

## London ESF Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) for 16 to 24 Year Olds Guidance for Training Providers - January 2015

### What is London ESF AGE?

London ESF AGE is a grant of £3000 for London employers who recruit an apprentice under the terms of the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme. The value of the mainstream, AGE 16 to 24 programme has been enhanced to £3000 for London employers employing up to 249 employees through funds from the European Social Fund (ESF).

London ESF AGE is only available to London employers as the enhanced element has been part funded by the Greater London Authority.

An additional £14 million is available to support London employers.

### How does the London ESF AGE offer differ from the mainstream offer?

A new mainstream AGE 16 to 24 offer will begin from January 2015, focusing on small businesses (those with fewer than 50 employees). Under the new eligibility rules, employers will be able to draw down a maximum of 5 grants of £1,500.

This mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme has been enhanced in London in two ways:

- eligible employers will receive £3,000 in total per grant.
- London ESF AGE will be available to employers that employ 0 to 249 employees, and not just 0 to 49 employees.

### Who is eligible for this London ESF Grant?

Employers with 249 or fewer employees, who employ an apprentice whose place of work is

within one of the 32 London boroughs or the City of London.

Apart from the apprentice's place of work postcode and employer size, employers must also fulfil the eligibility criteria of the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme. The terms of the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme can be found [here](#).

Apprentices undertaking the new Apprenticeship standards, or Trailblazers, are not eligible for London ESF AGE.

### When will London ESF AGE be available?

London ESF AGE is available from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015, subject to budget availability. The apprentice, aged 16 to 24, must have been employed and started their framework in this period.

### How many London ESF grants are available?

Providers will be allocated a London ESF AGE facility and may offer grant support up to the value of this facility.

Providers may submit a request to the Skills Funding Agency to increase the value of the London ESF AGE facility by sending an email request to [providerAGEfacilitymanagement@sf.a.bis.gov.uk](mailto:providerAGEfacilitymanagement@sf.a.bis.gov.uk)

An increase in the facility will be subject to budget availability. Providers without a facility may also request one using the same email address.

Each employer is entitled to receive one London ESF grant per apprentice, up to a maximum of 5 apprentices, in line with the terms of

the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme.

### How do providers claim the London ESF Grant on behalf of eligible employers?

Training providers should have confirmed their ESF AGE facility amount with the Skills Funding Agency prior to claiming any London ESF AGE.

### For employers with 0 to 49 employees

For each eligible grant, providers will claim both £1,500 from their mainstream AGE facility and £1,500 from their London ESF AGE facility, amounting to £3,000 in total.

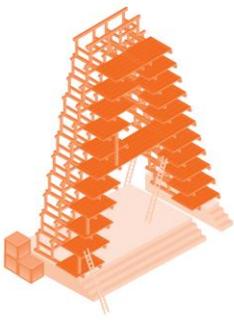
To claim for these providers will need to enter the relevant codes on the ILR when the apprentice starts:

- for the mainstream AGE 16-24 £1,500 element enter LDM code 333 or 334 (see guidance [here](#))
- for the London ESF AGE £1,500 element also enter LDM code 335.

Once it is shown that the employer is eligible on the AGE report and the apprentice has been in learning for 13 weeks, the training provider must pay the full £3,000 to the employer (this will be before the £1,500 ESF element has been paid to the training provider by the Skills Funding Agency – see next paragraphs).

Providers may choose to pay the two elements to employers (ESF £1500 and mainstream £1500) as two separate payments.

Providers will automatically receive the £1,500 mainstream AGE 16 to



24 element of the payment from the Agency after the apprentice's 13 weeks in learning point.

However, to receive the £1,500 ESF funding, providers must claim the funding from the Skills Funding Agency, using the Delivery Statement, immediately after paying the employer. Guidance on the Delivery Statement can be found [here](#).

It may take up to 6 weeks after the provider makes this claim to the Agency to receive the payment to their account.

For each eligible grant, £1,500 will be deducted from the provider's mainstream AGE 16 to 24 facility and £1,500 from the ESF facility.

### **For employers with 50 to 249 employees**

Employers of this size will not be eligible for the mainstream AGE 16 to 24.

For each eligible grant, providers will need to claim £3,000 from their ESF AGE facility.

To claim for this providers will need to enter the LDM code 338 on the ILR when the apprentice starts.

Once it is shown that the employer is eligible on the AGE report and the apprentice has been in learning for 13 weeks, the training provider will need to pay the full £3,000 to the employer (that is, before the £3,000 ESF element has been paid to the training provider, by the Skills Funding Agency).

To receive the £3,000 funding from the Skills Funding Agency, providers must claim, using the Delivery Statement, immediately after paying the employer. Guidance on the Delivery Statement can be found [here](#).

It may take up to 6 weeks after the provider makes the claim to the

Agency to receive the payment to their account.

For each eligible grant £3,000 will be deducted from the provider's ESF AGE facility.

### **Eligibility for the London ESF Apprenticeship Grant**

The ILR data submitted in support of the London ESF AGE claim will be interrogated to identify if employers are eligible for London ESF AGE, based on the employer size and the apprentice's place of work.

In order to determine that the employer has no more than 249 employees, the employer's unique number (ERN) entered in the Employer Identifier field on the ILR will be used. It is therefore important that the correct ERN is used. Providers can find the employer's ERN [here](#).

The apprentice's place of work postcode will be picked up through the Employer Identifier field on the ILR.

As well as signing an Employer Agreement for the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 programme, providers and employers will also need to sign an annex to this Agreement to support the employer's eligibility for the London ESF AGE element.

For ESF purposes providers will also need to obtain a state aid declaration from each employer.

### **Evidence of claiming and payment to employers**

Under ESF rules providers must retain documentary evidence in line with the requirements of their London ESF AGE funding agreement.

Providers must obtain this evidence, including evidence of paying the Grant to an employer, before

claiming funding from the Skills Funding Agency.

Evidence will be checked for compliance by the Skills Funding Agency, and potentially external ESF audit authorities such as DWP and the European Court of Auditors.

All documentary evidence will need to be retained until December 2022 for audit purposes.

Activity will also need to comply with ESF publicity requirements. This includes displaying an ESF plaque or publicity poster at the provider's premises.

### **How can employers and providers check if an employer post code makes them eligible for London ESF AGE?**

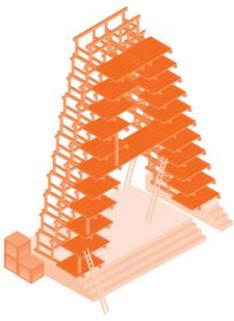
As with the mainstream AGE 16 to 24 offer, the National Apprenticeship Service is unable to provide an upfront eligibility checking service for London ESF AGE.

The ILR data submitted in support of the AGE claim will be interrogated to identify which employers are eligible for London ESF AGE.

Therefore providers should advise employers that if they consider themselves to have a London borough post code, they may be eligible for the London ESF Grant; however eligibility will be confirmed via verification of the ILR on the AGE Grant report.

### **How will London ESF AGE be marketed?**

The marketing of London ESF AGE will be integrated into existing National Apprenticeship Service and Greater London Authority marketing campaigns and communications.



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### **Who can be contacted for further information on London ESF AGE?**

As with the mainstream AGE 16 to 24:

- employers linked to a training provider should consult their training provider for further advice on London ESF AGE.
- employers not linked to a training provider can find out more by contacting the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600
- training providers should contact their Skills Funding Agency CDS team if they require further advice on London ESF AGE.