cornerstone Employer | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#)

Industry Partnerships

By working with CEC, industry partners can channel up to date information about new pathways into their sector to education leaders and young people – and increase the representation of their sector nationally. Register your interest below:

[CEC's Industry Partnerships web page.](#)

Become an Enterprise Adviser

Volunteering as an Enterprise Adviser gives businesses the opportunity to support local schools and colleges by sharing your experience and networks to help them develop a strong careers programme that supports all students. Enterprise Advisers can:

- Share their career journey with young people
- Offer experiences of their workplaces
- Strategically support school leaders with their careers programme

You can find out more about becoming an Enterprise Adviser below:

[Rewrite the Story \(careersandenterprise.co.uk\)](http://careersandenterprise.co.uk)

Employer Resources

CEC's Resource Directory allows you to find quality assured resources to help businesses to support young people and prepare them to take their best next step. Resources are available to guide your thinking around this critical area of careers education. Visit CEC's Resource Director to learn more:

[Resource Directory](#)



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