



WORCESTERSHIRE
APPRENTICESHIPS

WORCESTERSHIRE
SME EMPLOYER GUIDE TO

APPRENTICESHIPS



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WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job with training, allowing people to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to be occupationally competent. There are 4 Levels of Apprenticeships. They can be used to recruit new employees or retrain/upskill your existing workforce (16+ with no upper age limit). The training provider will make sure the individual being put forward for the apprenticeship meets all eligibility criteria before enrolment.

There are over 630 apprenticeship standards covering job roles from entry level to senior management. There are different entry requirements depending on the industry, the job role and the apprenticeship level.

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at Grades A* - C or 9 - 4
Advanced	3	2 A level passes
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

To start someone on an apprenticeship, the two key things you need to consider are what apprenticeship standard will fit your job role requirements and which training provider you will work with to deliver the apprenticeship.

There are now almost 300 Higher & Degree Apprenticeships for jobs such as Lawyer, Solicitor, Architect, Banking, Nursing, Midwife, Management, Quantity Surveying, Civil Engineering to name a few. These are great for upskilling and developing existing employees.

ELIGIBILITY FOR APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING

In order to be eligible to receive funding, your apprenticeship must follow the approved and outlined Apprenticeship Standards.

This means that all apprenticeships have a standardised model of delivery so that apprentices across the country should be learning the same type of things in their apprenticeship area. This allows employers to be sure that someone they hire who has completed an apprenticeship has all of the skills that will be required in the workplace. They will also have acquired the necessary level of knowledge in order to thrive.

APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD GUIDELINES

Each Apprenticeship Standard has specific guidelines attached to it, but some of the general guidelines include:

- > Provide a lawful wage (at least the national minimum apprenticeship wage)
www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates
- > Ensure your apprentice has the required English, maths and ICT skills if needed (the level required will be outlined in the content of the apprenticeship standard along with the entry requirements).
- > Ensure that at least 6 hours per week of the apprentice's work hours are made up of off-the-job training.

This can include learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working routine and contributes to the achievement of an apprenticeship. It can be delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work or off-site in a training centre, it can include lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning, and manufacturer training, practical training, shadowing, mentoring, industry visits, and attendance at competitions, learning support and time spent writing assessments/assignments.

- > Only take on an individual as an apprentice if they require enough training to take 12 months of at least 30 hours a week to be capable of fulfilling the job role.
- > Do not charge the apprentice for any of the hiring, training or assessment costs.
- > If an apprentice doesn't feel that their apprenticeship is going in the right direction, they are free to leave, just like in any other job, so it is important to ensure that they are treated well and as part of the team.
- > There is no requirement to retain your apprentice at the end of their programme, however, 85% of apprentices stay in employment, and 64% of these continue working with the same employer.
- > Employers need to have a signed apprenticeship agreement and apprenticeship commitment statement from the learner and training provider.

APPRENTICESHIP STANDARDS, END POINT ASSESSMENT AND GATEWAY

An apprentice can only pass and complete their apprenticeship if they pass the end-point assessment (EPA). They are assessed to check the knowledge, skills and behaviours they have learned throughout their apprenticeship. The end-point assessment organisation will be a separate organisation to the training provider, but the training provider will organise and guide through this.

End-point assessment is different for each apprenticeship standard. The end-point assessment plan will outline the end-point assessment for each apprenticeship and usually includes:

- > a practical assessment
- > a project
- > an interview and presentation
- > written or multiple choice tests

GATEWAY

During a period called gateway, you and your training provider decide if your apprentice is ready to take their end-point assessment.

Before considering if your apprentice is ready, the apprentice must have:

- > completed the minimum duration of their apprenticeship
- > met the requirements set out in the end-point assessment plan

Once the apprentice has met these requirements, you and your training provider should use the end-point assessment plan to decide if you think the apprentice has the skills to pass the end-point assessment. If you decide the apprentice isn't ready for end-point assessment or disagree whether the apprentice is ready, you should discuss whether more training is needed.

SELECTING A TRAINING PROVIDER

To find a training provider who can deliver the apprenticeship standard you want and in a way you prefer (day release, block release or all on the job) In Worcestershire you can ask the Worcestershire Apprenticeship Hub **0300 666 3666** for help with this or use the local search directory wocsapprnticeships.org.uk/business-directory/

You can also use the national search directory: www.gov.uk/employers-find-apprenticeship-training to find training providers anywhere in the country but who will deliver the apprenticeship in Worcestershire for you.

WHAT IF THERE ISN'T A SUITABLE APPRENTICESHIP STANDARD FOR YOUR JOB ROLE?

Although there are currently over 740 approved, proposed or under development Apprenticeship standards, sometimes there isn't one available for your industry yet. You could form or become part of a Trailblazer Development Group which consists of at least 10 employers, with 2 small employers (fewer than 50 employees).

The group's role is to develop a new standard which set out what's required for the occupation and the end point assessment, the measurement of the competencies for the occupation, and ensure the apprentice is 'job-ready' at the end of the apprenticeship.

Further information on Trailblazer Development Groups can be found at: www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/trailblazer-group/

ADVERTISING A VACANCY AND RECRUITING

Once you have discussed your requirements with your chosen training provider, if the apprenticeship is a new position rather than a upskilling apprenticeship for an existing employee, a vacancy advert will be put together and appear on Find an App .GOV website. Once the vacancy is live on here it will automatically filter to Worcestershire Apprenticeship Hub vacancy page and Worcestershire Jobs website. The vacancy will then be promoted locally to schools, colleges, Job Centres, Careers Hub advisors and other support services as well as accessed by any individual searching for vacancies.

Employers can also advertise themselves on their own website, social media and any other way they attract new people.

Some training providers may have a pool of ready candidates, others will not and will wait for applications to come through the system in response to the vacancy advert. They can filter applications, carry out Initial Assessments, check eligibility and forward to you for interview. You also have the choice to receive all applications direct to yourself (See section on managing your Digital Apprenticeship Service account).

Applicants are available all year, however the busiest time for prospect applicants is early Spring/Summer time, when schools and colleges discuss post 16/18 options with students.

If you are planning to upskill an existing employee using an apprenticeship standard, all you need to do as previously mentioned, is identify the standard and search for a training provider who is approved to deliver it, there is no need to advertise as a vacancy. Higher and Degree Apprenticeship Levels are very popular with employers for upskilling existing employees.

The national directory for Apprenticeship standards can be found at the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (Ifate)

www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards

FUNDING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP

(NON-LEVY EMPLOYERS ONLY)

If you are not an apprenticeship levy payer, there are two different ways to fund your apprenticeship training. This is either by registering for and utilising the apprenticeship service www.gov.uk/guidance/manage-apprenticeship-funds or through a funding contract held by your selected training provider (see section on setting up a Digital Apprenticeship Account).

After agreeing on an amount between yourself and the training provider, the government will cover 95% of the training costs, up to the allocated maximum funding for that apprenticeship.

Any costs you have to pay for training will be taken in instalments over the course of the apprenticeship by your training provider.

So for example, if an Apprenticeship Standard funding band is set at £12 000 and the apprenticeship is 18 months long, the cost to you would be 5% of this total (£600) that is then paid monthly over the 18 months (£33.33 per month).

APPRENTICESHIP LEVY

WHAT IS THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY?

The Apprenticeship Levy is a fund with employers at its heart. Every employer in the UK with a pay bill of £3 million or over, pays into the levy and then use the funds to hire apprentices.

The government set up the Levy to encourage more employers to hire apprentices and improve the quality of apprenticeships by putting business at the heart of the apprenticeship system. This is achieved through the Trailblazer programme, in which employers work with the government to set Apprenticeship Standards. The Trailblazer groups are made up from a wide range of employers who agree the content for an Apprenticeship standard which are aligned to job roles and are the standard that is nationally approved and that all apprentices follow.

The funds in the Levy are only for use in the training and assessment of an apprentice, and do not cover any extra costs incurred in the hiring of an apprentice.

HOW DOES THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY WORK?

The Levy is co-funded by any UK employer, in any sector, with a pay bill of £3 million or more, and the government. Those eligible employers pay 0.5% of their pay bill, which is paid through PAYE. However, employers will have a £15,000 allowance to offset their levy payment. This is equivalent to 0.5% of £3 million, so if you are eligible, you are technically only paying the levy on the pay bill amount above £3 million.

For every pound added to the fund, the government will add an extra 10p to spend on apprenticeships. That means that if you have a pay bill of £4 million, you will have to pay £5,000 into the Apprenticeship Levy but will have £5,500 in your account to spend on apprenticeships.

HOW DO YOU UTILISE THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY?

The unused funds in your Levy account will expire after 24 months, so make sure you start the process to hire an apprentice in that period OR utilise your levy by upskilling existing employees.

Luckily, spending your Levy is all processed through the Digital Apprenticeship Service (DAS) website, where you will be able to select a registered training provider, set up your apprentice's details and agree costs. So, all you have to do is set up your DAS account, agree details with an appropriate training provider and hire an apprentice.

When selecting a training provider, search for the appropriate apprenticeship standard through your digital account search directory. Here you can view its funding band, these are government set bands with guidance to suggest how much they consider that training should cost, this will be the amount that you pay for the apprenticeship from your levy pot. You will also be able to view the content of the apprenticeship standard, the types of job roles it will cover and search for a list of approved training providers who you can select to work with to deliver this apprenticeship standard.

LEVY TRANSFER

Large employers that pay the apprenticeship levy and won't spend it all themselves can choose to transfer up to 25% of their levy funds each year to other businesses, to pay for their apprenticeship training and assessment.

Transferring levy funds is a way of supporting other businesses by deciding which sectors, skills or local areas you'd like to fund. For example, you could support the engineering sector across England, or fund digital apprenticeships in your local area, or support any apprenticeships in a particular town or city.

Which businesses and apprenticeships you support with a transfer is your choice.

NATIONAL INSURANCE SAVINGS

For apprentices under the age of 25, all employers are exempt from paying employer class 1 National Insurance contributions on earnings below £827 per week, or £43,000 per year. This would cover the vast majority of apprenticeships as it is rare for an apprentice to be paid such a large sum of money.

For example, if you had a 22-year-old apprentice being paid the National Minimum Wage, you would save £1,500 in National Insurance contributions over 12 months. If you were paying that same apprentice the Real Living Wage, that saving would increase to £2,000 over the same period.

If you are in a position to do so, it may be a nice move to top up your apprentice's wage based on the calculated National Insurance saving you are able to make. This is likely to be appreciated by the apprentice and will make them feel more appreciated and welcome as part of the team.

EVIDENCE NEEDED

If your apprentice is under 25 years old and on an approved UK government apprenticeship standard, you'll need evidence to apply for national insurance relief.

Evidence can be either:

- > a written agreement between you, the apprentice and a training provider. The written agreement must show the apprenticeship standard, a start and (expected) end date for the apprenticeship and be signed by the Training Provider.
- > evidence that government funding is received for the apprenticeship. Evidence of funding can be either a declaration that you will receive apprenticeship incentive payment or the employer payment schedule to the provider.

GRANTS AND FUNDING SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYERS

National funding provides £1,000 to support your apprentice in the workplace if they are one of the following:

- > 16 to 18 years old
- > 19 to 25 years old with an education, health and care plan
- > 19 to 25 years old and they used to be in care.

If your apprentice is eligible, your training provider will give you the payment in 2 instalments of £500. You will get the first payment after 90 days and the second one after a year.

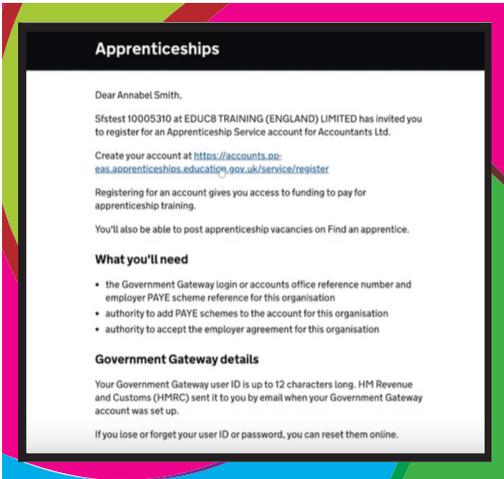
Local Authorities and District Councils often have additional employer funding and support grants available to support their strategic growth plans for apprenticeships. <https://worsapprenticeships.org.uk/grants-2/>

DIGITAL APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE (DAS)

for businesses that do not pay the
Apprenticeship Levy - How to add
apprentices, set up payments and
claim incentives

Employers are required to establish and manage their own Apprenticeship Service account. Whether you are looking to recruit your next generation of staff or to upskill existing employees, the new DAS will be the portal that enables Training Providers to help you to access funding for training and to undertake the apprentice recruitment services on your behalf for any apprenticeship positions that you wish to fill.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

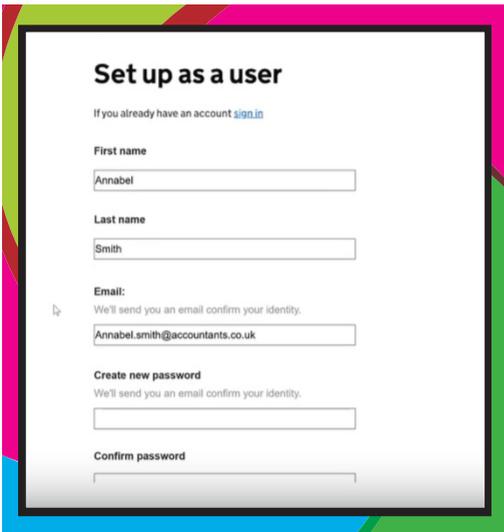


INITIAL SETUP

In order to start the process all you need to do is to provide your training provider with the name and email address of the person who will be responsible for managing your DAS.

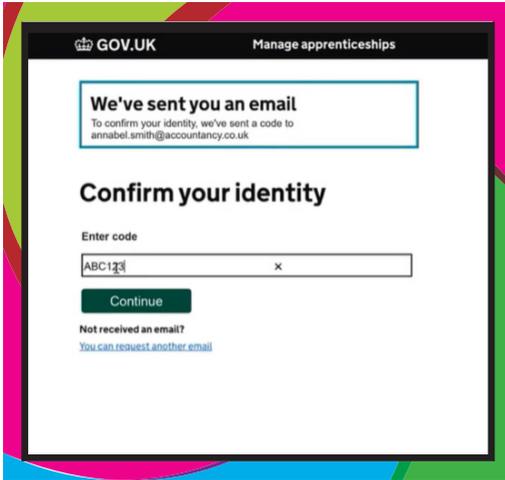
Using the information you provide, they will begin their part of the setup process on the DAS. Your DAS User will then receive an email with an attached link that will take you to the DAS website. They will see the page shown.

The next screen is partly completed from the details you have provided them. Your DAS User will then select a password and follow the security requirements as instructed.



Initial User setup is now complete.

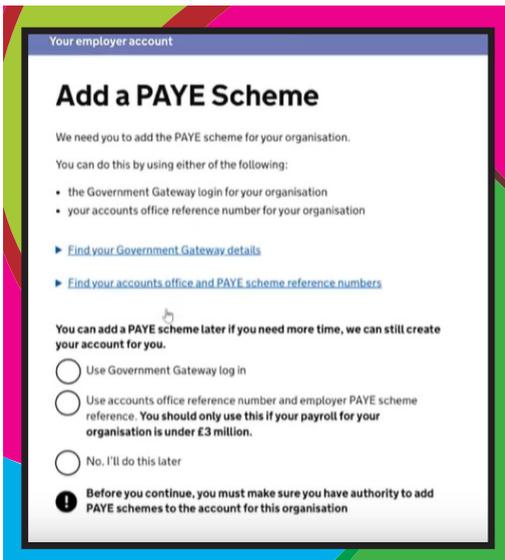
LINKING YOUR COMPANY TO THE DAS USER AND ACTIVATION



The screenshot shows the GOV.UK 'Manage apprenticeships' interface. At the top, it says 'We've sent you an email' and 'To confirm your identity, we've sent a code to annabel.smith@accountancy.co.uk'. Below this is the heading 'Confirm your identity' and a form labeled 'Enter code' with the text 'ABC123' and a clear button 'x'. A green 'Continue' button is below the form. At the bottom, there is a link: 'Not received an email? You can request another email'.

You have successfully completed the User Profile and selected a password. This will prompt a further email to your DAS User from the site, including a reference code for use in confirming that their email address is valid. Please follow the link on the email and insert the code as seen.

ADDING COMPANY DETAILS - THE NEXT STEP IS TO LINK YOUR BUSINESS TO THE USER PROFILE.

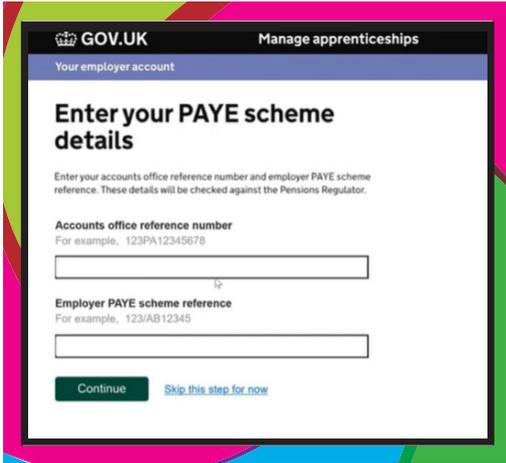


The screenshot shows the 'Your employer account' page with the heading 'Add a PAYE Scheme'. It states: 'We need you to add the PAYE scheme for your organisation. You can do this by using either of the following:'. It lists two options: 'the Government Gateway login for your organisation' and 'your accounts office reference number for your organisation'. Below are two links: 'Find your Government Gateway details' and 'Find your accounts office and PAYE scheme reference numbers'. A note says: 'You can add a PAYE scheme later if you need more time, we can still create your account for you.' There are three radio button options: 'Use Government Gateway log in', 'Use accounts office reference number and employer PAYE scheme reference. You should only use this if your payroll for your organisation is under £3 million.', and 'No, I'll do this later'. A warning icon and text at the bottom state: 'Before you continue, you must make sure you have authority to add PAYE schemes to the account for this organisation'.

This is quite simple using this screen shot

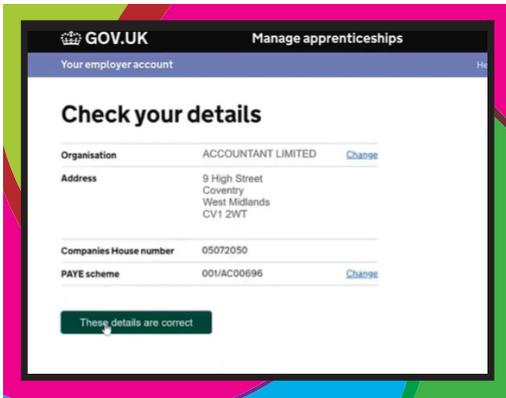
Just use your PAYE Scheme reference along with your Accounts Office reference number. If you are struggling to find the PAYE or Accounts office reference numbers, they are included in any HMRC correspondence to your business.

Please note that all Levy-Paying companies (Over £3million per year in payroll) must use the Government Gateway registration route.

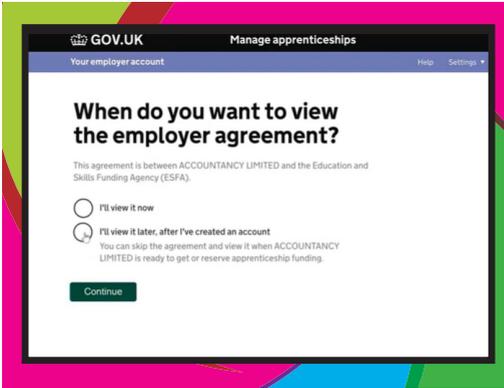


For employers who use the PAYE scheme and accounts office reference, you will see a screen as shown below.

Once you have entered the requested reference numbers you will see the below screen prior to confirming that these are correct. Congratulations, you have now linked the business with the User. Your DAS is now live.



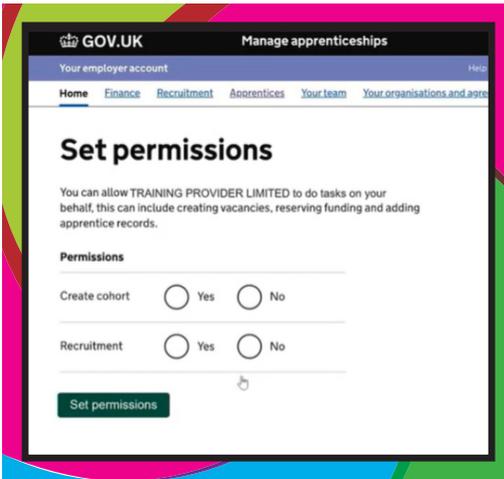
CONFIRMING AGREEMENT WITH ESFA



The screenshot shows the 'Manage apprenticeships' page on the GOV.UK website. The main heading is 'When do you want to view the employer agreement?'. Below this, it states: 'This agreement is between ACCOUNTANCY LIMITED and the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)'. There are two radio button options: 'I'll view it now' and 'I'll view it later, after I've created an account'. A note below the second option says: 'You can skip the agreement and view it when ACCOUNTANCY LIMITED is ready to get or reserve apprenticeship funding.' A 'Continue' button is at the bottom.

You will be reserving funds provided by the ESFA to pay for apprenticeship training. The next step is to complete a legal agreement between the business and the Education Skills Funding Agency.

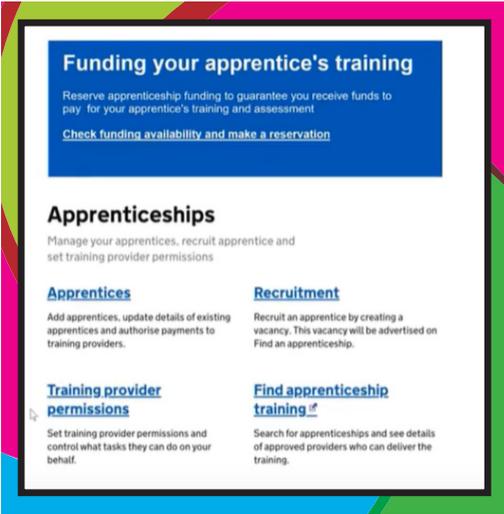
SETTING PERMISSIONS FOR THE TRAINING PROVIDER



The screenshot shows the 'Set permissions' page on the GOV.UK website. The main heading is 'Set permissions'. Below this, it states: 'You can allow TRAINING PROVIDER LIMITED to do tasks on your behalf, this can include creating vacancies, reserving funding and adding apprentice records.' There is a section titled 'Permissions' with two rows: 'Create cohort' and 'Recruitment'. Each row has two radio buttons labeled 'Yes' and 'No'. A 'Set permissions' button is at the bottom.

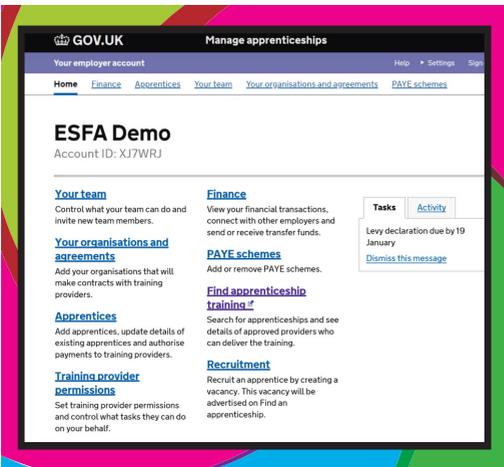
If you would like your training provider to take the hassle out of managing the DAS on your behalf, your DAS User now needs to set permissions which will allow them to reserve funding from the ESFA, add apprentice records (Create cohort) and also advertise to recruit apprentices on your behalf (Recruitment). To reassure you, the training provider will never add or amend records on the DAS without your express agreement. In any event, the system notifies you of

any actions they take on your behalf and only your DAS User has the ability to authorise or refuse them, as you see fit. Some employers do want to manage these systems themselves and are able to have that option instead.



If in future you wish to change your mind, you can amend these permissions at any time from the 'Home screen' of your digital account, which looks like the image shown. Once you have approved these permissions the training provider will be able to reserve funding on your behalf from the ESFA, recruit apprentices should you so desire, and fulfil all of the ongoing administration requirements associated with the DAS.

APPRENTICESHIP LEVY TRANSFER SCHEME (IF APPLICABLE /AVAILABLE)

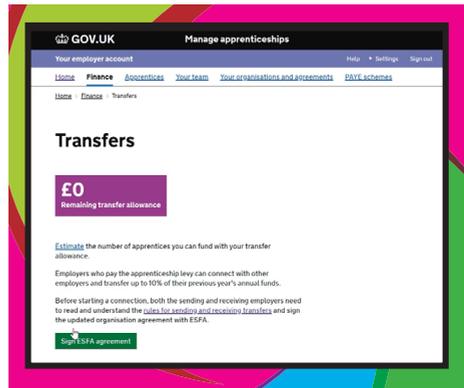
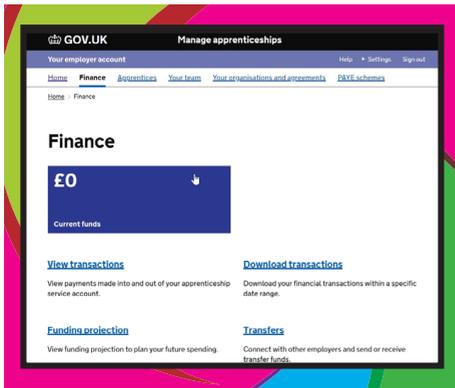


Some employers have put in place programmes that enable qualifying non-levy paying organisations to access the unspent funds of large levy paying organisations to pay in part, or in full, for the cost of training their apprentices. This type of funding is known as a 'Levy Transfer'. The training provider will, with your agreement, work with the employer of your choice to link your organisation, via the DAS, with a major employer with Levy

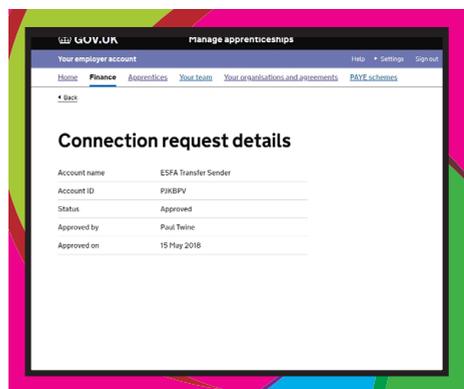
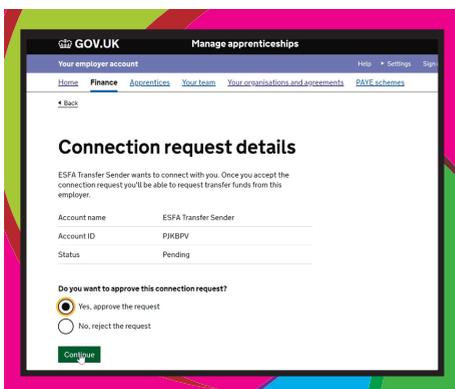
funds to spare who will then pay in full or in part for the cost of training your apprentice. Please speak to your training provider about the support available. If you have decided to take advantage of a Levy Transfer scheme, there are two easy additional steps you will need to complete on the DAS:

Provide the unique 6-character AS 'Account ID' for your organisation to the training provider you are working with (shown on example home screen above). They will then provide this to the WMCA or other partner to share with the "sending" organisation. This is to allow them to create the link between them as a "sender" of levy funds and your organisation as a "receiver" of levy funds.

To access the funds from the sending organisation you simply need to accept a 'transfer connection request' from the sending levy-paying employer. You can do this by accessing the 'Finance' section in the homepage and then clicking on 'transfers' in the 'finance' section.



You will see a pending connection request. You need to approve the connection request from the sending levy-paying employer.



Once you have approved the connection request you will be able to add Apprentices to your DAS.

ENROLLING YOUR APPRENTICE

We now move to the point where you have decided to start an apprentice you have recruited, or use apprenticeship funding to upskill one of your existing team. Your training provider will arrange a meeting to enrol your apprentice. This will be done face to face or remotely via video. The learner will complete an enrolment form, be issued with their first piece of work and a Learning Agreement will be signed by the Learner, your training provider and by the representative of your business, usually the learner's line manager. Immediately thereafter, if you have provided the appropriate permissions, the training provider will select the right course and enter the apprentice's details onto the DAS system to enable delivery and funding of the apprenticeship to start. Your DAS User will receive an email confirming that the training provider has added a learner (a 'Cohort request') which is the confirmation of the start of the learning journey. Your DAS User will follow the link to a page such as the image below:



Your DAS User will check that you are happy with the details and confirm them as correct: Once you give approval, your DAS User will see a final screen as shown.

Name	Date of birth	Training dates	Price
Joe Smith	8 Oct 2001	Apr 2020 to Oct 2021	£8,000 Edit
			Delete
Total apprenticeship training price (excluding VAT)			£8,000
Add another apprentice		Delete this group	

Approve these details?

Yes, approve and notify training provider

No, request changes from training provider

[Continue](#)

Worcestershire Apprenticeship Hub are available to offer all employers impartial advice and guidance and help and support in identifying apprenticeship standards, training providers and maximising levy spend.

Please contact us at 0300 666 3 666 or email: info@worsapprenticeships.org.uk

GOV.UK Manage apprenticeships

Your employer account [Help](#) [Settings](#) [Sign out](#)

[Home](#) [Finance](#) [Recruitment](#) [Apprenticeships](#) [Your team](#) [Your organisations and agreements](#) [More](#)

Apprentice details approved

Reference	VYPDJR
Training provider	EDUC8 TRAINING (ENGLAND) LIMITED
Approved by	ACCOUNTANCY LIMITED

What's next?

You've approved these apprentice details. [Manage your apprentices](#) to view or update details.





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Worcestershire

Training Providers Association CIC

Supporting local apprenticeships and skills development



Worcestershire

Local Enterprise Partnership



worcestershire
county council



European Union

European
Social Fund