

KICKSTART SCHEME

EMPLOYER FAQs

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WHAT IS KICKSTART?

Kickstart is one of the flagship government initiatives created to support the economy and labour market in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The scheme seeks to support the employment of young people, aged 16-24, in order for them to gain valuable experience and develop their work-related skills at no cost to their employer.

Kickstart was announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the policy paper, [A Plan For Jobs 2020](#). The scheme was launched on 2 September 2020, and the Government are seeking 250,000 placements for young people to commence by December 2021.

EN:Able Communities is a DWP recognised Kickstart Gateway, and this FAQ is designed to help employers with their questions about the Kickstart Scheme and processes.

The Offer For Employers

Employers can employ a young person age 16-24 on a placement for 6 months. For this, employers will receive:

- 100% funding for a role of 25 hours per week on National Minimum Wage
- 100% NI contributions and 100% Pension enrolment contributions
- Up to £1,500 per person hired through the scheme to cover management costs such as on-boarding, uniform, and training (job role and employability training)

After the placement period of 6 months there is no obligation for the employer to offer further employment. This programme is designed to build young people's experience and leave them with practical skills and knowledge for future employment opportunities - it would be fantastic if the placement could lead to a permanent role in your organisation, but it is not a requirement.

Can My Organisation Apply?

Yes. Any organisation that is UK based, regardless of size, can apply for funding to appoint a Kickstart employee, so long as they adhere to the expectations outlined on page 4.

EXPECTATIONS, APPLICATIONS AND APPROVAL

This section contains information and FAQs concerning what is expected of you as an employer, and outlines the rules of the application process.

Expectations of Employers

Kickstart Employers must meet the following criteria to receive funding for their placements:

- The roles must not replace any existing or planned vacancies.
- The roles must not cause existing employees, apprentices or contractors to lose or reduce their employment.
- The employing company will be the placement's legal employer. (The placement will have to adhere to that employer's terms and conditions and employment practices.)

A Kickstart Employer is expected to provide:

- Suitable line management. i.e. regular liaison with a supervisor to ensure that the young person is fully occupied and being productive.
- Training opportunities for the young person to develop their skills in the job.
- Employability support, to enable the young person to apply for a job in the future.
- A safe working environment, with appropriate health and safety practices.
- Employer Liability Insurance.
- Risk assessments for vulnerable groups.
- Disclosure and Barring Service Checks for employees working with 16 -17 year olds.

Scheme Rules FAQs

How many placements can I apply for?

As an employer you can have as many placements as you are able to support. These can run concurrently, or they could occur after previous placements have ended.

Recruitment Form

EN:Able communities will provide you with a job description template. In this template you must give as much detail as reasonably possible on the job role. EN:Able Communities will then submit proposed job to the DWP to be accepted.

It is important that the information you provide is comprehensive. The DWP will carefully scrutinise this, as they are seeking quality jobs for this scheme. To ensure that the Gateway application is approved, EN:Able Communities will also vet the quality of all job applications and employability support offered.

What types of job roles would be suitable for a Kickstart placement?

Any NEW job that your organisation feels it needs, could be suitable.

Examples are: Office administration, labourer, communications, IT support, data base clerk, etc.

Eligible Job Example: An additional Office administrator, Communications post, labourer on a construction site etc. that Company A needs.

Non-Eligible Job Example: Additional temporary staff for Christmas peak period Company B recruits annually.

When do the placements need to commence?

Placements can commence any time between approval of your application and the 31st December 2021 as chosen by you (and within the confines of the recruitment process.)

What types of checks will DWP undertake on my organisation?

DWP will undertake some financial checks on all applying organisations. DWP will use a government software called 'spotlight' that will check the financial viability of your organisation. It is expected that for very small companies (such as small construction firms) there are at least 3 people in the company to support one Kickstart placement.

Will there be a contract to sign with the DWP?

Yes. The DWP will produce a Grant Agreement. The template will be published in October. It is expected that each Gateway will also have a contract of delivery with the DWP.

You will be required to sign a contract with the DWP (the details of these contracts are currently being developed.)

Can I employ the young person for more than 25 hours per week?

Yes, DWP will only pay for 25 hours. Your organisation will need to pay for the additional hours at the minimum of the National Minimum Wage, based upon their age (£4.55 for under 18s, and £8.20 for those aged 21 to 24.) You will also need to pay NI and pension contributions.

Further information about minimum age rates can be found at on [the government's website](#).

If EN:Able Futures are employing the kickstart candidate on your behalf then a Host Agreement would be signed and in place to enable EN:Able Futures to invoice you for the difference as EN:Able Future would be paying the young person.

Can I just have a Kickstart placement for 6 months with no intention of a job when the placement ends? Do I need to provide a job at the end of the placement?

It would be fantastic for the young person if your organisation could provide a job, but it is not a requirement of the scheme. The aim of Kickstart is to provide meaningful work experience, whilst ensuring that the young person adds value to your organisation as a result of the role you have created for them.

Ideally both the DWP and EN:Able Communities would like employers to recruit the young person after the placement, however, there is no obligation to do so.

Can I have a kickstart placement and then consider them for a permanent job or an apprenticeship?

Yes! This is exactly what the Kickstart scheme is trying to achieve. Kickstart is an opportunity to get to know the young person and consider if they are suitable to be employed long term. In summary, think of the Kickstart placement as 'Try before you buy'.

What happens if ENC can only gather interest for 29 placements and therefore doesn't proceed - can I still take part through another organisation?

EN:Able communities already has had considerable interest in its offer to be a Gateway body. This outcome is very unlikely. Should this occur, We will of course, talk to you about this potential scenario, and can opt for which intermediary you would like to be managed by. We are working with a number of other reputable Gateway bodies and would pass your details onto them, with your consent.

What happens if we are applicant number 35 - will we have to wait until there are 60?

No. EN:Able Communities will submit the application. The minimum threshold for an Intermediary is 30.

Remember, that 30 cohort need not be for all the jobs to begin at the same time. An organisation could state that it will have 2 placements over the lifespan of the Kickstart scheme. Those 2 placements will be counted in the 30 cohort.

CANDIDATES AND HIRING

This section contains FAQs concerning finding and hiring the right candidates for you and your business.

Choosing the Right Young Person

Can I select the candidate?

Yes. The young person will come recommended from the Job Centre. You will then interview the person(s). The DWP will keep referring people to your organisation even if you feel they are not suitable for your proposed job role. DWP have stated that they expect 5 – 8 people per Kickstart vacancy to be referred to you.

What type of young person may be referred to me?

The Job Centre Job Coach will match suitable candidates for each job vacancy. Kickstart is not aimed at young people who are a long way from the labour market and need pre employment support. Other DWP services will support those young people. The young person could be displaced from a job in the retail/ hospitality sector, or have recently left education (school/university at age 16,18, 21).

DWP officers have confirmed that no young people will be forced into accepting a Kickstart placement. If a young person rejects the Kickstart placement, they will not be sanctioned i.e. lose their benefits.

The DWP/ Treasury have expressed an interest in expanding the Kickstart scheme to other young people groups; however, at the moment, Kickstart will be aimed at those young people in receipt of Universal Credit.

What if the DWP do not find anyone who wants to work for us?

Due to the number of young people that are unfortunately on Universal Credit, this is unlikely. There are 529,400 18-24 year olds claiming unemployment-related benefits; this is up by 125% since March and is the highest figure since September 1996.

Unemployment for young people has risen faster than for any other age group, up by 11.9% in the quarter since February to April, and now stands at 12.3% (up 1.6 percentage points). [Source: Learning and Work Institute.] In addition, there is predicted to be a huge spike at the end of the academic year 2020/21 for those coming out of education.

How Long Will the Process Take?

The DWP are currently stating that they expect the Intermediary Application Stage to be considered within a week of submission, with recruitment and job searches then taking up to a month. This will vary depending on the supply of young people on Universal Credit at the Job Centre for your particular vacancy.

Kickstart has generated an awful of interest from many large companies, potential intermediaries, and SME companies through these intermediaries. Furthermore, there is a complex roll out of the scheme to be managed, with additional DWP job coaches to be employed. Therefore, at the beginning of the scheme, it is expected that there may be some delays in the first cohorts being approved and young people matched to companies.

Other possible time delays:

- EN:Able Communities needs to get a minimum cohort of 30 people to submit an application. If EN:Able communities cannot reach that cohort in a reasonable time, then EN:Able Communities will pass the cohort to another reputable gateway.
- Cohort approval - the DWP require comprehensive Job Descriptions for all placements, which will then be assessed. To ease this process, it is important that all employers provide as much detail as possible.
- The time taken to arrange interviews.

PLACEMENT MANAGEMENT

This section contains FAQs concerning the management and training of the young people placed with you by the Kickstart scheme.

Training and Employability Support

How much training and employability support do I need to provide?

The amount is not prescribed.

For on the job training, we would recommend as much as your organisation can undertake to enable the young person to adequately perform their role. The spirit of Kickstart is to enable the young person to gain the maximum work experience to develop their talent in your sector, and to be an asset to your organisation.

For employability support, the more you can give the better. There is no prescribed amount. The spirit of this scheme is to enable the young person to be able to move into full time employment with an organisation following the placement.

Should you need any support with training and employability, EN:Able Futures can provide a bespoke package to the young person. Contact kickstart@efficiencynorth.org for more information.

Should training and employability support be included in the paid 25 hours the young person is employed for?

Yes. This would be the same as for any other employee that your companies employs. Training time will be considered an essential part of their role.

Dismissal

What if my young person gets a full time job during the placement?

Fantastic - a success!

Should the young person working for you find a permanent job or apprenticeship (in your organisation, or another one) during their Kickstart placement, the DWP will pay the salary costs until the day that the young person leaves the placement and you will be able to retain the full management fee.

What do I do if I have to dismiss the young person from their placement?

You will be their employer, and therefore must adhere to all good employment law and practice. You must adhere to your organisations HR procedures. If you dismiss a Kickstart placement you will be paid until the candidates last working day.

If EN:Able Futures employs the young person on your behalf, EN:Able Future manage this.

If I dismiss a young person on a Kickstart Placement, as they breached company procedures, will I be eligible to receive a future placement?

Yes. However, EN:Able Communities would wish to discuss this with you, to fully understand what went wrong, and how it could potentially be averted in the future.

What if the Kickstart candidate leaves the job mid placement?

You will be paid until the date the placement ends, and you will still receive your Management Fee.

COVID-19

What happens if lockdown restrictions prevent the young person attending the workplace - will they (we) still get paid?

The young person you employ through Kickstart is an employee of your organisation, therefore policies would apply to them as they would for all your other employees.

If they have to self isolate in accordance with the governments recommendations, the Kickstart employee would be eligible for sick pay in accordance with your organisations HR policy.

If the Kickstart employee cannot work due to not being able to get to the work place location e.g. site/office, then you would enact your companies HR procedures for that, in a similar manner as you would for all your other employees.

If there are future lockdowns, how will this Kickstart placement be affected?

As you are their employer, requirements to advise, support and employ the Kickstart placement will apply in the same way it does to all your employees.

Will I need to implement any specific COVID measures for a Kickstart placement?

No. The same measures as for all your employees will need to be implemented. (These will include a risk assessment that relates to ensuring your employees can work in COVID safe manner.)

THE GATEWAY PROCESS

This section contains explains the role EN:Able Communities and EN:Able Futures can play in the Kickstart Scheme process, and out line a rough timeline of steps in the application.

The Roles of EN:Able Communities and EN:Able Futures

EN:Able Communities as a Gateway

EN:Able Communities is a DWP recognised Kickstart Gateway. As a Gateway, ENC will:

- Gather the information from you to support an application.
- Submit an application to the DWP on your behalf (when we have a cohort of a minimum of 30 Kickstart job placements.)
- Pass on the relevant payments made by DWP to you: the Management Fee and the salary costs.
- Support your organisation by:
 - Providing a forum for Q&As on how you may be able to support the young person in the Kickstart placement.
 - Holding review meetings with your nominated lead for this project to assess the success of the Kickstart placement every 2 months.
 - Provide employability support if engaged by you via EN:Able Futures to young people employed through the scheme.

EN:Able Futures as a Supporting Partner

If needed and engaged, EN:Able Futures can:

- Provide the Employability support. ENF has qualified and highly experienced work coaches that can provide the employability support to the Kickstart placements. You can use some of the Management Fee to purchase this service. If interested, then we could devise a package with you to meets your needs.
- Employ the Kickstart placement and host in your organisation (should you wish.)

The Kickstart Timeline

- STEP 1 Express your interest by contacting kickstart@efficiencynorth.org, 07884589122, or by filling in the form [on our website](#).
- STEP 2 Complete a Kickstart Recruitment form stating:
- Information about job placements you are offering, including job title, duties and skills needed. (Ideally in Job Description format.)
 - Your planned employability support.
 - Information about your company, contact details.
- STEP 3 EN:Able Communities will, when it has received 30 applications for placements, submit an application to the Kickstart scheme.
- STEP 4 DWP will then assess and approve the application.
- STEP 5 Your job vacancy will be placed on the DWP IT system. DWP (Job Centre Plus) Work Coaches will then match suitable young people to your vacancy.
- STEP 6 You will then interview candidates.
- STEP 7 When appointed, the young person will start and be onboarded into your organisation.
- STEP 8 EN:Able Communities will pay your organisation your management fee (up to £1500) and then Kickstarter wages/ NI/ Pension costs in arrears at months 2,4,and 6.

QUESTIONS?

If you would like more information about how EN:Able Communities can help you access Kickstart Funding, please contact us.

Phone 07884589122

Email kickstart@efficiencynorth.org

Website <https://www.efficiencynorth.org/communities/kickstart>

Twitter @ENableCIO