Train to Retain
‘retaining essential skills in the industry’

Overview

The Train to Retain scheme will support the retention of essential skills in the industry by providing grants for professional development activities for apprentices and graduates that meet the qualifying criteria set out below. These development activities will support the continuation of learning and will be carried out when individuals are not working on their normal activities.

In-scope employers can apply for funding from 10th June until 7th July and funding decisions in principle will be awarded from 15th July. The scheme will initially run for a period of 12 months until July 2021. The ECITB Board will review the operation of the scheme on a regular basis and consider any changes that may be necessary. This includes the possibility of extending the scheme beyond July 2021.

Eligibility for Train to Retain grant support

The scheme is targeted at apprentices and graduates working in key ECI occupations. As entry-level workers, they are relatively inexperienced and as such are more vulnerable during times of economic instability. By targeting the retention of essential ECI skills, as opposed to generic skills, the scheme will help to ensure the industry retains the future talent it needs to grow and remain competitive.

Apprentices

The qualifying disciplines for apprentices are: plating, pipefitting, welding, rigging, electrical installation, electrical maintenance, mechanical fitting, mechanical maintenance, instrumentation and control, project controls, design and draughting, thermal insulation and NDT (non-destructive testing)

To qualify for grant support individuals must meet one of the criteria set out below.

- Any apprentice not in full time off-the-job training. This includes apprentices attending both day release and block release.
- Any apprentice who is within 3 months of completing their full time off the job training at closing date of application (ie between July and September 2020).
- Any individual who has completed their apprenticeship within 6 months at closing date of application (ie between January and July 2020). Completed is defined by the date on the apprenticeship certificate.

Graduates

The qualifying disciplines for graduates are: mechanical (includes piping), electrical, structural, civil, chemical, instrumentation, process, process technical safety and project controls.

The qualifying criteria for graduates is set out below:

- At closing date of the Train to Retain application on 7 July 2020 any university graduate who graduated since academic year 2017 / 2018 and is currently employed in the engineering construction industry
The aim of this scheme is to support the ongoing development of apprentices and graduates who are unable to pursue their current recognised industry programmes at the present time. It will also support the further training of recently qualified apprentices (within 6 months of completing) who may benefit from additional development.

Grant will be paid in respect of these training and development activities. The grant rate will be:

**Apprentices** - £110 per day

**Graduates** - £130 per day

For the purposes of clarity, any apprentice interim grants that are due to be paid to employers while their learners are on Train to Retain will be deferred until the point at which they are back on their existing apprenticeship and have ceased to access Train to Retain.

The graduate scheme grant will continue to be paid as agreed but an employer cannot receive the Train to Retain day rate grant for any training activity that has or will be funded by the Graduate scheme grant, as a single training activity cannot be funded twice.

Furlough – employers will not usually be able to access Train to Retain support in respect of any days on which their employee (apprentice or graduate) is furloughed. Individuals who have been furloughed on a part time basis may continue to access Train to Retain on their working days.

It is a published requirement in the ECITB’s Grant Policy that employers may be required to permit ECITB’s auditors to have access to records relating to training activity which is supported by grant awards.

**Duration of Grant Support**

During the initial operational period of the scheme from August 2020 until July 2021 the maximum available support per individual will be 120 days. As indicated at the outset the scheme will be reviewed on a regular basis and depending on demand this may be subject to change.

**Scheme outline**

Employers will submit a formal stage 1 application to the ECITB. The stage 1 application will require the employer to outline the number of individuals they wish to access the scheme, the duration of the support they are requesting and a brief overview of proposed development activities.

Following the closing date for applications, a funding decision in principle will be awarded and at this point the employer will progress to stage 2 of the application process where more detailed information will be required on those accessing the scheme along with a structured development plan with clear learning outcomes and lines of assessment for each individual.

The ECITB’s account management team will be on hand to provide any support required to assist in the creation of these development plans. These plans may include activity to support the individual’s current role and/or activities to broaden the skills of the individual in key areas such as Industrial Revolution 4 (IR4), Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) and Energy Transition/the net zero agenda.

Grant support will be available for development activities undertaken from 3rd August and will be managed through the ECITB’s MSP. Employers will be required to provide relevant evidence on progress against the agreed development plans and to make grant claims in the normal manner.
The ECITB Train to Retain scheme will be subject to monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure we are meeting the scheme’s objectives and to enable us to assess the scheme’s impact. Evaluation will also enable us to continuously improve the mechanisms through which we provide support to our employers.

Employers accessing the scheme agree to participate in evaluation processes. This will be done through the scheme application and follow-up after 6 months and 1 year following the closure of the scheme.

All data provided for monitoring and evaluation purposes will be handled in strict accordance with GDPR regulations, and will be anonymised for analysis and reporting purposes.