

Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Policy



1 Introduction

The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced by the Government in April 2017 to create long term sustainable funding for apprenticeships and to give employers more control to provide their staff with a range of training opportunities. Large employers (those with an annual pay bill over £3 million) contribute 0.5% of their annual pay bill into the scheme.

The apprenticeship levy allows employers like the council a real opportunity to invest in high quality training, helping to grow our organisation in order to get the skilled workforce the council needs to thrive and succeed. Now we can work in partnership with other employers, supporting them to take on new apprentices and to support and develop existing employees.

Providing apprenticeships is an integral part of the council's wider regeneration approach and also supports educational improvement priorities by helping to raise skills aspirations.

As a large levy paying employer with an ambitious [Apprenticeship Strategy](#), we have the option to transfer up to 25% of our levy funds to other employers, helping to boost the number of high-quality apprenticeships across the County and developing skills and knowledge of our residents.

Employers must either be non-levy payers or have fully committed their own levy funds in order to apply for additional funds from the council under the scheme.

However, in addition, Government funding is still available to small businesses who employ less than 50 people who want to offer an apprenticeship to a 16-18-year-old or a 19 to 24-year-old who is a care leaver or has an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan. View the [specific section of rules](#).

2 Strategic aims and assessment criteria

The [County Durham Vision 2035](#), which was developed with partner organisations and the public, sets out what stakeholders would like the county to look like by 2035, structured around the visions of 'More and better jobs', 'People live long and independent lives' and 'Connected Communities'.

To gain maximum benefit from the levy to support the achievement of this vision, applications will be prioritised using the following assessment criteria:

The council will endeavour to support applications which align to the vision and the priorities detailed in the [Council Plan](#) for:

- Our economy
- Our environment
- Our people
- Our communities
- Our council

We will consider levy transfer applications for:

- Businesses within County Durham
- Partnership organisations – Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs)
- Businesses supporting the Council's supply chain

3 Eligibility criteria - transfer of apprenticeship levy fund rules

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has published [guidelines for transferring apprenticeship levy funds](#).

Transferred funds can only be used to pay for the training and assessment costs of approved apprenticeships - The full list of [apprenticeship standards is available here](#). The receiving organisation remains responsible for paying the salaries of the apprentices who are funded by a levy transfer.

Any employer wishing to receive and use transferred funds must register and set up an account with the Apprenticeship Service and have a signed agreement with the ESFA.

Transfers can only be used for new apprenticeships - either new recruits or for existing staff. The council is not able to transfer funds for apprenticeships that have already started.

The receiving organisation must apply for levy transfer funding before the hiring of the apprentice. The receiving organisation must ensure that enough time is allowed to make the levy transfer application and recruit the apprentice before the start date of the apprenticeship training course selected.

Transfer payments will be made monthly from the council to the receiving employer's apprenticeship account.

If the apprenticeship stops for any reason then the funding will stop, however the receiving employer will not be required to pay any funds back to the council received to date. It is the receiving organisation's responsibility to inform the council if an apprenticeship ends earlier than the projected end date provided on the application form.

A transfer can fund up to the funding band maximum of an apprenticeship standard. If the receiving employer agree additional training with the training provider, the receiving employer will have to pay the difference to the training provider.

Once the transfer of funds has been processed, the responsibility and liability of the apprenticeship lies solely with the receiving employer. The council has no accountability for the apprenticeship going forward, apart from the commitment to fund the apprenticeship over its entire duration until completion.

For further details on your responsibilities as an employer when employing an apprentice, please visit [Government advice on employing an apprentice](#).

4 Application process

Employers interested in making an application for a levy transfer will be able to view the Durham County Council levy transfer pledge on the apprenticeship service [pledge page](#). Employers will need an apprenticeship service account to apply for a transfer to fund an apprentice for their business.

An employer interested in making an application for a levy transfer will need to:

- know which apprenticeship standard their apprentice will be undertaking;
- know how many apprentices they need funding for;
- know the location of where the apprentice will be working from;
- know the apprentice expected start date.

Employers will then submit an application to the council via the 'create a transfer' online application form; this will be considered by the council and the employer will be notified of the decision via their apprenticeship service account.

5 Assessment process

Applications for a levy fund transfer will be considered by the council's Organisational Development/Workforce Development Team within HR and Employee Services who manage the council's Apprenticeship Programme and will be considered on a case-by-case basis against the assessment criteria (see section 2).

Funds will also be allocated based on the availability of funding, therefore will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

As levy transfers can only be made against a named apprentice, an 'approval in principle' will be granted until the apprentice/s has been recruited and the learning provider has confirmed eligibility.

Upon receipt of the application, the council will endeavour to inform the receiving organisation of the outcome of their application within 30 days.

For monitoring purposes, we also request that receiving employers commit to notifying the council on the completion of the apprenticeship.

If you have any questions or require any support, please get in touch with us at HRCorporateTraining@durham.gov.uk

For advice regarding the application of this policy please contact:

HR Corporate Training

hrcorporatetraining@durham.gov.uk

Version 1

Last Review – April 2023

Next Review planned – April 2025

Durham County Council complies with all relevant statutory obligations. Personal information processed by the Council will be handled in accordance with the Council's privacy statement, which can be accessed [here](#).

If you have any concerns about how your data is handled, please contact either the Data Protection Officer at dpo@durham.gov.uk or the [Information Commissioner's Office](#).