

2026 Apprenticeship Guide for Employers

How to use the Growth & Skills Levy and funded training for talent attraction, staff development and upskilling.





About LMP Education

LMP Education is a nationally recognised, award-winning apprenticeship training provider. We deliver innovative solutions for staff development, upskilling, and recruitment. LMP Education is a market leader in apprenticeship training for businesses and also works extensively with businesses of all sizes, local authorities, early years settings, councils and charities.

With a strong focus on workforce growth, LMP Education helps businesses train existing employees and attract new talent through high-quality apprenticeship programmes.

We are dedicated to inspiring ambition, creating inspirational learning journeys and delivering excellence in learning.

Our mission is to drive positive social change by providing access to education, training, and career development across the UK.

Why Choose LMP

We aim to ensure every business uses their Growth and Skills Levy funds for effective and impactful learning and development.

LMP Education delivers training to over 1000 organisations we work with, including SMEs, private sector, local authorities and businesses across the UK.

We can support implementing your apprenticeship strategy and help create meaningful career pathways for your staff.

Contents

02	About LMP Education
04	The Benefits of Apprenticeships
06	What Are Apprenticeships?
08	Understanding the Growth and Skills Levy
10	Who Can Do an Apprenticeship?
11	Upskill and Develop Your Staff Using Apprenticeships
12	Recruiting an Apprentice
14	Learner Testimonials
15	FREE LMP Assisted Recruitment Service
16	How is Apprenticeship Training Delivered?
17	What is Off-the-Job Training?
18	Empowering Growth, Enriching Lives
19	The Impact of Apprenticeships
20	LMP Education Added Values
21	Corporate Social Responsibility
22	LMP Accreditations and Awards
24	Get in Touch



The Benefits of Apprenticeships

Investing in apprenticeships and funded training provides valuable benefits for employers in the UK including:

1 Tailored Skills Development

- Employers can train apprentices to meet the specific needs of their business.
- Apprentices learn the exact processes and values of the organisation, helping build a highly skilled workforce and close skills gaps.

2 Increased Productivity

- Studies show that apprenticeships improve overall productivity and performance.
- Many employers report higher staff morale, motivation and output.

3 Cost-Effective Recruitment

- Apprenticeships provide a more economical way to hire and train new staff.
- The UK government offers funding and incentives, including covering up to 95–100% of training costs for smaller employers.

4 Employee Retention

- Apprenticeships tend to produce higher levels of loyalty, with many people staying long-term after completing their training.
- Investing in staff development increases job satisfaction and reduces turnover.

5 Succession Planning

- Apprenticeships help create a talent pipeline for future supervisory or managerial roles.
- Employers can grow their own leaders rather than relying on external recruitment.

6 Diversity and Fresh Perspectives

- Apprenticeships can attract young people or career-changers from diverse backgrounds, bringing new ideas and approaches.
- It helps promote inclusion and social mobility.

7 Positive Brand and CSR Impact

- Offering apprenticeships improves corporate image and social responsibility credentials.
- It demonstrates investment in people and the community.

8 Growth and Skills Levy

- Businesses with a payroll of over £3 million pay the Growth and Skills Levy and can reclaim it by employing apprentices.
- Using apprenticeships ensures this money is used and not returned to the Treasury.

What are Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are work-based training programmes that combine practical on-the-job experience with structured learning. They enable employees to gain new skills while working.

They are available across various industries and provide a cost-effective way for businesses to develop their workforce by bringing in fresh talent or enhancing skills of current staff.



Key Features of Apprenticeships:

Available to All Staff

Apprenticeship training is available to individuals aged 16 and above who seek to learn through practical experience while working; there is no upper age limit. It is suitable for existing staff looking to upskill or for new staff members joining the team.

Can Support Career Development or Change

Young adults often pursue apprenticeships, but they are also ideal for people of any age who want to learn new skills or change careers.

Earn While You Learn

Everyone on an apprenticeship training programme receives a wage while working in their role and undertaking structured training.

Government-Funded

Apprenticeships are fully or partially funded by the Growth and Skills Levy, reducing training costs and budgets.

Work-Based Learning

Training is tailored to the employee's role, making it highly relevant and applicable.

Industry-Recognised Qualifications

Apprenticeships lead to nationally recognised credentials, including diplomas and degrees.

Available at Different Levels

Ranging from Level 2 (entry-level) to Level 7 (equivalent to a master's degree).

Understanding the Growth and Skills Levy

Apprenticeships are funded via the Growth and Skills Levy. Many organisations face challenges in understanding the levy and apprenticeship funding complexities.

What Is It?

The Growth and Skills Levy is a new version of the previously used Apprenticeship Levy. The aim of the new levy is to provide a more flexible offer to employers and learners. The Growth and Skills levy claims to help people learn new, relevant high-quality skills at work and fuel innovation in businesses across the country.

Key facts:

- Requires large employers with a wage bill over £3 million to contribute 0.5% of their total payroll.
- Funds collected are allocated for apprenticeship training.
- The levy is paid into a central digital apprenticeship service (DAS) account that employers can access.
- Funding is available for new and existing employees age 16+ (no upper age limit).
- Training must be delivered by an approved training provider, such as LMP Education.
- Growth and Skills Levy funds expire after 24 months and then they are returned to the government.

LMP Education Levy Support Team

LMP Education has a team of Growth and Skills Levy experts who can provide advice and guidance in getting the best out of the levy.

We can help with integrating apprenticeships into the organisations overall staff development and talent acquisition strategies.

Apprenticeships can be used to develop talent as part of a People and Talent Strategy and also for Continued Professional Development.

Did you know?

£156million of unused levy funds were returned to the government last year.

Some business leaders are unaware of the Growth and Skills Levy or available funds.



Growth and Skills Levy: The Facts

When is the Growth and Skills Levy payable?

All eligible employers pay the 0.5% Growth and Skills Levy at the end of every month. This is collected automatically by HMRC through the employer's PAYE system.

Who can use the Growth and Skills Levy?

The Growth and Skills Levy can only be used for organisations in England, as the legislation differs across the devolved nations. This is why levy-funded apprenticeships must work at least 50% of their time within England. The amount of levy available is directly linked to the proportion of employees living in England.

What can the Levy be spent on?

The Growth and Skills Levy can only be spent on apprenticeship training and assessments. The levy funds can be used to upskill existing staff and train new apprentices.

While the levy cannot cover staff wages, it's a fantastic way to enhance professional development and benefit your workforce. Use your trust's levy funds to empower your team and create new growth opportunities!

Recent Levy Reforms

Key Differences: Growth and Skills Levy vs. Apprenticeship Levy

- 1. Flexibility & Scope:** the new levy allows employers to fund shorter, targeted "modular" training courses to fill specific skill gaps, whereas the old levy was largely restricted to full, long-term apprenticeships.
- 2. Training Options:** the Growth & Skills Levy introduces "apprenticeship units" (30–140 hours), which allow for faster upskilling compared to the minimum 12-month requirement of the old system.
- 3. Fund Expiry:** funds will now expire in 12 months instead of the previous 24-month period, requiring faster utilisation.
- 4. Level 7 Restrictions:** from April 2026, levy funds cannot be used to fund new apprenticeships at Level 7 (master's level) for individuals aged 22 and over.
- 5. Foundation Apprenticeships:** the new system introduces foundation apprenticeships designed to help younger workers start their careers.
- 6. Co-investment:** the government's co-investment rate for training costs (when levy funds run out) changes to 25%, aiming to encourage more direct investment from businesses.

Who Can Do an Apprenticeship in your Business?

Apprenticeships are not just for new recruits - existing staff can also enrol in apprenticeship training to upskill in their current roles. Common roles include:

Business Operations Administrators

Equip your team with the essential skills they need to excel in today's fast-paced business environment.

Financial Team

Access a range of enhanced finance apprenticeships designed to empower you and your team, as well as drive organisational success.

Data and Archiving Assistants

Develop your data management team and ensure data safety and organisation of key information.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for an apprenticeship, you need to hold a GCSE C/4 or equivalent in maths and English.

For level 3 apprenticeships and above, where these are not held Functional Skills Level 2 (maths and English) can be embedded into the programme.

For level 2 apprenticeships, a lower threshold applies, more information available on request from LMP Education.

Anyone in England aged 16 years old and above, whether employed, unemployed or leaving school can do an apprenticeship.

There is no upper age limit to do an apprenticeship.

You must have lived in the UK for 3+ years minimum and a valid form of UK ID

You can hold a higher-level qualification, such as an A Level or a degree, but you must not have prior learning within the apprenticeship's area of study.

Upskill and Develop Your Staff Using Apprenticeships

By using apprenticeships strategically, businesses can develop their workforce, fill skills gaps, and create a sustainable pathway for career growth—all while making the most of available funding!



Finance and Accounting



Safeguarding



Business Administration



Medical Administration



Library, Information & Archive Services Assistant



Recruiting an **Apprentice**



At LMP Education, we're passionate about helping you build a strong, dynamic team. That's why we offer a free recruitment service to help you bring talented new apprentices on board.

We can help you advertise and fill a range of exciting apprentice roles, including:

- **Business Operations Administrator**
- **Accounts or Finance Assistant**
- **Assistant Accountant**
- **Professional Accounting Technician**
- **Safeguarding Support Officer**
- **Medical Administrator**
- **Library, Information & Archive Services Assistant (LIAS)**



Apprentice Wages

We recommend reviewing your organisation's budget to afford the National Apprenticeship Wage of £8 per hour (from April 2026) for the first 12 months and ensuring that they are employed to cover the duration of their apprenticeship. After a year, the apprentices will be entitled to the minimum wage for their age.

Incentive Payments

You could receive a £3,000 incentive payment from the government when recruiting:

- Apprentices aged 16–18
- Apprentices under 25 with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP)

Testimonial

"LMP Education assists us with recruitment by advertising the post, shortlisting, and referencing requests and interview invites. They are always willing to help in any way. I am confident I can rely on them to direct queries or concerns we may have to the right person"

– Suzanne Caffery, Operational Manager, Oasis Academy Clarksfield



Employer Testimonials

“What has stood out most is LMP’s ‘can-do’ attitude, with a clear focus on success and creating a great experience for learners, rather than simply delivering a transactional service. My advice for other organisations looking to use apprenticeships would be to view apprenticeships not just as a tool for attracting new talent but also as a powerful way to develop and retain existing employees.”



– **Darren Cooper, Learning & Development Manager at Atlas Hotels**

“Employees who go through apprenticeships with a business often feel a sense of loyalty to the company that invested in their training. This can lead to higher retention rates and a more committed workforce. Apprenticeships are a proactive way to address succession planning, pipelining skilled workers into the business. This helps us ensure a pipeline of qualified individuals who can step into key roles as experienced employees are prompted. Our apprentices are an integral part of the business and positively impact our business understanding our culture, mission and values.”



– **Rachel Broadhead, Talent Acquisition Manager at Tieva**

“We have partnered with LMP to deliver our Grow to Lead programme by combining apprenticeships with our own on-site, in-person sessions. This collaboration allowed us to create a development programme that not only has a strong theoretical foundation and knowledge base but is also tailored to suit our employees and the culture at Bill’s.”



– **Emily Jolly, Learning and Development Manager at Bill's Restaurant**

FREE LMP Assisted Recruitment Service

Are you ready to welcome a new apprentice? Let's Make It Happen — Together!

If you have an apprentice vacancy and would like to take advantage of the LMP free recruitment service, simply follow the easy steps below.

- 1. Get in Touch:** Share your job description and requirements with the LMP Recruitment Team at apprenticeships@lmpeducation.org.
- 2. Advertise Your Role:** Once approved, your vacancy will be advertised on the Find My Apprenticeship (Gov.uk) website, as well as other platforms like Indeed and Bamboo HR — reaching a wide pool of potential candidates.
- 3. Screening & Application:** LMP Education will carefully screen applicants for eligibility and invite suitable candidates to complete an application form.
- 4. Candidate Selection:** You'll receive candidate bios, CVs, and completed applications to review. Once you've had a look, you can shortlist the candidates you'd like to interview.
- 5. Interview Coordination:** Round one interviews will take place at your organisation. We'll work closely with you to arrange dates and times, ensuring a seamless process.
- 6. Appointing Your Apprentice:** Once you've found the perfect match, let us know! We'll guide you and your new apprentice through the onboarding process, making sure everything is set up for success.
- 7. Ongoing Support & Success:** Your apprentice starts their role, and their apprenticeship enrolment is finalised. From there, the LMP Education Team will be with you every step of the way, providing ongoing support until your apprentice successfully completes their programme.

We're here to make the process as simple and rewarding as possible — so you can focus on nurturing new talent and strengthening your team.

How Is Apprenticeship Training Delivered?

LMP Education delivers apprenticeship training in compliance with government funding rules and Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework guidelines.

Our blended learning approach is individualised to the needs of the learner and organisation which allows us to provide a degree of flexibility in our apprenticeships. LMP's tutors will create a plan to ensure that the training requirement is met in a way that will have a positive impact on the learner and employer.

Delivery is predominantly remote and consists of regular one-to-one sessions once every 4 weeks (usually lasting 1 hour), webinars and workshops (which are recorded for ease), various assignments and assessments, observations, and formal reviews every 8 to 12 weeks with employer, apprentice and tutor. Where observations are required, these can be done on-site.

Off-the-job training will be needed for all our apprenticeships. Learners do not need to take time out of the workplace to attend college for training, meaning more quality time spent at work.

Learners and line managers will be given access to BUD. This is where learners' work is uploaded, evidenced, marked, and tracked.



What to Expect from LMP Education

- High quality training
- Industry-relevant curriculum content
- Commitment to excellence and quality assurance
- Expert support from experienced tutors
- Focus on personal and professional development
- Safe, inclusive and supportive environment
- Engaging and flexible learning platform

What is Off-the-Job Training?

Off-the-job training is an essential part of every apprenticeship, designed to help apprentices and existing staff members develop the knowledge, skills, and behaviours they need to succeed — all during their normal working hours. This valuable training enhances both the learner's development and the overall impact they make in the workplace.

According to the government funding rules for apprenticeships it is required for apprentices who work over 30 hours a week to spend 20% of their time or 6 hours per week doing off the job training.

Off-the-job training is directly relevant to the apprenticeship and can take many forms, including:

- Individual study time for reflection and growth
- Apprenticeship tutor sessions and webinars
- Group learning opportunities (like inset days)
- Shadowing experienced colleagues
- Mentoring from line managers
- 1:1 performance reviews and feedback
- Collaborative planning and resource preparation with class teachers, SENCo or external professionals
- Attending meetings and briefings

At LMP, the supportive tutors will work closely with you to create a personalised training plan that meets all requirements — while delivering meaningful benefits to both your team and the wider community.

What doesn't count as off-the-job training?

- Training unrelated to the apprenticeship standard
- Progress reviews or on-programme assessments
- Training outside normal working hours



See off-the-job training as an opportunity!

With the right support, off-the-job training becomes a powerful tool for growth-enhancing skills, boosting confidence, and driving success. We're here to make the process as simple and beneficial as possible, so your apprentices and existing staff members can thrive and your business can continue to flourish.



Empowering Growth, Enriching Lives

LMP Values

With a strong focus on education and social impact, we work together to create sustainable opportunities that empower individuals and communities.

LMP Education is a team industry professionals committed to fostering learning, personal development and career success. Every day, we push the boundaries to enhance opportunities for our learners, placing them at the core of everything we do.

We enrich lives by equipping individuals with valuable skills, building confidence, and creating pathways to fulfilling careers. Our core values drive our mission and shape the impact we make:



Be Inspiring

Motivate and empower others to reach their full potential.



Take Action

Proactively create opportunities and drive meaningful change.



Have Compassion

Support and uplift those around us with empathy and care.



Ensure Equality

Champion fairness, inclusion and diversity in all we do.

LMP Education delivers apprenticeships, short courses, CPD, adult education and employability support programmes.

The Impact of Apprenticeships

86%

of employers agree or strongly agree that apprentices have made a positive impact on their organisation

91%

of learners said that they felt supported during their apprenticeship

100%

of learners said they feel or know how to stay safe

94%

of learners agree that their apprenticeship is developing them in the workplace

89%

of employers agree their apprentice is developing the needed skills to support their business

88%

of learners said they are enjoying their apprenticeship

LMP Education Added Values

Mental Health:

LMP Education ensures mental health is at the forefront of what we do and we work to ensure that all our employees and people we work with can share their feelings and mental health struggles in a safe environment and they can receive the right support and advice.

With each apprentice, we make sure that we maintain an open line of communication, calling them at least once a month to check in on their mental well-being, seeing how they're feeling and if they're enjoying their apprenticeship. They will also have monthly meetings with their individual tutor who will always check in with them.

Safeguarding:

Safeguarding is a top priority at LMP Education, we believe that:

- The safety and welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults should always be of paramount importance, whatever the circumstances.
- Everyone in a role that is working with children, young people and vulnerable adults has a moral and legal responsibility to safeguard them.
- Special care is needed when dealing with children, young people and vulnerable adults whose age, inexperience or physical state makes them particularly vulnerable to abuse.

We offer a one-day safeguarding course to ensure that members of staff at your establishment have access to the correct accreditation required for their role. The course is run by an expert facilitator who specialises in safeguarding. Upon completion, attendees will have a better understanding of how to proactively identify and handle concerns about a child's welfare.

Corporate Social Responsibility

At LMP, we believe that Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has the power to create lasting positive change — benefiting schools, communities, and the environment alike.

We're passionate about turning ideas into action and specialise in crafting tailored CSR opportunities that deliver real, measurable impact. Whether you want to enhance your organisation's outreach or strengthen community connections, we're here to help every step of the way.

Together, we can bring impactful initiatives to life, such as:

- Sponsoring a Teaching Assistant Apprentice to support classroom learning
- Providing Food Hampers to families in need during festive seasons
- Partnering with Businesses to deliver inspiring career workshops for young people
- Organising Holiday and Residential camps for enrichment and exploration
- Supporting Alternative Education Programmes to help every child and young person thrive

By working together, we can make a meaningful difference — empowering individuals, uplifting communities, and shaping a brighter future.



LMP Accreditations and Awards

Rate My Apprenticeship Awards

LMP Education won the award for 'Best Training Provider in the UK' at the Rate My Apprenticeship Awards. This award is for training providers who go above and beyond in their delivery of apprenticeship qualifications and is based solely on reviews from learners.



Ofsted

Being rated 'Ofsted Good' is something we are incredibly proud of and showed recognition of everything we do right as a training provider at LMP Education.

Ofsted's report quoted this:

"LMP has successfully maintained the good quality of education for apprentices. Learners appreciate the high level of support and care they receive from their experienced LMP tutors."



Leaders In Safeguarding

LMP Education achieved 'Leaders in Safeguarding Gold' which is a huge achievement showing how effective and robust our safeguarding arrangements are.

It is awarded to organisations in recognition of their provision, practice and commitment to keeping children, young people and vulnerable adults safe so we are incredibly proud.

Investors In People Platinum Award

Achieving 'Investors in People Platinum' reflects the incredible culture, commitment and people at LMP. Only 7% of organisations reach this standard and this reflects the energy, authenticity and dedication of staff. The Directors of Investors in People commented "LMP consistently aims to develop and innovate its work and teams. LMP is a fine company that understands the value of people and the importance in learning."



Get in touch

If you're interested in recruiting an apprentice, placing an existing team member on an apprenticeship programme, or simply want to learn more about the benefits of apprenticeships, we'd love to hear from you!



CONTACT INFORMATION

LMP Education
www.lmpeducation.org
info@lmpeducation.org

**Book a discovery call
to find out more**

