

Funding boost to get young people get into work

Employers can now apply for a £1000 cash boost to help them take on new trainees, Apprenticeships and Skills Minister, Gillian Keegan has announced today (27 January).

The new scheme will support young people to gain the skills and experience they need from the very start, helping them to get a job, an apprenticeship, or pursue further study. The cash boost – which is available until 31 July 2021 – will help businesses with the cost of providing a high-quality work placement for a trainee. This includes providing facilities, uniforms or helping with travel costs. Businesses offering new traineeship opportunities will receive the £1,000 bonus for every trainee they take on with up to a maximum of 10 trainees. Employers can claim the cash incentive for all work placements that have been completed since 1 September.

The highly successful traineeship programme has already helped nearly 120,000 young people get on the path to a great career since 2013. Recent figures show that 66% of trainees get a job, take up an apprenticeship or go on to further study within 6 months of completing their programme, and today's announcement will expand the scheme even further, giving thousands more young people the opportunity to gain the skills they need to start a new career as we build back better from the pandemic. This will support this country and our businesses to fill and create more jobs, giving young people a better start while boosting productivity.

The programmes last between 6 weeks and 12 months, and focus on developing vital employability skills, alongside additional English, maths and digital skills, combined with a work placement lasting a minimum of 70 hours. Young people have completed work placements in a range of exciting industries including construction, education and health and social care.

The launch of the incentive scheme follows the announcement in July 2020 by the Chancellor, as part of his Plan for Jobs, of an additional £111 million investment to support the largest-ever expansion of traineeships so more young people have the skills and confidence they need to get on in life.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

My number one priority is to support, protect and create jobs, which is why for the first time ever we're giving businesses £1,000 to cover the cost of trainee work experience, because we know that traineeships are a proven way to give young people the skills and opportunity, they need to be ready for work.

We also know that our young people will be vital in the national

effort to recover from the pandemic, so I urge businesses to seize this opportunity and help us harness the talent of our young people and offer hope for the future.

Gillian Keegan, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills said:

We're pulling out all the stops to help young people get the skills and confidence they need to progress. This cash boost will help employers of all sizes provide more traineeship opportunities, to invest in their workforce so they can rebuild and grow, giving young people a vital route to start their apprenticeship journey, get their first job or go on to further study.

I strongly encourage as many employers as possible to apply now and take advantage of this fantastic offer so more young people can gain the skills they need to progress in their careers as we build back better from the pandemic.

Louise Powell, Head of Apprenticeships, Specsavers said:

We began offering Traineeships in September to provide an opportunity for young people to experience a real working environment and for our store partners to recognise the young talent available. So far we have had 16 Trainees and 10 of those have now been offered a job with 9 about to start their Apprenticeship. We have a further 24 vacancies and we have been amazed at the continuing quality of candidates presented by our partner Qube throughout".

This new cash boost is in addition to the apprentice scheme announced last year, which offers employers £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and £1,500 for apprentice aged 25 and over. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant. More than ten thousand employers have already taken up the offer, which is available until March 2021, so businesses can create even more opportunities and give more people the life changing chance to start a great career.

The government's £2 billion Kickstart Scheme is also creating hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country.

Together, these schemes will ensure that more of our young people are given the opportunities they deserve, helping them to secure the experience and skills that they need to get a job or start further education or training, while boosting productivity and filling more jobs.