

ECITB Approved Training – Key principles and priorities

ECITB Approved Training

1. A key tenet of the ECITB's strategy is to support and encourage the transferability of skills across all sectors of the industry. Increasing the mobility of a skilled workforce will help reduce unnecessary waste and duplication. Therefore, grant aid is prioritised to support training related activities which are aligned to national and industry specific standards. Where training is not aligned to national or industry specific standards, grant aid may be provided but at a reduced rate to incentivise the industry to use transferable standards.
2. Grant aid can be provided for any training or assessment related activity that supports any principal or related activities as defined in the Board Order, however, the Board prioritises training in certain areas as being critical to the productivity and safety of the industry and to meet current and future industry demands. These training areas are:
 - New entrant training, specifically
 - Apprenticeships
 - Graduate development
 - Reskilling sector transferees
 - Pipeline skills programmes such as scholarships
 - Upskilling existing workers – Skills and technical training
 - Craft/technician skills (eg. Mechanical joint integrity, NDT)
 - Safety training (including behavioural safety and human factors)
 - Project management / project controls / commercial awareness
 - Design training (eg CAD, BIM)
 - Skills to support net zero (eg energy transition leadership)
 - Digital skills (eg. Project data academy)
 - Behavioural and cultural change in the industry – Management and professional training
 - Leadership, Management and Supervisory development
 - Mental Health Awareness
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Validation of competence (VQ's, technical tests)
 - Training as a contractual requirement (e.g. Work access, plant operations)
3. There are some areas of training undertaken in the industry which are required to gain access to sites or to ensure a worker can travel offshore. These passport schemes are excluded from grant support. Currently these are:
 - CCNSG National and renewal
 - CSCS safety test
 - BOSIET
 - FOET
 - MIST
 - Sea Survival



4. Notwithstanding the lists in paragraphs 2 and 3, the Board and the OGC may reprioritise grant aid or support excluded training if the needs of the industry justify the deviation.
5. The grants which are available in respect of ECITB approved training are set out in the schedule of grants in the grant management system in the ECITB's Membership Services Portal ("MSP"). Any requests for grants to support training outside the schedule should be submitted through a Regional Discretionary Fund application, also using the MSP.
6. The key principles for establishing and using the Regional Discretionary Fund are set out in Appendix 1 to this annex.

Employer's in-house training

7. Employer's in-house training activities may attract grant payment, as this supports the development and productivity of an employer's workforce. However, where an employer's training programmes do not align with ECITB approved training as described in the MSP, an application should be made to the Regional Discretionary Fund. For the avoidance of doubt, grant support for employer's in-house training will be to support the delivery of training. Grant support will not normally be provided to cover the costs of development of an employers in house training.

Regional Discretionary Funding – Key Principles

- As part of operational planning each region budgets for a discretionary fund by which the budget holder can make a discretionary award to support training in the region. By definition the fund is managed at a regional level. All regional budget holders are responsible for establishing the regional employers consensus to help determine how the fund should be deployed each year with respect to the following:
 - Percentage of grant support for approved applications.
 - Whether a different percentage of grant should be applied to different types of training.
 - Providing funding windows across the year to ensure everyone has reasonable access.

This will be part of the regions operational planning for each year and consensus should be sought from employers through regional fora and the parameters set will be approved as part of the overall operational plan.

- All discretionary applications should meet the criteria outlined in this appendix and may require written in-depth justification for training support dependent upon type of training and level of grant support requested. Where the requests fall within the principal and related activities of the Board Order and are from employers who are on the ECITB Register of Leivable Establishments, the discretionary application is dealt with according to financial authority levels.
- The primary goals of this grant scheme are to increase engagement with training by employers, provide learning solutions to employers where there is no existing ECITB approved grant which meets their needs, and to make the training supply chain more responsive to the skills needs of the industry.
- The eligibility criteria applied in reaching grant award decisions are as follows:
 - a. As a general rule, the fund is to be used for securing and funding external training, rather than in-company programmes.
 - b. If the fund is used to fund internal training, special arrangements will apply relating to the approval and verification of training. These will include defining the outcomes and identifying satisfactory evidence that outcomes have been achieved.
 - c. Non-eligible training programmes (see Annex A para 3) and any training where there is an existing support mechanism within the ECITB or from another funding agency.
 - d. Preference should be given for programmes involving several collaborating employers, rather than single company schemes.
 - e. Preference should be given to programmes or innovations in training that attract additional levered support to achieve more or better outcomes.
 - f. Preference should be given for programmes that show specific skill



enhancements or where there is a key market failure in existing provision.

- g. The funds should normally be used to procure training, and not to cover other costs.

Grant aid process – Key principles

Claiming Grant

1. There are two ways that in-scope employers may apply for grant payments for training and testing activities;
 - a. either through an ECITB Approved Training Provider (ATP) or Approved Centre in respect of ECITB approved training, tests or qualifications, or
 - b. directly by the employer through the Membership Services Portal (MSP).
2. Either way, it is incumbent on the employer to secure the ECITB's commitment for the funding before the activity occurs through the grant management system in the MSP. When employers do not seek a commitment ahead of a training activity there is a risk that grant will not be paid. Where employers request support through the Regional Discretionary Fund the requested value should not include VAT as the ECITB is unable to support such costs through this fund.
3. When a commitment for grant is approved by the ECITB in the MSP it has a validity of 120 days. This means that commitments should only be made when the employer expects the training activity and evidence requirement can be completed within this time frame.

Evidence requirement

4. All grant claims are paid on the satisfactory verification of evidence that the activity for which the grant has been requested has occurred. Types of evidence required include, attendance sheets and certificated outcomes.
 5. Where a grant claim is for a commitment made through the Regional Discretionary Fund, evidence of the amount paid for the activity is also required. This is to verify the fees paid for the activity by the employer and is usually a copy of a third party invoice. If the training is delivered internally and therefore an invoice is not available the employer will need to demonstrate internal delivery costs.
 6. Where evidence can take more than 3 months to access from the provider, or where the learner is on a programme of longer than 9 months duration, evidence that the employer has paid for the activity may be accepted (normally a copy of a paid invoice would suffice).
 7. Occasionally grants from the Regional Discretionary Fund may be made on the basis of an underlying contractual agreement between ECITB and the receiver of the grant. Where this is the case, the agreement must be signed and included in the bundle of evidence submitted for each grant claim. 'Written agreement' may be a contract, deed or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).
-

Employer's declaration

8. When requesting grant support or claiming grant directly the employer is agreeing to the following:
 - a. The ECITB auditors and financial controllers can have access to further evidence of training activity if required as part of normal auditing or further verification if required.
 - b. The employer is not receiving any other external funding for the training activity which could directly replace the ECITB funding (ie; funding from clients or asset owners).

ECITB responsibility

9. When claims for grant are received in the MSP the ECITB will aim to complete the approvals process and pay the grant within 6 weeks subject to the timely submission of any required evidence. When commitments requests are received in the MSP the ECITB will aim to complete the approvals process within 12 working days.

Claiming of grant for non-leviable establishments

10. Where grant support for other activities relating to training or testing does not involve a claim by an in-scope employer, the mechanisms, milestones and evidence requirements will be part of the business case and any associated agreement between the ECITB and the parties involved.
-