



Accessible Apprenticeships



Essex County Council

Accessible apprenticeships take into consideration the individual needs of the learner, allowing them to get the most out of their apprenticeship journey.

As with any apprenticeship, accessible apprenticeships are real jobs that enable individuals to earn while they learn, whilst gaining valuable knowledge, skills and behaviours tailored to a specific job role. Accessibility ensures that all individuals, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities, can participate and succeed.

What are the benefits to my business?

- providing fresh perspectives, new ideas and inclusivity to all
- creating a diverse workforce which in turn contributes to creativity, innovation, and competitiveness
- accessing an untapped talent pool & supporting skills shortages
- recruiting individuals with unique skills and strengths
- contributing to the community e.g., enhancing your corporate image

What makes an apprenticeship “accessible”?

It's a more flexible, bespoke programme designed for those with additional learning needs and disabilities. Reasonable adjustments are put in place so that such individuals are not placed at a disadvantaged compared to people without learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Almost all apprenticeships can be made accessible and having additional needs shouldn't restrict an individual's employment opportunities.

What types of adjustments might be needed?

This will depend on the apprentice's individual needs but could include:

- changes to the recruitment process so a candidate can be considered
- flexible working arrangements (a minimum of 25 working hours pw)
- specialist equipment e.g., standing desk or adapted keyboard
- a support worker or job coach to help in the workplace
- physical changes to the workplace e.g., ramps/audio-visual fire alarms

What will it cost my business?

Hiring an accessible apprentice is a cost-effective way to attract new talent and fresh eyes into your organisation as well as creating a diverse workforce. The cost of training an apprentice is dependent on their age and whether or not your business pays the Apprenticeship Levy, but businesses with less than 50 employees and an annual salary bill of less than £3 million are not required to pay this.

To discuss taking on an accessible apprentice within your business email:



targetedemployment@essex.gov.uk

How much do I need to pay an accessible apprentice?

Apprentices aged 16 to 19 or 19+ and in the first year of their apprenticeship are entitled to a minimum apprenticeship rate.

Apprentices are entitled to the minimum wage for their age if they both aged 19 or over and have completed the first year of their apprenticeship.

Are there any financial incentives?

Employers can receive £1,000 for taking on an apprentice who is either:

- aged 16 to 18 years old, or
- aged 19 to 25 years old and has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or has been in the care of their local authority

What is the Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service?

Essex Apprenticeship Levy Transfer Service (ALTS) can support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) with the costs associated with apprenticeship training. To benefit from possible levy transfer, you'll need to apply through the Essex ALTS: <https://www.essexalts.co.uk/about-us/>. They will match you with a larger company willing to transfer their unused levy funds to support the apprenticeship training.

Which training providers do you work with?

We work with the following training providers:

- Adult Community Learning (ACL)
- KEITS
- Dynamic Training

What's expected of me as an employer?

As with any apprenticeship, there are certain expectations that must be met by both the employer and the apprentice.

In addition to reasonable adjustments, employers may also need to provide additional support and training tailored to the individual's needs such as additional mentoring, structure and clarity, extra time for tasks, or specialised training programs.

Will I always need to provide a lot of support?

It's recommended that all apprentices have a mentor, but a sound induction and support programme is equally crucial. As with all apprentices, with further training and support from a training provider, many apprentices with additional needs adjust to their job role and their disability does not affect their ability to work unaided.



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