

News story: Multimillion-pound contracts awarded for apprenticeship training

Hundreds of training organisations across the country are being given a boost as government begins awarding contracts tomorrow (21 December) worth nearly £500m to provide apprenticeship training for learners and small businesses.

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) is awarding contracts to hundreds of organisations to provide apprenticeship training to non-levy paying employers. Each of these employers does not pay the apprenticeship levy because they have an annual pay bill of less than £3million.

This will ensure all businesses have a real choice of high quality apprenticeship training provision, no matter where they are in the country or what sector they operate in. It will also mean that more people of all ages and backgrounds will have the opportunity to get into skilled employment. Employers looking to find an apprenticeship provider can do so through find apprenticeship training, which will be updated in early January.

Apprenticeships and Skills Minister Anne Milton said:

We are investing in our workforce to make sure there is no barrier on anyone's ambition and that employers have the skilled workforce they need. The investment announced today will ensure that all businesses are able to benefit from high-quality apprenticeship training provision.

The awards follow a rigorous procurement process, designed to ensure the sustainable, ongoing provision of apprenticeship training for employers and learners over the next 15 months. Over 1,000 providers submitted bids.

The initial awards for this procurement total £485m, with successful providers able to bid for more funding over the contract period if they can demonstrate evidence of demand, and subject to the ESFA funding rules and affordability.

In cases where providers have been unsuccessful in the procurement, we are extending contracts by three months so businesses and apprentices have stability while completing existing training.

Contracts for the non-levy funding will run between January 2018 and April 2019.