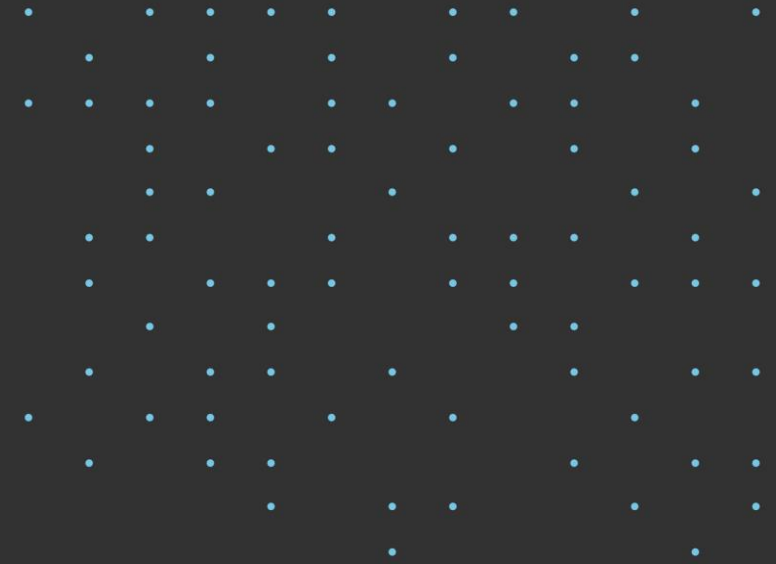




Professional Services Skills Landscape

Level 7 Funding Update

May 2025



Level 7 Announcement

Summary

- Changes to **level 7 apprenticeship funding** from **1st Jan 2026**.
- Government funding will continue for new level 7 apprentice starts who are **aged 16-21** or Under 25 who either are a care leaver or have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) at the start of their apprenticeship.
- Anyone who **starts their Level 7 apprenticeship on or before 31 December 2025** will continue to receive **full funding** under the current rules until they complete their programme

Further Information

- All intakes before 31st December 2025 can **continue as normal**
- **New Level 7 trailblazer** sill under development, work was paused until Level 7 announcement
- BPP updates will be provided here [Level 7 apprenticeships funding announcement - BPP](#)



BPP Response

Employer Considerations

- January 2026 start dates to **move before 31st December 2025**
- **Utilisation of new Level 4** for non-relevant degree graduates.
Funding band will be **£12k** and available at BPP from **August 2025**
- Review **other available apprenticeships** to maximise levy utilisation
- **Internal comms plan** regarding new eligibility rules
- Track the **age and eligibility** of potential apprentices

BPP Considering

- **Level 4 Plus** option that includes higher level paper
- Creating **Level 5 Trailblazer** group
- **Level 6** Degree Apprenticeship
- Options will be available from **January 2026**

25%

Level 7 BPP learners
would be eligible under
new rules

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Guidance for L4 Learners Age 22+ After 1st Jan 26

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EPA is before 31st December 2025

- **Complete Level 4** as planned.
- We recommend enrolling onto **Level 7** by our final December 2025 enrolment date (onboarding deadline 6 weeks before)
- We strongly encourage **completion of Level 4 programme** before transitioning to Level 7.

If a learner is.....

- Not planning to move to Level 7, continue with Level 4 as normal
- Aged 21 or under upon completing Level 4 and wishes to progress to Level 7, they should continue with Level 4 as planned

EPA is after the 1st January 2026

- **Continue Level 4 studies without delay.** Any completed Level 4 modules **can count as prior learning and exemptions** from Level 7 modules
- Option to continue with Level 4 and then **commercially fund** if aged 22+ after 1st Jan 2026.
- Consider **moving EPA forward to 2025 date** if viable option
- If aged 22+ and want funding for Level 7 programme, enrol onto **Level 7** by our final December 2025 enrolment date (onboarding deadline 6 weeks before)

2025 Public Level 7 Start Dates

- 18th July
- 20th August
- 3rd September
- 16th September
- 6th October
- 5th November
- 10th December
- Late December date to be added



25/26 Funding Rules



Off the Job Training

- **No longer calculated individually;** a **minimum number of hours** is now published per standard.
- **Minimum OTJT:** 187 hours or 8 months duration.
- **No distinction** between full-time and part-time apprentices for OTJT delivery.
- **English and maths** (standalone) are excluded from OTJT but must still be delivered if required.

DFE Minimum Hours

Level 3 Assistant Accountant – 348

Level 4 Professional Accounting/Tax Technician – 348

Level 7 Accountancy/Tax Professional - 787

Part Time Apprentices

- No automatic extension for <30 hrs/week
- Duration must be **realistic** and agreed with employer

Assessment Reform

- Introduction of **new apprenticeship assessment principles** (replacing “end-point assessment” with “apprenticeship assessment”).
- Dual system in place while standards are updated

Functional Skills

- Must follow **active learning** per training plan
- Cannot count as programme active learning
- Must be completed if part of **gateway requirement**

Other Notable Clarifications

- **Apprenticeship Agreement** must be extended if the programme is extended.
- **Zero-hours contracts** are acceptable but must meet all other rules.
- **Breaks in learning** must be used if no OTJT active learning occurs within required timeframes.
- **Residency eligibility** updated to reflect post-Brexit immigration and asylum policies

Applies to all apprenticeships starting on or after **1 August 2025**. Some rules (e.g. redundancy and changing to a new version of a standard) apply **regardless of start date**.



Hot Topics and Further Announcements

Announcements

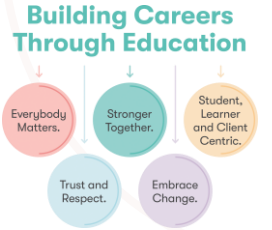
- **Apprenticeship budget exceeds £3bn** for the first time...
- Launched **Foundation Apprenticeships and shorter duration** – down to 8 months
- Full Skills England – IfATE closed – June 2025
- Funding rules – changes to OTJT min hours
- **£136m for Skills Bootcamps** across a range of sectors
- **Lots of investment into Construction**

Future Flexibilities?

- End Point Assessment reform
- High Value Training
- Higher Technical Qualifications L4 & L5
- Skills Bootcamps

Skills England Board Members appointments

- **Phil Smith – Chair** - Phil Smith is the former CEO and Chairman of Cisco UK & Ireland, he also chaired Innovate UK and led key skills initiatives, including The Tech Partnership and the Digital Skills Council.
- **Sir David Bell – Vice Chair** - Sir David is the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive of the University of Sunderland.
- **Nicki Hay – Director of Apprenticeships Strategy and Policy, BPP**
- Andy Westwood - Policy Director for the Productivity Institute and Professor of Public Policy, Government and Business at The University of Manchester
- Brian Holliday – MD of digital industries at **Siemens UK and Ireland**
- Sara Todd - Chief Executive at Trafford Council
- Anthony Impey -
- Dame Fiona Kendrick - **Chair and CEO of Nestlé UK & Ireland**
- Helen Woodward Davies - **Resource Programme Director for EDF at Hinkley Point C**
- Dr Fazal Dad – Principal and Chief Executive for Blackburn College
- Zoe Lewis - Principal and Chief Executive Officer of Middlesbrough College Group
- Sian Elliot - Director of Organising, Public Services & Skills at TUC
- Dr Fiona Aldridge – CEO of the Skills Federation



Next Steps

Employers

- Review your Level 7 start dates for early 2026 to consider moving forward
- Review your Level 4 learner end dates and consider bringing EPA forward or transitioning to Level 7
- We will update you in the next 4-6 weeks on BPP offering

Upcoming webinars

- 4th June 16.15 Employer Update on recent announcements: Level 7 funding, Funding rule changes

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