

Top 7 myths about the apprenticeship programme

1 “As my levy funds expire after 24 months then I cannot use them to fund all of an apprenticeship that lasts longer than 24 months”

- FACT: The fact that your funds expire after 24 months in your apprenticeship service account doesn't stop you meeting the full costs of an apprenticeship that lasts longer than 24 months. New funds enter your account every month for as long as you pay the levy.
- The costs of an apprenticeship are spread over the full length of the apprenticeship and are met in monthly instalments. We always use the oldest funds in an account first to minimise the potential for funds to expire.
- Only funds that are not spent will expire 24 months after they enter your account. If you do not have sufficient funds in your account to cover the monthly cost, we will pay 90 per cent of the balance due.
- You can use the National Apprenticeship Service's 'Estimate my apprenticeship funding' tool to estimate how much your organisation will have available to spend on apprenticeships.

2 “If you don't spend all your levy, it gets spent by central Government on other things”

- FACT: Unspent levy funds get re-allocated to other apprentices within financial years.
- The apprenticeship levy funds all apprentices currently in training – those already in an apprenticeship and those just starting, those working for employers who pay the apprenticeship levy, and those working for employers who do not.
- As businesses of all sizes recruit and train more apprentices, we expect there will be very little (if any) year on year underspend of the apprenticeship levy.

3 “20% off-the-job training is inflexible: it has to involve 1 day off a week, spent in college”

- FACT: Off-the-job training does not have to involve 1 day a week spent in college. It can be delivered in a way and place that suits you and the provider, allowing the apprentice to learn the new knowledge, skills and behaviours required.
- The style and timing of the learning is very varied – it could be a block of time in a residential setting or online learning to fit in with shifts. We published guidance with best practice examples in June 2017 – it's available [here](#).

4 “Providers have to advertise apprenticeship vacancies for us”

- FACT: As an employer you are free to advertise your own apprenticeship vacancies directly on your own websites, along with any other details including application processes. You do not have to advertise through providers.
- We also encourage you to advertise vacancies through our '[Find an apprenticeship service](#)' (FAA), so that potential apprentices can find lots of vacancies all in one place. The training provider you work with must post FAA vacancies on your behalf – talk to your provider to find out more.
- From October 2018, employers will be able to post their own vacancies on 'Recruit an apprentice,' which will then show up on FAA.

5 “Apprenticeships cannot be used for existing staff”

- FACT: Apprenticeships can be used to upskill and/or retrain employees of any age, including older workers or existing staff, as long as the apprenticeship is giving them new skills to enable them to achieve competence in their chosen occupation.

6 “Apprenticeships are only entry level – they are for low skilled people”

- FACT: Apprenticeships are available from Level 2 (GCSE equivalent) right through to Levels 6 and 7 (equivalent to a Bachelor's or Master's degree). Some apprenticeships may also offer additional professional qualifications, such as ACCA. You can check the [Institute for Apprenticeships website](#), which is constantly being updated as new standards come online every month.

7 “Apprenticeships are only for young people (16-18)”

- FACT: Apprenticeships are available to people of all ages; anyone over the age of 16 living in England can apply. There are different entry requirements depending on the industry, job role and apprenticeship level.