


Funding to Fire Up Your Business

Your toolkit for government supported funding
of vocational training and apprenticeships





The benefits of investing in the learning and development of your workforce are endless. From the clear-to-see perks, such as improving the confidence of your employees, allowing them to flourish with new skills, and keeping them in the job longer. To the less evident advantages, such as improving your public reputation as an employer, having a competitive advantage over other employers when recruiting, and improving the mental wellbeing of your staff.

However, the benefit that is often overlooked is that upskilling your workers prepares your organisation to combat a variety of old and new challenges that being in business can throw at you. For example, training one of the employees at your care home with a Falls Prevention course will allow them to mitigate the risk of harm both to a service user and that staff member. Or training an employee at your childcare setting with a Children and Young People's Mental Health qualification will help identify any mental health concerns early and give that child a better chance in life.

By offering your employees the opportunity for continuous personal development, you'll expand the expertise within your business and the wider community. Your employees will have more skills and knowledge at their fingertips, leading them to be better prepared for the challenging situations that our fast-paced and complex environments can throw at them.

Whilst it can't be denied that it is crucial to invest in the learning and development of your team, the biggest barrier to doing so is the availability of the money to pay for it. As a leading provider of training solutions in the adult care, healthcare and early years industries, at Connect2Care we recognise that navigating the plethora of government funded training opportunities can be a minefield. We are here to help.

The purpose of this e-guide is to bridge the gap between businesses needing cash for training and the government funding available. In this guide, we'll walk you through the wide variety of funding opportunities that are out there and available for you now in a simple, easy to understand way. Our friendly team is always on hand to help you uncover the best funding opportunities to suit your individual business needs.

Kirsty Simmonds

Health and Social Care Sector Lead
for Connect2Care



Apprenticeship Funding Support

As the network of employers nurturing the next generation of workers through apprenticeships grows, so does the number of occupations available for prospective apprentices.

In recent years there's been a complete reform of apprenticeships. And with this, the benefits of apprenticeships for employers are becoming more widely understood.

The most notable benefit is that companies can utilise government funding to prepare their staff for the future by gaining industry-recognised skills, developing the knowledge behind their job, and learning the right behaviours to perform their role to the best of their abilities.

There are three ways of funding apprenticeships within your business. Here, we run through them in more detail advising how they can be accessed and what additional incentives are available.



Apprenticeship Levy

[The Apprenticeship Levy](#) is a payroll tax on UK employers which can be used to fund new apprenticeships. Employers, in any sector, with an annual pay bill of more than £3million, will pay the levy. This is set at 0.5% of their pay bill over £3million and paid monthly through PAYE.

A business's levy payments can be used to fund apprenticeships right across an organisation, at all levels, and not just for new employees.

Employers in England who pay the levy and participate in apprenticeship programmes receive more than they pay into it. They earn an additional 10% through a monthly top-up to their digital account.

Sound confusing? Don't worry – Connect2Care have created a free to download e-guide called [Apprenticeship Levy Handbook](#) which covers everything you need to know about the apprenticeship levy - without all the jargon!

Co-Investment

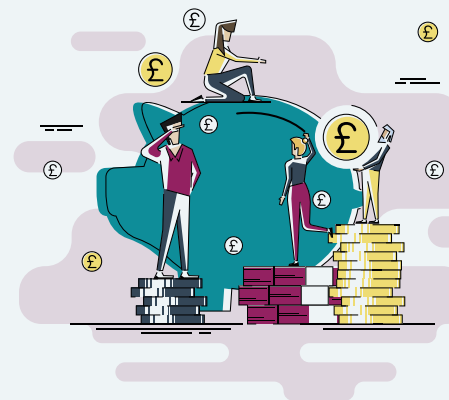
Smaller companies, who don't pay the apprenticeship levy, have access to the government's co-investment fund to support with the cost of apprenticeship training.

The government asks that employers make a 5% contribution, and the government pays the remaining 95% up to the maximum amount of funding set for the apprenticeship chosen.

These payments are made directly to the apprenticeship training provider and the End Point Assessment Organisation.

Additionally, employers who don't pay the levy may be eligible for additional funding and support. This is dependent on the apprentice's circumstances or if a business employs fewer than 50 people.

More information on the [funding rules for employers](#) concerning apprenticeships is available on the government website. Connect2Care are more than happy to support you to navigate the available apprenticeship funding options.



Levy Transfers

Employers who pay the apprenticeship levy can sometimes find themselves in a situation where they have unused funds.

This opens up the opportunity for businesses to collaborate by levy-paying employers transferring their remaining funds to another business to pay for their apprenticeship training costs. A levy-paying business can transfer up to 25% of its levy pot to as many different employers as it likes.

There are a number of possibilities for employers who wish to receive a levy transfer. This could include speaking with current business partners or getting in contact with Apprenticeship Training Agencies.

The Government has provided [guidance](#) for businesses wishing to transfer unused apprenticeship funds to other employers.

Local Levy Transfer Campaigns

Due to the growing popularity of apprenticeships across the UK, many local campaigns have been set up to facilitate levy transfers to businesses in their local communities.

A few notable campaigns include:

- ▶ **Manchester** – The [#SEEDIFFERENT](#) campaign offers a [levy matchmaking](#) service to maximise the use of funds, providing its own local strategy to gauge where skills gaps are.
- ▶ **London** – [The London Progression Collaboration](#) (LPC) offers free support to increase investment in apprenticeships, aid fair levy transfers, and access to a knowledge-sharing network between local businesses.
- ▶ **West Sussex** – The [council](#) offers a service for businesses to both transfer and receive apprenticeship levy funds to ensure the fair distribution of levy funds and stimulate the economy locally.
- ▶ **Birmingham** – The [WMCA](#) set up the [Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Fund](#) to cover the costs of training apprentices at small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the West Midlands.

At Connect2Care, we're here to identify the best local scheme available to meet the needs of your workforce. [Get in touch](#) with us today and we can support you through the application process.

You can now search the government portal for apprenticeship funding opportunities via [levy transfer](#).

As a business of any size, you can use this service to apply for funding from large businesses that want to fund 100% of your apprenticeship training and assessment costs.

They can fund your apprenticeship training by transferring some of their apprenticeship levy



Connect2Care's Levy Transfer Support Scheme

Connect2Care's sister company, HIT Training launched the campaign, **Don't Waste: The Future of Hospitality**, to bring the hospitality sector together to utilise its combined resources and support businesses of all sizes to provide high-quality career development opportunities.

We work with some of the largest businesses in hospitality with most of them pledging to support apprentices across the country by supporting our campaign.

This means that no matter where you are based, we are able to help your adult care, healthcare or early years setting to access apprenticeships with the costs covered via a levy transfer.

Get in touch with us today to find out how we can support you to access funds from a levy transfer.

Health Education England (HEE) levy-transfer service for the NHS

Health Education England now offers a free matchmaking service to facilitate and fairly manage any opportunities for levy transfers.

This paves the way for any unspent levy funds to be used to sharpen the skills and development of regional workers in health and social care.

You can [speak to a friendly member of Connect2Care](#) to explore the opportunities of how levy transfers could work for your business.



Incentives to Upskill Your Workforce

To help you fund training opportunities which will attract new talent and upskill your workforce, there are a number of schemes and initiatives available both locally and nationally. We've highlighted some of the new and long-running support packages which Connect2Care can help you to access:

Build Back Better

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chancellor Rishi Sunak put forward his vision to support, create and protect jobs for now and the future.

Originally coined Plan for Jobs, and rebranded as Build Back Better as part of the Chancellor's Budget 2021, the package of support is intended to secure the UK's long-term economic success. It aims to achieve this by focusing on developing the skills of people to help them gain new employment, or better jobs.

Build Back Better is subject to change, and we're here to help you secure your long-term success by taking advantage of the scheme which best supports your business objectives.

Get in touch with us today, and we can help implement these incentives into your business.

Lifetime Skills Guarantee

As part of Build Back Better, the government has introduced a Lifetime Skills Guarantee to give people access to the education and training they need throughout their lives.

Starting from April 2021, adults looking to achieve their first full advanced level (level 3) qualification, which is equivalent to an advanced technical certificate or diploma, or two full A levels, will be able to access a free, fully funded course as part of the government's Lifetime Skills Guarantee.

These courses, in areas including business skills and health and social care, will improve people's employment prospects and open up new opportunities.

Get in touch with us today to see how we can help you access this funding for your employees.



Traineeships Summarised

Traineeships are available for young people aged 16 to 24 and for young people with Education, Health and Care Plans up to academic age 25.

They can last from 6 weeks up to 12 months, though usually traineeships last for less than 6 months. They offer young people the opportunity to gain basic employability skills, on-the-job training and prepare them for work with the goal that they will progress into either an apprenticeship or employment after the traineeship.

The core target group for traineeships in 2020 to 2021 will be young people who, regardless of their background:

- ▶ Are not currently in employment and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it.
- ▶ Are age 16 to 24 and qualified up to and including a full Level 3, and
- ▶ Providers and employers believe they have a reasonable chance of being ready for an apprenticeship or other employment within 6 months of completing a traineeship.

The government will fund employers who provide trainees with work experience, at a rate of £1,000 per trainee for up to ten learners in each of the nine government regions (therefore the maximum any employer can receive is £90,000). You'll need to work with a training provider, like Connect2Care to deliver the associated learning and development – this will be fully-funded by the government.

Work experience in traineeships should give the young person exposure to a real workplace so they can develop the skills, knowledge, confidence, attitudes, and behaviours they need to succeed at work. You'll also need to offer an exit interview on completion which should include meaningful feedback.

The traineeship is free to your business, but you may choose to support trainees with expenses such as transport and meals.

Connect2Care can assist you with setting up a traineeship within your business.

Speak to one of our team today!

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Connect2Care Traineeship Programme Content

Duration

- ▶ 6 – 8 Weeks
- ▶ Three days a week work experience programme supported by 2 days a week of virtual classroom skills and knowledge building.

Content

- ▶ TQUK Level 1 Award in skills for employment: minimum of six credits from the following recommended units:
 - Managing Personal Finances – 3 credits
 - Communication in Work – 3 credits
 - Developing Confidence – 2 credits
 - CV writing – 1 credit
 - Planning and Reviewing Learning – 3 credits
 - Introduction to Customer Care – 1 credits
- ▶ Functional Skills English and maths (as required)
- ▶ Digital skills for the unemployed level 1

- ▶ Up to four of the following interactive online workshops:

- Infection Prevention and Control (contextualised for the setting in sector specific cohorts)
- How to Manage Anxiety and Burnout

- Awareness of First Aid for Mental Health
- Dealing with Loss and Bereavement

- ▶ Your Connect2Care Trainer/Mentor will hold an initial 'enrolment' meeting with the trainees on a local basis – (where possible face to face). After this initial meeting, there will be training mentor provision to follow through and support through their learning journey. The C2C Trainer/Mentor will offer online, telephone and (where appropriate) face to face support to the trainee and the employer for the full 8 weeks of the project, including:

- Weekly updates with the employer
- Weekly updates with learner(s)
- Weekly updates with Connect2Care virtual college

- Weekly progress update on engagement with Netty (online resource platform)
- Daily attendance checks

Further Support for Employers of Apprentices

For a number of years, the Government has been incentivising employers to take on young apprentices. Apprenticeships enable young people with little to no experience to get on the career ladder and learn their craft whilst they earn a wage. Employers benefit not only through the below financial incentives, but also through the talented and loyal worker an apprenticeship creates.

Training younger apprentices, and support for care leavers and those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan

No matter the size of your business, if you're a levy or non-levy payer – businesses are entitled to a £1,000 cash incentive payment for any employed apprentice aged 16-18 or aged 19-24 with an Education and Health Care plan or was once a child in care.

Payments for the £1,000 bonus will be claimed on behalf of the employer by their training provider in two instalments six months apart during the first 12 months of the employee being on an apprenticeship.

National Insurance breaks

From April 2021 employers of apprentices under the age of 25 will no longer be required to pay secondary Class 1 (employer) National Insurance contributions (NIC) on earnings up to the Upper Earnings Limit (currently £50,270), for those employees.

This is a 13.8% saving on everything the apprentice earns over £8,840 a year for the employers of apprentices.

For more information on this initiative, [Connect2Care has provided an example of how the employer savings work.](#)



Funding Support for Further Education

In addition to apprenticeships, providing your workforce with continuing professional development is essential to the core running of your business. Again, this can be costly to facilitate. However, there's a range of funding opportunities available.

Here, we've looked at three of the most popular funding sources, but do [get in touch](#) with us at Connect2Care to explore all the options available to you.

Adult Education Budget

The Adult Education Budget (AEB) provides funding for the delivery of education and training for people aged 19 and over.

Funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the AEB aims to engage adults and provide them with the skills and learning they need to progress into work or equip them for an apprenticeship or other learning.

As an employer, you can use this funding to help your workforce achieve Functional Skills Level 1 or 2 in maths and English if they don't already have equivalent maths and English qualifications, including GCSEs. The funding is also geared up to provide your team with useful skills which are unrelated to their current job role.

European Social Fund

The European Social Fund (ESF) helps people get better jobs and ensures fairer job opportunities for all EU citizens. It works by investing in Europe's workers, young people and all those seeking a job. This funding will continue to be available until March 2023, regardless of the outcome of Britain leaving the European Union.

The funding is available to develop the skills of young people and adults in 38 local enterprise partnership

(LEP) areas across England. The aim is to make sure existing workforce skills are enhanced and young people can secure employment or progress to further education and training. We currently offer a range of Level 2 and 3 qualifications lasting between 3 and 4 months including Cleaning Knowledge and Skills, Understanding Behaviour that Challenges or the Principles of Business Administration.

Connect2Care works with a number of local enterprise partnerships to provide fully-funded training to employees in the adult care, healthcare and early years sectors to gain lifelong skills.

Our local partners and the areas they cover include:

- ▶ Solent, including Southampton, Portsmouth and Chichester.
- ▶ Greater Manchester and Lancashire, including Preston, Burnley and Lancaster, and Sheffield City.
- ▶ North Yorkshire, York and East Riding.
- ▶ New Anglia, including Norwich and Ipswich.
- ▶ The Marches, covering Shropshire, Herefordshire, Telford and Wrekin.
- ▶ Coast to Capital, including Crawley, Worthing and Brighton.
- ▶ Central England, covering Nottinghamshire, Coventry and Warwickshire, Derbyshire, Stoke and Staffordshire, and Hertfordshire.

[Get in touch](#) if you're keen to access AEB or ESF funding to support your workforce.

Workforce Development Fund

The Workforce Development Fund (WDF) empowers businesses to claim back the cost of an employee undertaking any health and social care qualifications, programmes and digital learning.

Provided by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC), the funding can cover employee salaries whilst training, the cost of an apprenticeship, coaching and mentoring, venue hire, and wage replacement costs.

There are two application routes to access the WDF depending on where you're located. [Contact Connect2Care](#), a Skills for Care Centre of Excellence, to see how we can make the WDF work for you.

For over 14 years, Connect2Care's team of expert trainers have been helping adult care, healthcare and early years businesses across the country to upskill their employees.

We have a vast number of experienced training professionals countrywide, and we are ready and able to provide you with the support you need to build skills within your setting.



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