



BRIEFING PAPER

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Traineeships

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side:

What are they?	3
Content	3
Funding	3
Statistics	4
Guidance for employers and providers	4

Contents

1.1	What are they?	3
1.2	Content	3
1.3	Funding	3
1.4	Statistics	4
1.5	Guidance for employers and providers	4

1.1 What are they?

A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience whose focus is on helping young people become ready for work.¹

Traineeships are aimed at young people aged 16 to 24 who:

- Have little work experience and are not employed – in particular those who have been unsuccessful when applying for an apprenticeship or job due to a lack of skills
- Qualified below level three – level three qualifications are similar in level to A-Levels.
- Providers and employers believe have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of starting a traineeship.²

1.2 Content

Introduced in August 2013, traineeships are not the same as apprenticeships.³ Traineeships can last between six weeks and six months. Their aim is to take young people to a positive outcome in the form of employment or an apprenticeship.

Traineeships are made up of three core components:

- A work experience placement lasting between 100 and 240 hours at the end of which the trainee receives an exit interview
- Work preparation training covering areas like CV-writing, interview preparation, job search and inter-personal skills
- English and mathematics courses, unless the trainee has achieved a GCSE at A*-C in those subjects (or a functional skills qualification at Level 2).⁴

In addition to these core elements, providers and employers can add other training elements depending on the needs of young people and the labour market.

1.3 Funding

Funding

For trainees aged 16 to 18, traineeships are funded by the Department for Education. In 2014/15 (year ended 31 March 2015), the total budget for traineeships was £15,269,000.⁵

¹ Gov.uk, [Skills Funding Agency, Apprenticeships, Further Education and Skills: Traineeships](#), 21 February 2014

² Department for Education, [Traineeships, Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment, Framework for delivery 2015 to 2016](#), March 2015, p.6

³ House of Commons Library, [Apprenticeships Policy, England](#), 20 July 2015

⁴ Department for Education, [Traineeships, Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment, Framework for delivery 2015 to 2016](#), March 2015, p.7

⁵ Skills Funding Agency, [Annual Reports and Accounts 2014 to 2015](#), p.67

For 19 to 24 year olds, traineeships are funded by the Skills Funding Agency's Adult Skills Budget.⁶ A detailed breakdown of their cost has not been published.

Pay and benefits

Traineeships are not jobs and are therefore exempt from the National Minimum Wage.⁷ Employers are not required to pay trainees. However, they are encouraged to contribute to expenses associated with traineeships.

Trainees can continue to receive benefits, including Jobseeker's Allowance or Universal Credit. They may also qualify for financial support such as [the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund](#), [Free School Meals](#), and [Learning and Learner Support arrangements](#) for 19 to 24 year olds.⁸

1.4 Statistics

Starts

Traineeships were launched in 2012/13. Latest available data show that:

- In 2012/13, the intake was fewer than 50 learners
- In 2013/14, there were 10,400 traineeship starts.
- In 2014/15 (August to April), provisional data report 15,100 traineeship starts.⁹

1.5 Guidance for employers and providers

Guidance for new employers and education providers wishing to provide traineeships is available from [the National Apprenticeship Service](#) and the [fact sheet for employers](#). Guidance and eligibility criteria for prospective providers were published by the Skills Funding Agency in February 2014.¹⁰

⁶ For trainees aged 16 to 19, the Education Funding Agency's per student funding methodology applies whereas trainees aged 19 to 24 fall under the realm of the Adult Skills Budget's single funding rate. See Skills Funding Agency, [Funding Rules 2015 to 2016, Version 2](#)

⁷ Department for Education, [Traineeships, Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment, Framework for delivery 2015 to 2016](#), March 2015, p. 10

⁸ Department for Education, [Traineeships, Supporting young people to develop the skills for apprenticeships and sustainable employment, Framework for delivery 2015 to 2016](#), March 2015, p. 10

⁹ Skills Funding Agency, FE data library, [Traineeships – starts by core element and age \(2013/14 to 2014/15\)](#), July 2015

¹⁰ Gov.uk, [Skills Funding Agency, Guidance, Traineeships: eligible providers](#), 20 February 2014

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