NEW EMPLOYER GRANT FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

GUIDANCE NOTES

(For use in relation to Apprentices starting their employment on or after 18th June 2020)

Tees Valley Combined Authority aim to have a geographical spread across Tees Valley as well as the Priority Sectors, as demand is likely to be high there is no guarantee that all applications will be successful. All applications will be considered subject to available funding.

Tees Valley Combined Authority supports the creation of Apprenticeships in the Tees Valley local authority areas of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees. This support is designed to assist employers who are committed to creating new and additional Apprenticeship employment opportunities within their business. Apprentices must be recruited externally for this position. Apprentices must start their employment on or after the 18th June 2020. The Apprenticeship training must be provided by a training provider approved by the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

The Grant supports SME’s who create Apprenticeships in sectors facing high demand and growth from employers as identified in the Tees Valley Strategic Economic Plan.

The Priority Sectors being supported are:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Logistics
- Digital and Creative
- Construction
- Culture and Leisure
- Process, Chemical and Energy
- Health & Biologics
- Business and Professional Services
- Health Care
- Education

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

The New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships is available for small to medium businesses (249 or less employees, across all work sites) from Priority Sectors who employ a new Apprentice aged 16-20 working towards a recognised qualification from the Apprenticeship Standards or Frameworks.

Apprentices must be Aged 16-20 - 100% of wages for the first 6 months of employment (salary costs only), for a minimum of 30 hours per week up to a maximum of 40 hours per week at National Minimum Wage (NMW), followed by 50% of wages only, up to a maximum of 40 hours per week at NMW for the remainder of the Apprenticeship employment, up to a maximum of 2 years.

Apprentices must start their employment within 30 days following confirmation the application is eligible.

The initial incentive payment of 3 months wages, excluding on costs will be paid following confirmation the application is eligible and the contract of employment has been received, subsequent payments, excluding on costs will be made on a monthly basis following on from receipt of the previous months Apprentices wage slips.
Any employer ineligible for this grant is not excluded from any other relevant apprenticeship support offered by Tees Valley Combined Authority.

**Please Note**

- Tees Valley Combined Authority will determine if your company falls within one of our identified priority sectors.
- The eligibility criteria and payment process laid out in this guidance may be revised at any time by Tees Valley Combined Authority. Any changes will be updated on our website and existing employers will be informed of any revisions which may affect their application.
- In the first instance employers are only able to apply for one apprentice for this grant.

**New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships will only be payable if:**

- the Application Form for a grant has been submitted for a specified Apprentice to the business and is resident in Tees Valley;
- the Apprentice has commenced employment within 30 days of eligibility being confirmed;
- the Apprentice is paid the National Minimum Wage for their age (this is not the National Apprenticeship Minimum Wage);
- the Apprentice undertakes appropriate Apprenticeship learning at Level 2 (intermediate) or Level 3 (advanced) working towards a recognised qualification from the approved Apprenticeship Frameworks or Standards related to their role; and is confirmed and evidenced by the Apprenticeship Training Provider upon registration of training;
- the business must fall into one of the identified Priority Sectors, Tees Valley Combined Authority will determine if your business falls into one of the identified Priority Sectors;
- an upfront initial payment of 3 months in advance will be paid upon commencement of employment of a start date and receipt of the signed contract of employment;
- subsequent payments will be made on a monthly basis from month 4, once employment has been evidenced by the previous months wage slip, submitted to Tees Valley Combined Authority.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR GRANT**

**THE EMPLOYER MUST:**

- have been trading for a minimum period of 12 months (up to Apprenticeship start date).
- be in a Priority Sector (as approved by TVCA)
- confirm that they are not able to create an Apprenticeship without the Employer Incentive for Apprenticeships.
• ensure the Apprentice’s workplace is located in the Tees Valley i.e. local authority areas of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland or Stockton-on-Tees.

• have 249 or less employees in total across all worksites.

• have completed a De Minimis Declaration Form and not received more than €200,000 in public funding awarded under the State Aid Regulation of De Minimis in the last 3 year rolling period.

• commit to paying the Apprentice(s) at least the National Minimum Wage appropriate for an Apprentice’s age, including time for off-the-job training.

• confirm that, following payment of the grant, they will complete and return an employer questionnaire provided by Tees Valley Combined Authority.

• Retain all records in relation to this grant for a period of 12 months beyond the length of the grant, and make them available for formal monitoring and/or audit as required by the Tees Valley Combined Authority

THE APPRENTICE MUST:

• be aged 16-20 on the start date of their Apprenticeship.

• Be a resident of Tees Valley i.e. local authority areas of Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland or Stockton-on-Tees.

• be free to be an Apprentice, i.e. not taking part in full-time education elsewhere.

• be newly recruited to an Apprentice role.

• be enrolled on a Level 2 or Level 3 recognised ESFA qualification from the Apprenticeship Standards or Framework confirmed by TVCA.

• start their learning as soon as practical after employment.

• be employed for a minimum for 12 months, or the time it takes to complete their Apprenticeship, whichever is greater (subject to satisfactory performance of the Apprentice as an employee).
HOW TO APPLY?

The New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships Application Form is available to download on our website, all applications must be returned via e-mail, postal applications will not be considered at this time.

The employer is required to return a completed Application Form and De-Minimis Aid Declaration Form to the Claims & Monitoring Team at Tees Valley Combined Authority. The Claims & Monitoring Team will acknowledge receipt and the application will then be assessed against the eligibility criteria detailed above.

All employers will be contacted by the Claims & Monitoring Team to advise on the status of their application within 10 working days.

To apply for the New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships please fully complete the Application Form send to: Project.Team@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk. If you have any queries, please contact the team on 01642 527985.

The De Minimis Aid Declaration must be signed and posted in hard copy to the Tees Valley Combined Authority prior to payment.

For the grant application to be eligible all stated criteria must be met. Should there be any query as to whether or not the stated criteria is met by an applicant Tees Valley Combined Authority’s Head of Education, Employment & Skills shall have the final decision.

PAYMENT OF NEW EMPLOYER GRANT FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

The initial grant payment (equivalent to 3 months’ salary) can only be approved once a contract of employment has been received, subsequent payments will be made on a monthly basis following receipt of the current Apprentices wage slip.

Once the required information has been received from the employer the Claims & Monitoring Team will obtain final approval of the grant. Grant payments will then be made within 10 working days of the grant approval date via BACs directly into the employer’s bank account. The grant payment is made by Tees Valley Combined Authority, as this is a grant it is exempt from VAT.

All grant recipients will be sent an evaluation form to complete after the wage incentive has been awarded.

Tees Valley Combined Authority, or duly authorised representatives appointed or other relevant bodies, may conduct further checks into the validity of the New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships.

Should any information regarding the Apprentice, their enrolment or employment status prove incorrect or require clarification, a New Employer Grant for Apprenticeships will not be issued. Where incorrect information is submitted and this influences the decision to award a grant, Tees Valley Combined Authority will request the payment be returned.