

Think Ahead



Technical factsheet

The Apprenticeship Landscape in Scotland

Contents

Introduction	2
Types of Apprenticeship & Frameworks	2
Funding & ACCA Apprenticeship Schemes	4
Navigating the Funding Landscape	6
Attract and Develop Talent	6
Future-proofing your workforce	7
Maintaining high standards	7

Introduction

There are currently 131 apprenticeship frameworks in Scotland – Foundation, Modern, Technical and Professional – serving around 30,000 students each year. While this target set by Skills Development Scotland for apprenticeship starts had been consistently met in the eight years to 2019, there has been a significant reduction in the number of starts throughout the pandemic. For example, there were just over 21,000 Modern Apprenticeship starts for the 2019/20 period and just over 10,000 up to the end of Q3 2020/21. The Modern Apprenticeship framework, which predates both the Technical and Professional frameworks, requires the delivery of a relevant qualification, core skills and industry-specific training.

The Apprenticeship Levy was introduced in April 2017 to reflect the Government's stated commitment to improving the skills base within the UK economy and providing a viable alternative to university education. All UK employers with annual salary bills of more than £3m now pay an apprenticeship levy at the rate of 0.5% of the organisation pay bill.

The levy funds get paid into HM Treasury, and an allocation returns to the Scottish Government as part of the [Barnett Formula](#) from HM treasury. The Scottish Government then passes this funding onto [Skills Development Scotland](#) (SDS), which administers Scottish Apprenticeships on behalf of the Scottish Government, which incorporates Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs).

Types of Apprenticeship & Frameworks

There are three types of apprenticeship in Scotland Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs), Modern Apprenticeships (MAs) and Graduate Apprenticeships (GAs).

The SCQF is the national qualifications framework for Scotland. If you would like to explore SCQF level 1 – 12 frameworks in more detail, please visit the SCQF interactive framework [here](#).

Foundation Apprenticeships

- These are delivered in schools with senior-phase secondary school pupils. These apprenticeships support those pupils seeking to start on a vocational track.
- Young people can spend time out of school at college or with a local employer and complete the Foundation Apprenticeship alongside their other subjects like National 5s and Highers. Please visit the [Scottish Qualifications Authority](#) website to read further detail of National Qualifications such as National 5s and Highers.
- There are currently [15 apprenticeship frameworks](#) at this level, one of which is [Accountancy](#).

Modern Apprenticeships

- Modern Apprenticeships can range from SCQF level 5 through to SCQF level 12, although the majority of Modern Apprenticeship frameworks are at SCQF levels 6 and 7 (Higher National Certificate equivalent)
- There are currently [102 apprenticeship frameworks](#) at this level, one of which is [Accountancy](#).

Graduate Apprenticeships

- There is no upper age limit on Graduate Apprenticeships; they are available to those aged 16 or over.
- These apprenticeships are SCQF level 8 (degree level) up to (masters degree level)
- There are currently [14 apprenticeship frameworks](#) at this level, one of which is [Accountancy](#).

Skills Development Scotland are currently seeking to Reduce the number of frameworks by broadening the application of individual frameworks to a broader range of roles. Within these broader frameworks, there will be several different

pathways. A benefit of this new approach would be the ability for individuals to move between multiple pathways within a single apprenticeship.

One of the first frameworks which will be changing in this way is Digital Technologies, where three pathways will sit within the framework; software development, cyber security and data.

Funding & ACCA Apprenticeship Schemes

The type of funding you will be able to access will depend on the type of apprenticeship. The following information details funding available for Modern, Foundation and Graduate apprenticeships. As an employer, you negotiate the costs with your preferred training provider, while Skills Development Scotland contributes to funding costs. Detail of the funding available for different types of apprenticeship is detailed below. Proceeds from the levy goes towards the funding that's available to deliver apprenticeship training. Some of the funding also goes to the Flexible Workforce Development Fund for employers who may have other training needs. For more information about the [Flexible Workforce Development Fund](#) please visit here.

It is important to note; you will also pay an apprentice's wage while they are working with you; you must pay at least the [National Minimum Wage](#).

Foundation Apprenticeships

There is no cost to you in supporting Foundation Apprenticeships as the apprentice is still at school.

Modern Apprenticeships

For Modern Apprenticeships, Skills Development Scotland contributes towards the cost of training and assessing apprentices on this type of apprenticeship. The total amount Skills Development Scotland will pay changes depending on the apprentice's

age, qualification level and type of apprenticeship. For full detail of the contribution available, please visit [here](#).

Enhanced funding contribution is available for those who are disabled and care-experienced up to, and including the age of 29, full detail of the contribution available can be found [here](#).

- Once you have selected the learning provider that will be carrying out the training, Skills Development Scotland will make contribution payments directly to them as your apprentice progresses through their apprenticeship.
- If you have a direct contract with Skills Development Scotland and experience with apprenticeships, you can deliver the apprenticeship internally. In this case, Skills Development Scotland will make contribution payments directly to you as your apprentice works towards their apprenticeship. However, you may choose to seek support from a learning provider if there's an element of the apprenticeship which you're unable to deliver internally. In this case, you must then pay the learning provider.

There are three ACCA apprenticeship schemes available to employers in Scotland through Skills Development Scotland:

- **Level 5 (RQF Level 2) Modern Apprenticeship in Accounting** - Designed to develop people for roles as accounts assistant, cashier, credit control clerk, finance assistant, purchase ledger clerk or sales ledger clerk.
- **Level 6 (RQF Level 3) Modern Apprenticeship in Accounting** - Designed to develop people for roles as training accounting technician or assistant accountant.
- **Level 8 (RQF Level 4) Modern Apprenticeship in Accounting** - Designed to develop people for roles as qualified accounting technician or accounts manager, this Level 4 Accounting Technician Apprenticeship draws on the early modules of our world-class professional qualification, known as 'Applied Knowledge', giving your apprentices interactive lessons, and access to a tutor and an online community of fellow students.

Both the ACCA Level 5 and Level 6 Modern Apprenticeships in Accounting allow apprentices to take the ACCA Certificate in Financial and Management Accounting as an option.

Graduate Apprenticeships

As of 2021, Graduate Apprentices' learning costs are funded by Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS) for the entire duration of the course. Graduate Apprentices must apply directly to SAAS for their funding. For more information please [visit the SAAS website](#).

Navigating the Funding Landscape

[Adopt an Apprentice](#) – This is a financial incentive of £5,000 to help cover wage and recruitment costs if you take on a Modern or Graduate Apprentice that has been made redundant, on the same apprenticeship to complete their training. The incentive covers all sectors, for further information and funding rules please read the [programme rules](#).

[Access to Work](#) – This publicly funded employment support programme has been developed to help disabled people start or stay in work. Funding can cover costs for additional equipment, access to software or transport to and from a place of work. Please visit [here](#) for further detail and eligibility criteria.

[The Big Plus](#) – This free service can connect you with a local tutor to support your employee with building skills and confidence with reading, writing and using numbers. As part of the [Young Persons Guarantee](#) and to support the Scottish Government's No-One Left Behind, employer recruitment incentives (ERIs) to help people prepare for employment, training, education and/or volunteering have been agreed upon between the Scottish Government and local authorities. For further information about EIRs and the other types of support available for employers and young people, please contact your [Local Partnerships lead](#).

Attract and Develop Talent

For business owners and managers, the apprenticeship programme offers a cost-effective way to attract, develop and retain skilled employees - the kind of people who will help you drive your business forward. A popular alternative to university, apprenticeships not only widen the pool of talent from which you can recruit, but they give you the means to build a diverse, talented, digital-ready team. By offering apprenticeships, you'll also demonstrate your commitment to building the skills of local talent as well as your employees.

Future-proofing your workforce

ACCA apprentices are trained to ensure digital and technological transformations can be used for business growth. Our syllabus covers technological factors, financial systems, procedures and IT applications, so your ACCA apprentice will advise on the potential effects of technological change on your business structure, for example. They will also use and adapt your processes as new technology is introduced to your business.

Maintaining high standards

We regularly talk to employers to understand what they want from accountants, so we ensure our offer remains relevant, up-to-date and of a high standard. In addition, we partner with Government, industry bodies and training providers to deliver an excellent globally-recognised foundation in accounting, finance and business through our apprenticeship programme.

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