

Information for employers

What is the cost of work based learning?

Research shows that 1.3 million working people don't have the skills they require to do their job proficiently. The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for bridging that gap to make our country better skilled and more productive.

So who picks up the bill?

This depends on the subject, length and cost of the course. Remember that the cost of training includes not only the course fee but also the hidden cost of the employee's time. Set against that is the benefit to the company in terms of acquiring up-to-date knowledge and skills that will make the company more competitive.

Train to Gain skills brokers

Train to Gain employs skills brokers work with employers to identify needs. They

- match needs to training
- agree a training package
- access appropriate funding
- review progress.

Every employer is invited by them to make a skills pledge (a voluntary public commitment to support their employees).

Skills brokers give priority to enhancing foundation skills in numeracy and literacy, bringing all employees to Levels 2 and 3. Where college attendance is not possible training providers may be able to visit a site to train employees.

To contact a skills broker phone Train to Gain on 0800 0155 545.

<http://www.traintogain.gov.uk/>

Employer support

An employer acting as sponsor may well wish to contribute to the course fee, and there may be funding available from the Learning and Skills Council depending on the subject and intensity of study. Usually employer and employee come to an agreement about the work time to be allocated for study and any conditions attaching to successful completion of the course.

Grants for individuals

Students studying independently can apply for a partial fee grant (towards the cost of tuition) if their household income is less than £25,000, and a partial course grant (towards study costs such as books or equipment) if the household income is less than £50,000. To qualify for these grants the course must last at least one year but not more than twice the length of the equivalent full-time course. If the fee grant awarded does not cover the costs it may be possible to get help from the Additional Fee Support Scheme, which makes annual awards

dependent on the household income. The maximum fee grant plus course grant is £1400 for 2007/8 and £1435 for 2008/9.

Career development loans

These are deferred bank loans to help pay for vocational education or learning where the learner has no grant or employer contribution. See www.direct.gov.uk/cdl or contact the Helpline on 0800 585 505.

Further information

<http://www.traintogain.gov.uk/> - access to qualified skills brokers who give employers expert advice on support and funding for businesses who want to train their staff

<http://www.learning-opportunities.org.uk> – for more information on financial help for learners

<http://www.lsc.gov.uk/whatwedo/ourfuture> - the government's skills campaign explained

www.studentsupportdirect.co.uk