

Funding and permitted hours for skills training: Guidance

Contents

Introduction
Full time and part time training courses
Funding for skills and training
Access to Work
DWP Train and Progress: increased training hours
Training referrals

Introduction

Many claimants who require support with developing their basic or employability skills could benefit from training courses that specifically target their skills gaps.

There are a number of programmes in place to support Universal Credit claimants in receiving training targeted at preparing them for starting work which are funded in different ways.

Further support is also available for some claimants in certain circumstances when participating in provision.

DWP Train and Progress is a campaign which allows claimants to participate in longer training courses, giving them the best opportunity to develop their skills and gain qualifications.

Full time and part time training courses

Where a claimant is not a qualifying young person, they can participate in part time courses or full time non-advanced (Level 3 or below) / vocational study or training without provision of a loan or maintenance grant.

This is not treated as being in education under the basic conditions of entitlement if they are still able to meet any work-related requirements that may be placed upon them.

For more information, see the 'Other course of study or training' section of Students: Eligibility, conditionality and student income.

Funding for skills and training (England)

All adults in England have a statutory right to access free learning in:

- English up to level 2
- Maths up to Level 2
- digital learning at Level 1

Any adult who wants to achieve their first full level 3 qualification (equivalent to two A-Levels, or a technical certificate or diploma) has access to nearly 400 fully funded courses.

In addition any adult in England can get a free level 3 qualification if they:

- are 19 or over and do not already have a level 3 qualification
- already have a level 3 qualification or higher but earn below the National Living Wage annually (£20,319 from April 2023)
- already have a level 3 qualification or higher but are unemployed

Further details can be found at [Free courses for jobs - GOV.UK](#)

Periods of education and training are generally expected to be of a short duration. This is usually up to 8 weeks, except in specific circumstances, for example where claimants have very low skills such as:

- maths
- English
- ESOL
- ICT

For further information on Department for Education skills funding in England see [Skills for Life website](#).

Funding for skills and training in Scotland

Funding for training may be available through [Skills Development Scotland](#).

Claimants can find information on training available to them on [My World of Work website](#).

Funding for skills and training in Wales

Welsh government also provide support to help claimants move closer to the labour market. For further information see the [Working Wales website](#).

[Support Finder](#) is an interactive tool to find the right provision for the claimant in Wales.

Support with travel and childcare by providers

For some provision, the provider will support the claimant with travel and childcare expenses and not DWP for example Work and Health Programme and Pioneer, ReAct+ (Wales).

Flexible Support Fund

Flexible Support Fund (FSF) can also be considered to help fund elements of training, provision, and skills support. See: [Flexible Support Fund: Training and education](#).

Access to Work

Access to Work is a grant that offers financial help to support people with a health condition or disability in overcoming barriers to work. It can help with the extra costs of moving into work or employing someone with a disability.

If training or provision offers paid work, work experience or work-based training, eligible claimants can consider applying to Access to Work for support.

For more information, see: [Access to Work](#).

DWP Train and Progress: increased training hours

DWP Train and Progress enables claimants to receive consistent support in addressing their skills needs so that they are better equipped to take up vacancies.

Through DWP Train and Progress, the length of time people can receive Universal Credit while undertaking work-focused training has been extended.

Until April 2025, the amount of time Universal Credit claimants can take part in full time, work-related training is up to 16 weeks throughout Great Britain.

This means that Universal Credit claimants in England, Scotland and Wales can participate in full-time, work-related training for up to 16 weeks.

Training referrals

Any referrals to training courses are recorded in the Claimant commitment as well as any circumstances or skills gaps preventing the claimant from immediately taking up work.

Claimants who have already completed a Level 3 training course for a specific sector would not usually be referred for another training course. However, they can take up a training opportunity in a different sector if it is the best route to support them to obtain the skills required in their local Labour Market.

When considering referrals to training, especially for in-work claimants, providers must confirm that skills funding is available.

Universal Credit is not intended to be a substitute for education maintenance or other educational grants. See [Students: eligibility, conditionality and student income](#).