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# National retraining scheme

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## About the scheme

The national retraining scheme is the government's new programme to help adults retrain into better jobs, and be ready for future changes to the economy, including those brought about by automation.

By helping adults to retrain into better jobs, the scheme will also help to meet the needs of businesses for a multi-skilled workforce in the future.

To support the development of the scheme, the government announced £100 million in the [autumn budget 2018](#). This is for the continued testing and development of the scheme, as well as delivering the first parts of the scheme to the public.

During its testing phase, the first part of the scheme, Get help to retrain, is available to eligible adults in [6 areas across England](#). This part of the scheme will be available to people and businesses across England in 2020.

The scheme is part of the government's [industrial strategy](#) to improve productivity and build a country that works for everyone.

# Eligibility

The scheme will initially support adults who:

- are already in work
- are aged 24 and over
- do not have a qualification at degree level
- are paid below a certain wage threshold – this threshold will be tested with people earning low to medium wages as we develop the scheme

We're investing in this group of people first as they:

- have comparatively less access to existing government support
- are most in need of adapting their skills so they can take advantage of new opportunities

Get help to retrain - the first part of national retraining scheme – is currently available to eligible adults in [6 areas across England](#), while it is still being tested.

Adults who are eligible, but don't live in one of these areas, will be able to access the service when it is rolled out across England in 2020. In the meantime, additional information, advice and guidance can be provided by the [National Careers Service](#).

# Why we need the scheme

We're introducing the national retraining scheme to respond to:

- the changing nature of jobs and the types of tasks people do at work
- the need for a multi-skilled workforce to take on new and emerging jobs as business needs change
- new opportunities that the future economy will bring

Some of the things we've also considered are:

- how the automation of many jobs will lead to new opportunities and challenges
- fewer adults undertaking training despite the range of opportunities currently available
- the barriers to retraining, which include:
  - the financial cost
  - poor fit between availability of training and working patterns
  - previous poor experience of education
- low productivity growth in the economy - which the scheme aims to address by improving skills, and helping people and businesses to take advantage of new

technology

- longer working lives - as people work longer there will be a greater need to:
  - adapt to changes in the economy
  - consider new careers during their working lives

## What the scheme will include

The national retraining scheme aims to:

- support people already in work to move into better jobs through training and tailored advice
- complement existing training programmes for adults
- encourage people to develop their flexibility and resilience in the world of work, so they can take advantage of new opportunities

The scheme will include a range of services to support people while they train and look for jobs.

It will provide:

- tailored advice and guidance from a qualified adviser
- functional skills training, initially focusing on English and maths
- flexible online and blended learning, a mix of online and face-to-face provision, enabling more adults to access training
- in-work vocational training, learnt on the job

## Get help to retrain

Get help to retrain is the first part of the national retraining scheme, which we began rolling out in July 2019. It's a digital service that will help people to:

- understand their current skills
- explore alternative occupations and training opportunities to develop new skills
- access support from a dedicated adviser

It breaks down the process of getting a better job into manageable steps, and helps adults build upon skills they may not have known they had, to secure a better working future.

We've been continually reviewing the Get help to retrain service since it was launched in July 2019. We are adding new features and upgrades, based on feedback from the people using it, so that it will:

- work better for the people who'll use it
- help people develop the skills employers say they'll need

Following extensive user testing, adults accessing the service will benefit from new and improved features, such as a more advanced skills matching tool to help them identify potential new job roles, and the ability to save their progress and return to their results.

The job matching feature also incorporates data on recent growth in each occupation, along with the strength of a person's match with the skills required for job roles.

The article [Designing a retraining scheme that meets the needs of the people using it](#), from the DfE digital and transformation blog, explains the approach we're using to develop the service.

We will continue to add further upgrades and new features to the service, as we roll out to more areas across England.

## Rollout

The service is available to [adults who are eligible](#) in these areas:

- the Liverpool city region
- North East local enterprise partnership area
- West Midlands combined authority areas
- the Leeds city region local enterprise partnership area
- the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough combined authority area
- the Heart of the South West local enterprise partnership area

If you are eligible, or know someone who is, find out if Get help to retrain could help you get started on the path to a better job.

In 2020, Get help to retrain will be available across England.

## National retraining partnership

The strategic development and rollout of the scheme is led and overseen by the national retraining partnership, which includes:

- government departments – led by the Department for Education (DfE), working with:
  - HM Treasury (HMT)
  - the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

- the Confederation of British Industry (CBI)
- the Trades Union Congress (TUC)

The national retraining partnership aims to help businesses and workers to provide feedback to develop the national retraining scheme effectively, so that it meets the needs of adults using the service

Alongside this, DfE is working across government to ensure that the scheme fits with other government programmes and provision, to deliver the most effective retraining opportunities possible.

## Our approach

Developing a national retraining scheme that really works is a big and complex challenge. This is why we are starting small, learning as we go, using a 'test and learn' approach.

This means we are:

- developing the scheme with the people and businesses who'll use it
- starting small and scaling up each part of the service following extensive testing with people using the scheme

Before releasing the first part of the scheme, Get help to retrain, we consulted with people who might use the service to help us with its development. This has allowed us to meet the needs of employed adults who are eligible to use the scheme, as well as employers.

We've worked with:

- over 515 working adults, including people with assisted digital needs
- 94 people representing around 51 employers across 7 different locations
- 17 careers advisers
- around 50 union representatives
- behaviour change specialists on how to bring employed adults into the scheme

We know from discussions with people that:

- most people will only consider training if there is a clear route to a new job
- the current training and job landscape can be overwhelming
- most people would not sign up for training without further information and guidance first
- negative perceptions were common, for example, poor previous learning experiences
- the term a 'better job' means different things to different people

- online training often meets people's needs for flexibility, but many people lack confidence using it
- existing online training is often targeted at highly-skilled and motivated people
- existing online training only meets users' needs to a limited extent as it represents only a small proportion of adult training provision
- people would pay for or co-fund training if it led to a job

We found that employers value:

- soft skills, such as good communications skills and a strong work ethic
- a scheme that is integrated with existing recruitment processes
- apprenticeships, but many have expressed an interest in a shorter, more flexible, retraining offer

We have taken these points into consideration as we have developed the scheme. We will continue to use insights, from partners, stakeholders and users of the scheme, to improve its effectiveness, and ensure it meets the needs of the people who will use it.

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