

Kickstart placement guide

Kickstart is a £2 billion government initiative aiming to create thousands of 6 month, paid work experience placements with employers. Jobs under this scheme will be open to 16-24 year olds in receipt of Universal Credit and who are at risk of long-term unemployment.

The government will pay the salaries of young people in placements for 25 hours a week and at [National Minimum Wage](#). Employers can supplement hours and pay as they see fit. Each placement includes £1,500 towards supporting employability skills and set up costs for young people.

Employers creating more than 30 placements can [apply directly to the government](#) for the funding. Smaller employers who are able to offer fewer than 30 placements need to enter into a partnership with a “Gateway” organisation, which will apply for and administer the funding on their behalf. Lambeth, Lewisham & Southwark Council are working together to support local businesses as a single Gateway.

Our aim is to help you create meaningful and high-quality experiences for your Kickstarters that also adds value to your business and helps it thrive. We have developed a comprehensive offer to help you develop and deliver your placements.

Application stage

Eligibility criteria

Kickstart is a Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) funded programme, and as such, comes with a set of mandatory criteria that all placements must meet. Better Placed are unable to put forward placements that do not fulfil these criteria, and DWP are able to ask for additional evidence to demonstrate that the placement is compliant:

- **All placements must be for a minimum of 25 hours a week for 26 weeks.** You are able to extend the number of hours that your Kickstarter works or top up their wages; but this will need to be funded by your organisation.
- **Kickstart work placements must be new roles.** They must not replace existing or planned vacancies, or cause existing staff to lose their jobs.
- **Placements should be entry level.** They must not require the participant to take any significant training before they start or have any specific industry qualification. Please consider an apprenticeship instead if significant training is required.
- **Kickstart placements need to be PAYE or on payroll.** DWP will track your Kickstarter is being paid through HMRC data linked to payroll and PAYE. They will pay salaries monthly, in arrears, based on this information.

- **Placements must offer the Kickstarter employability and skills support.** Gateways and employers must demonstrate how the Kickstart placement will support the young person to develop skills, maintain their placement and progress in their career following the placement. There is no expectation that the placement continues beyond the 26 weeks, but it is vital to demonstrate that the scheme will give the young person the skills and experience to secure future employment.

We will assess any placements you suggest against this criteria. DWP have a particular emphasis on employability support, so we expect all employers to adopt our approach to support skills development for Kickstart. We will consider employers providing their own employability skills support in exceptional circumstances.

[Completing our initial application form](#)

In order to demonstrate to the DWP that your placement meets this eligibility criteria, you will need to provide us with very specific detail on your organisation and proposed placement(s). Applications are rejected without this information and you will experience delays with getting your placement approved. When you are completing our application form, expect to answer questions on:

1. Your organisation's staffing

We need to know the detail of any staff redundancies in the last 6 months. If you have made staff redundant, this does not mean that your Kickstart placement will not be approved but we will need more information on how your placement is different to any positions that were made redundant.

Have existing staff had their contracted hours reduced within the last 6 months. This is to ensure that your Kickstarter is not replacing any responsibilities of existing staff.

Would you have created the placements without Kickstart funding; Kickstart is strictly for new roles and we need your confirmation that the government's funding is creating new opportunities for young people. Checks may be made to see what roles you have publicly advertised in the last 6 months, and we would expect you to submit a completely new Job Description for a Kickstart role.

2. Recruitment over the last 6 months

We need to know about any recruitment that has been started in the last 6 months, this is so that we can demonstrate to the DWP that the placements are new roles. If you had started to recruit to similar positions and then paused this recruitment we will need a valid reason that demonstrates the Kickstart placements are new roles.

3. Details on your organisation

This information will demonstrate to the DWP your capacity to host and manage a placement and your ability to receive payments. DWP will carry

out a [Cabinet Office Spotlight Check](#) of your business before approving any placements.

4. Support provided for Kickstarters

The Better Placed partnership are asking for all employers who host placements through our Gateway to contribute £750 of their £1,500 support grant towards employability and placement support for your Kickstarter. The DWP require all Kickstarters to receive support throughout their placement, this will also help your Kickstarter get the most out of their 6 months with you. We are delivering a high-quality support offer which is compliant with the level of support DWP expects Kickstarters to receive.

This programme has been designed to support young people living in Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark to apply for and complete your Kickstart placement. Your Kickstarter will have access to:

- 1) Pre-placement support
 - a. Participants will undertake a short course covering a range of employability topics, to get them ready for the world of work
 - b. Participants will work towards a qualification in employability
- 2) During placement support
 - a. Monthly 1-1 specialist coaching sessions
 - b. A personalised learning plan
 - c. Online training sessions, with mandatory modules for Kickstart plus optional modules selected based on the role and the need of individuals
 - d. Access to high-quality, local careers advice
- 3) Post-placement support
 - a. Getting participants ready for their next step if their placement does not lead to further employment
 - b. Continued support after they have finished their placement

Participants are expected to undertake, on average, 1 hour per week in personal development

You will need to confirm that you are happy for us to utilise part of your £1,500 support grant to deliver this comprehensive package. You can opt out of this by exceptional circumstances only, and this will be agreed with us in advance of your application being submitted to the DWP.

Once your placement has been approved

1. You will need to sign a funding agreement with the council. We will be responsible for administering the funding for both wages and the set up grant, this agreement will detail our roles and responsibilities in doing this. We will not be able to grant you any funding until this agreement is signed.
2. We will work with you to structure your job description and ensure your role is attractive to potential Kickstarters. We will then help you liaise with the DWP on the details of your placement, and make sure you get the right candidates. You will be able to set a limit to the number of young people you want to apply for your placement(s).
3. All applicants to your Kickstart placement must come through the DWP. You will be able to advertise your placement, but only young people aged 16-24 who are claiming Universal Credit will be eligible to receive the wage subsidy and set up grant.
4. Potential applicants to your placement will be supported through the pre-employment support outlined above, making sure they have a clear understanding of what is expected of them in the workplace and how to be successful during their placement.
5. You will be able to interview candidates in the same way as any other job. You are in full control of who you hire, and you are at no obligation to hire anyone.

Placement duration

Payments

Salary and the upfront set-up grant payments are paid directly to the Council from DWP. In order to administer the funds to your organisation, the council will set up a purchase order for the duration of the placement. We will collect evidence that the placement has commenced for the grant to be released. Salary payments should be received automatically once HMRC have confirmed payment.

Payment schedule

- Set-up support grant released when DWP are satisfied the placement has started
 - We will help you collect the relevant information and liaise with the DWP to get this payment processed as soon as possible
- 1st Month of salary, once confirmed through PAYE, will be paid in arrears, in or around week 6 of the placement

- Month 2-6 of salary will be released monthly once payment through PAYE has been confirmed; again employers can expect a 2 week delay in receiving this money.

Support for you and your Kickstarter

Once your Kickstarter has started their placement, they will be referred to our support partner to access their personalised support. Our support partner will work with you to determine the tailored support your organisation needs to get the most out of the placement. This relationship will continue throughout the placement period.

Post placement

Once the 26 week placement period has finished, our support partner will work with your Kickstarter to plan the next step in their career. Your input will be critical to help the Kickstarter understand what contribution they have made to your organisation over the previous 26 weeks and the skills they have developed whilst in your employment.

There is no reason why you cannot chose to employ your Kickstarter on a more permanent basis, or even convert their employment to an apprenticeship. This will be funded by your organisation, the DWP are not able to extend any placements.

You will also be able to host any further placements through the Better Placed Gateway. The DWP will be accepting applications until December 2021.