

Building Skilled and Inclusive Workforces: Employer Support from DWP

As the UK economy continues to evolve, sectors are experiencing different levels of growth, change, and challenge.

For employers, this means navigating shifting workforce demands while building skilled, inclusive, and resilient teams.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) offers a comprehensive range of **free** employer-facing services to support recruitment, training, and workforce development.

Whether expanding operations, opening new sites, or diversifying hiring practices, DWP provides practical tools and expert guidance.

How DWP supports employers

DWP provides a suite of free programmes and services to help employers recruit and upskill staff efficiently.

Employers can access support through local teams, which includes assistance to create job adverts, use of local Jobcentre facilities for interviews (where space is available) and opportunities to attend local job fairs.

Alongside this DWP provide a suite of programmes which include

[Sector-based Work Academy Programmes \(SWAPs\)](#) and the [Wales Skills to Employment Pathway \(WSEP\)](#) offer pre-employment training tailored to industry needs, ensuring candidates are equipped with relevant skills before starting work.

SWAPs offer businesses the opportunity to trial a candidate that has received relevant training in a role and if they are a match, hire them through a guaranteed interview.

[Work Experience placements](#) and [Work Trials](#) allow employers to assess candidates in real-world settings, improving hiring outcomes and retention.

These programmes are flexible, cost-effective, and adaptable to a wide range of roles, from technical to customer-facing positions. Employers can collaborate with local Jobcentres to tailor recruitment and training efforts to meet specific business needs.

DWP also supports inclusive hiring practices. The [Disability Confident](#) scheme helps organisations attract and retain disabled talent, while Jobcentre partnerships enable outreach to underrepresented groups. These initiatives promote workforce diversity and contribute to broader social impact.

Employers can advertise vacancies through [Find a Job](#), a free online platform that reaches thousands of jobseekers daily. This service complements DWP's local and national support, helping employers connect with candidates quickly and effectively.

For more tailored support, employers can contact the [Employer Services Line](#) for expert advice and labour market insights. The Employer Services Line can link you with Jobcentre Plus teams across the UK, helping you tap into a diverse pool of candidates and community networks.

Conclusion

As industries adapt to meet future demands, the need for skilled, diverse, and resilient workforces continues to grow. DWP offers strategic support to help employers recruit, train, and build inclusive teams.

Through the free programmes, partnerships, and platforms, employers can access free practical tools to strengthen workforce capability and community engagement.

You can find out more about how DWP can support you by visiting [How Jobcentre Plus can help employers](#).

A quick guide to DWP programmes and initiatives

DWP Employer Programmes	
Work Trials	- An opportunity for you and a perspective candidate to try the job - A trial period in the actual job often lasting around a week (or up to 30 days) - Participation is entirely voluntary - Claimants stay on benefit during the work trial Government guidance on Work Trials
Work Experience	- A voluntary Work Experience scheme can help your business - You can interview before agreeing to placements - Placements last up to 8 weeks - Jobcentre Plus continue to pay benefits plus travel expenses - Many employers recruit from placements when vacancies arise Government guidance on Work Experience
Sector-Based Work Academy Programmes - SWAP (England and Scotland)	- A more efficient approach to filling your vacancies - Short sharp training intervention, designed with the employer to up skill potential recruits. - Designed and tailored with you to meet your recruitment needs - Has 3 components; pre-employment training, work experience and a job interview. sector based work academies Employer Guide
Pre-employment training (England, Scotland and Wales)	- Similar to sector based work academies but does not offer the guaranteed job interviews at the end, perfect for upskilling and training with no employment obligations at the end. - See Pre-employment Training for more information
Apprenticeships	- Investment opportunity to upskill new and existing staff with introduction of apprenticeship levy from April 2017 Apprenticeship funding; how it will work
Traineeships	- Traineeships are designed to help young people who want to get an apprenticeship or job but don't yet have appropriate skills or experience. - They are study based programmes, combined with work placements, which give young people the opportunity to develop workplace skills and experience; putting them in a better position to compete for future vacancies and opportunities. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships--2
Find a Job	- Find a Job service offers a simple way for employers to post job adverts and jobseekers to look for work. - It has a simple login process, an enhanced search function and a facility for jobseekers to upload and share their CVs whilst automatically recording onsite activity and job applications. Employer section of Find A Job
Access to Work	- Access to Work (AtW) is a grant scheme that is intended to help people with a disability or health condition to take up or remain in work. - An AtW grant can pay for: special equipment, adaptations or support worker services to help people do things like answer the phone or go to meetings and help getting to and from work. https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work
Disability Confident	- Voluntary scheme developed by employers and disabled people with 3 levels to support your organisation on your Disability Confident journey to change attitudes, behaviours and culture The Disability Confident scheme
The Armed Forces Covenant	- Treating fairly those who serve, or have served, the nation Armed Forces Covenant
Care Leavers Covenant	- DWP lead on delivering the Care Leaver's Employer Covenant in partnership with Spectra First and the Department for Education (DfE) https://mycovenant.org.uk/
Employer Domestic Abuse Covenant (EDAC)	The Department for Work and Pensions is a delivery partner of the Employers Domestic Abuse Covenant (EDAC), pledging to support women affected by abuse to (re) enter the workplace. as part of this, we have pledged to raise awareness of domestic abuse within the workplace.

	If you are interested in finding out more about what our EDAC membership means or would like to get involved, please let us know or visit edacuk.org
Fuller Working Lives	- A strategy to tackle age discrimination and support older workers Fuller Working Lives - A Partnership Approach
Movement to Work	- Movement to Work (MtW) is a work-placement charity that supports employers to provide work placements that combine employability skills training with on-the-job experience. - MtW is a charity coalition of 250 of the leading UK employers. - The aim of MtW is to get unemployed young people (aged 18-30) into employment by giving them work experience that will build their confidence and improve their job prospects. https://www.movementtowork.com/
Kickstart	- The Kickstart Scheme is a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of high quality 6-month work placements for young people - Funding available for each job will cover the relevant National Minimum Wage (NMW) rate for 25 hours a week for 6 months, plus the associated employer National Insurance contributions, and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/kickstart-scheme
Other DWP products	
Jobhelp website	Our recruitment and jobs portal, there are hints and tips and support to help people find a new job - https://jobhelp.campaign.gov.uk/
@jobsplusmore	- Our national twitter page, we can use this to advertise opportunities. We also have local accounts to allow us to target opportunities to a specific location. Contact us for support accessing this service. https://twitter.com/JCPJobsPlusMore
Specialist Employability Support	- Specialist Employability Support (SES) is designed specifically to help and support people with disabilities, into work. Participants will receive individually tailored help via external providers. https://www.gov.uk/specialist-employability-support
Flexible Support Fund	- Flexible Support Fund (FSF) provides local support that our claimants may need to return to work. - Where our existing menu of support doesn't provide what the claimant(s) need and there is no other non-contracted provision in the area, the FSF is used to plug the gap. - Awards of FSF can be made for a variety of reasons. Most commonly awards of FSF are used to: - Provide financial support to remove barriers which prevent claimants from getting a job or moving closer to the labour market. - Procure training and education which enable claimants to enter sustained employment or move closer to the labour market. - Provide financial assistance with travel costs. - The FSF fund is awarded on a discretionary basis by the local office.
New Enterprise Allowance	- The New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) scheme aims to support claimants to start their own business. - NEA supports the creation of a business as long as the claimant has a genuine aim to build a sustainable business that will be registered in Great Britain for tax purposes. https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-enterprise-allowance-campaign
Rapid Response Service	- Our redundancy support service is free of charge to get support and useful information through our 'Rapid Response Service (RRS)'. This is a redundancy service designed to give both employers and employees support and advice about things like: - Helping people facing redundancy to construct CVs and find jobs. - Helping people identify their transferable skills and training needs. - Providing training to help people develop vocational skills. - Providing general information about benefits helping with costs like travel to work expenses.