

Enhanced Funding Guidance 2024-2025

Enhanced funding is an enhanced rate payable as an alternative to (and not in addition to) the standard funding rate, to enable you to offer significant additional support to Disabled and/or Care Experienced Apprentices aged 20-29 who have a demonstrable need for additional support from you, to enable them to progress their apprenticeship. This is because SDS and the Scottish Government recognise that Disabled people and those who are Care Experienced can face additional challenges in their career journeys.

You must ensure that funding for the significant additional support and/or activities identified is not available to you from any other source and the support you have identified as required is a significant addition to your delivery.

The rate of funding between the standard rate and the enhanced rate is required by you

- (i) as a result of the disability and/ or care experience (as applicable), and ex
- (ii) to provide significant additional support and/or adaptations to enable the Apprentice to sustain and complete their apprenticeship.

Providers who apply for EFC will be required to adequately evidence to SDS the additional support given. You will be required to retain evidence of the support you will put in place for audit purposes. SDS shall commence evidence reviews during the 24/25 contract delivery year.

The guidance below sets out possible forms of evidence that can be presented but we will consider other appropriate forms of evidence that are deemed acceptable.

EFC is available at the highest level (16-19 years) of MA Programme funding contribution for the Apprentice's framework. If the Apprentice is aged 25-29 then there must be a 25+ contribution rate for that framework.

SDS recognise that some Disabled and Care Experienced people might not disclose their disability/ care experience status at the start of their apprenticeship. If Apprentices disclose after starting on their MA journey and require significant additional support, you, as the provider, may apply and, if approved, payment would be on a pro rata basis and from the date of approval.

Applications must be made on the Appendix 4A Enhanced Funding Application, which can be found on [SDS Learning Providers Equality and Diversity](#)

An application can only be submitted if the Apprentice meets the eligibility criteria set out in parts A and/or B and the support required, and how you will evidence that support, is clearly described, in part C.

SDS requires to be satisfied that: -

- the additional support you have identified below is necessary as a result of the Apprentice's disability, impairment or medical condition declared in Part A, or the Apprentice's care or looked after experience declared in Part B.
- the support you have identified is a **significant addition to your delivery; and**
- **the support that you give the apprentice can be appropriately evidenced to SDS.**

The support must not be covered by Access to Work or any other funding.

ELIGIBILITY

- Eligibility Criteria is set out in the MA Specification section 4.1 Eligibility Criteria for MA Funding.
- It is available to support: new starts, re-entrants, existing Apprentices who declare a disability and /or care experience, and progressions.
- Ideally disclosure should be made prior to the Apprentice starting in order to get the support in place, but if the Apprentice's circumstances change or they disclose later that they require support due to disability and/or care experience and an application should be made by completing Appendix 4a. However, the EFC will be paid pro rata from the point the application is approved.
- Providers can apply for EFC if the Apprentice is aged 20 to 29 years and would describe themselves as Disabled and/or care experience as described in Appendix 4a completing Parts A, Disability and/or B, Care Experience. **In order to be eligible for EFC the disability/health condition should last more than 12 months and affect their ability to carry out their apprenticeship.**
- The Provider must identify, in conversation with the Apprentice the appropriate support and complete the table in Part C - **this support should be significant additional delivery and you must provide SDS with the evidence of that support.**
- Both the Apprentice and Provider must complete and sign Part D – Declaration.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFYING APPROPRIATE SUPPORT

The benefits of disclosure done in a safe and confidential manner equips the Provider with relevant knowledge to put support in place and recommend reasonable adjustments to the employer that might otherwise be missed.

SDS deliver regular free training and CPD for Providers and have published several tools and guides to support Providers to undertake Needs Assessments and identify appropriate approaches and support including online resources: -

- [Disabilities A-Z](#) , a guide to reasonable adjustments and conditions
- The [Needs Assessor Handbook](#) is a comprehensive guide to preparing for and undertaking a needs assessment. Available in the Equality section of [Equality Page](#)
- [Access to work](#)
- Details on our recourses and support guides can be found under the guides section on our [Equality Page](#)

SUPPORT – LEVEL OF DETAIL REQUIRED IN THE APPLICATION

Support must be in addition to the support/adjustments you offer when tailoring your service for apprentices' needs and it is a **significant change to your delivery** in order to enable the Apprentice to start, sustain and achieve their Modern Apprenticeship.

In **Table 1** every box must be completed.

Completing Application Form Table 2

You must complete **at least ONE** section of this table and include the evidence that you will provide. It is VERY LIKELY that an appropriate submission includes information on support and evidence on more than one section of this table. Further guidance on what might be included for each section is set out below. Read ALL this carefully before completing a request for EFC.

Table 2, section A: *Developing an approach to learning and assessment to ensure the most appropriate methodology for the Apprentice is used and is required to ensure the Apprentice sustains and achieves their Apprenticeship.*

This may, for example, relate to how you have had to adapt and alter instruments of assessment and /or learning materials/delivery.

Support required:

- Detail significant changes that you have had to make to planned learning and/or assessment approaches for the specific learner.
- Explain how much time has been required by staff to **develop** these new approaches ready for implementation.

Evidence to be retained (examples):

- A signed log or note referencing newly developed learning materials/instruments of assessment including staff who developed new approaches and when this took place.

- Internally verified adapted instruments of assessment specifically for the needs of an apprentice

Table 2, section B: *Scheduling additional contact time to address additional support requirements to ensure the Apprentice sustains and achieves their Apprenticeship.*

This may, for example, relate to how you have had to significantly adapt your learning, assessment and coaching delivery to apprentices to support individuals with learning disabilities or difficulties, or those that have specific mental health/anxiety issues etc.

Note that it is VERY likely that you will have had to adapt your delivery for individuals where adaptation of approach was required (i.e., if section A was completed, it is likely that section B will also be completed). However, there will be circumstances where section B is completed without section A.

Support detailed here should **NOT** be hypothetical e.g., statements such as “*We will offer the Apprentice more frequent meetings with the assessor during the Apprenticeship to allow the Apprentice to work at their own pace. The meetings will be at times that suit the Apprentice and could be face to face or video*” will be rejected if not clarified with detail.

Support required:

Detail the additional planned contact time with the apprentice including purpose of additional contact time, the frequency, duration and method of contact to be used.

Evidence to be retained:

- There should be some form of personal learning support plan (PLSP) that is set out for the individual which is a “living” document”, clearly being utilised to administer the ongoing support of the individual. In some cases, the provider may use their own or SDS exemplar learning plan and apprentice progress review documentation to record additional contact activities, but it is likely, due to the specific adaptations required, they will wish to tailor this documentation.
- A log of all contact that has taken place for each individual receiving EFC should be kept- time, date, duration and purpose. This should be signed by the provider and the apprentice and the employer.
- Note that sensitive commentary in shared evidence documentation can be redacted when requested by SDS for audit purposes.

Table 2, section C:

Modifications to learning resources and activities, or provision of adaptive equipment such as specialist ICT equipment, to allow the learner to more fully participate and is required to ensure the Apprentice sustains and achieves their Apprenticeship.

This may, for example, relate to the purchase of assistive technologies that the Apprentice requires for the assessment that the individual cannot obtain through Access to Work or any other funding.

Support required:

Detail the modifications/additional equipment required to allow the learner to fully participate indicating the cost of purchase/hire.

Evidence to be retained:

- Evidence that specialist equipment/material has been purchased/hired e.g., a VAT invoice or purchase history.

Table 2, section D: *The provision of mentoring support to the Apprentice required to ensure the Apprentice sustains and achieves their Apprenticeship.*

This may, for example, relate to additional meetings focused on coaching and mentoring the apprentice related to the support need. Such meetings may require significant staff time or additional specific training for the staff members relating to the apprentice's unique circumstances. You should use this section for mentoring and support that does not relate to the technical aspects of achieving the qualification *per se* (mentoring and support for the technical delivery and assessment of the qualification would be included under section B).

Support required:

Detail the justification for, number, duration, nature of, and expected impact of, additional mentoring support sessions you will be undertaking with the apprentice.

Evidence to be retained:

- A log of all contact that has taken place for each individual receiving EFC should be kept- time, date, duration and purpose (this may be the same log as any required for section B if relevant, but time spent on additional learning/assessment development should be easily distinguished from additional coaching). This should be signed by the provider and the apprentice. If this is undertaken by any other external organisation, evidence of their intervention must also be provided by them.
- There may also be entries in a PLSP (see section B) or evidence of mentoring activity in LPs/APR documentation.

Table 2, section E: *Undertaking **specific** staff training required for either the Provider or Employer to understand a specific disability, health condition, or the challenges that may be experienced by a Care Experienced apprentice.*

This is likely to relate to training required for staff from specialist organisation(s) in direct response to specific apprentices' needs. **General upskilling on equality and diversity CPD is NOT eligible. Note also that training that took place more than 12 months prior to an individual EFC claimant submission will NOT be considered "specific".**

Support required:

Detail the justification for, duration and expected impact of specialist equality training sessions you will be undertaking with your staff/employers to support specific apprentices' needs. Identify how many staff/employers will be undertaking the training.

Evidence to be retained:

- A log of training session(s)-including delivery organisation purpose, date(s), attendee(s) and cost.
- VAT invoices and/or evaluation of training
- Evaluation data of training sessions undertaken

Table 2, section F: *Other measures required to ensure the Apprentice sustains and achieves their Apprenticeship.*

This section may relate to other very specific significant requirements for additional need. Learning providers must make it very clear why they are supporting the additional need and provide justification as to why this has not been covered through the employer's obligations where pertinent.

Support required:

Detail the justification for, duration, cost and expected impact of one or more "other measures" required to support the apprentice.

Evidence to be retained:

- A log of required additional measures
- VAT invoices and/or audit trail of purchase

RECORDING ON FIPS

1. The Provider cannot compel Apprentices to sign Appendix 4a.
2. A blank copy of the application form (MA Specification, Appendix 4a) is held in [SDS Learning Providers Equality and Diversity](#)
3. Where the application is made at the beginning of the Apprenticeship SDS approval of the EFC must be in place prior to entering the start on FIPS. Once the email approval is received the assignment can be entered on FIPS, following the guidance below, to change the age category to 16-19, which will apply the highest level of funding, enter the Training category comment and upload the Appendix 4 and email approval in to FIPS.
4. Should an MA disclose a health condition, disability or being Care Experienced after the start has been recorded on FIPS the Provider will be required to submit an EFC application to Equality.Apprenticeships@sds.co.uk and the application will follow due process. If the application is approved, the provider will be informed and requested to upload the approved appendix 4a and email to the FIPS assignment. SDS will facilitate the change of age group, training comment and apply the pro rata funding to the assignment from the date of Appendix 4a approval.
5. Retention of Appendix 4a is required for audit purposes. As this contains personal information, this form must be held securely in compliance with Data Protection legislation (including the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018). (See section 28 in MA Conditions).

Where the Apprentice is a new start and Appendix 4a has been fully completed the Provider should complete the Training Agreement with the following details. Please note, no change is required on Training Agreement for existing Apprentices.

a) **Training Agreement** – section on qualification & contact details

- i. Training Category select **16-19**.
- ii. Change Training Category select **Yes**.
- iii. Reason for change – enter the appropriate option from those listed in the table below. For example, if the correct category is Disability enter Enhanced 1 in the box.

(Table 1)

Enhanced Funding Category - Disability/Care Experienced	Option for Training Agreement and FIPS Training Category Comment*
Disability	Enhanced 1
Care Experienced	Enhanced 2
Disability & Care Experienced	Enhanced 3

***If the training category comment is not as stated in the above table, the assignment will be rejected and will be required to be re-submitted with the correct entry.**

6. The Apprentices details can then be registered on FIPS
 - **FIPS Application** – enter the details captured on the training agreement relating to training category to confirm that a change is required. The training category should be changed to 16-19 to provide the higher level of contribution (as shown on the FIPS Application Example).
 - Appendix 4a must be uploaded to FIPS when the Assignment is in Assignment “Draft” status. Video on how to upload can be found [here](#).

The fully completed form should be uploaded in FIPS **within 5 working days of approval**, any sections completed incorrectly will result in the noncompliance, SDS reserves the right to reclaim any funding at any point.

FIPS APPLICATION EXAMPLE

Change the options below to update funding rate.

Start Date	...	
Expected End Date	...	

Qualification Details

Area of Scotland	...	Age at Start	---
Qualification	...	Change to Training Category Required	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Sector Skills Council	...	Training Category	---
Framework	...	Off the Job Training as part of MA?	---
Awarding Body	...	Training Venue	---
Awarding Body Centre Number	---	Expenses	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Occupational Grouping	---		
VQ Level	---		
MA Centre Number	---		
Staged Registration	---		

Change to Yes

Age at Start	---
Change to Training Category Required	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes
Training Category Comment	<div style="border: 1px solid red; background-color: #ffe6e6; padding: 5px;"> ✘ Required fields must be filled in. </div>
Training Category	---
Off the Job Training as part of MA?	---
Training Venue	---
Expenses	<input type="checkbox"/> No

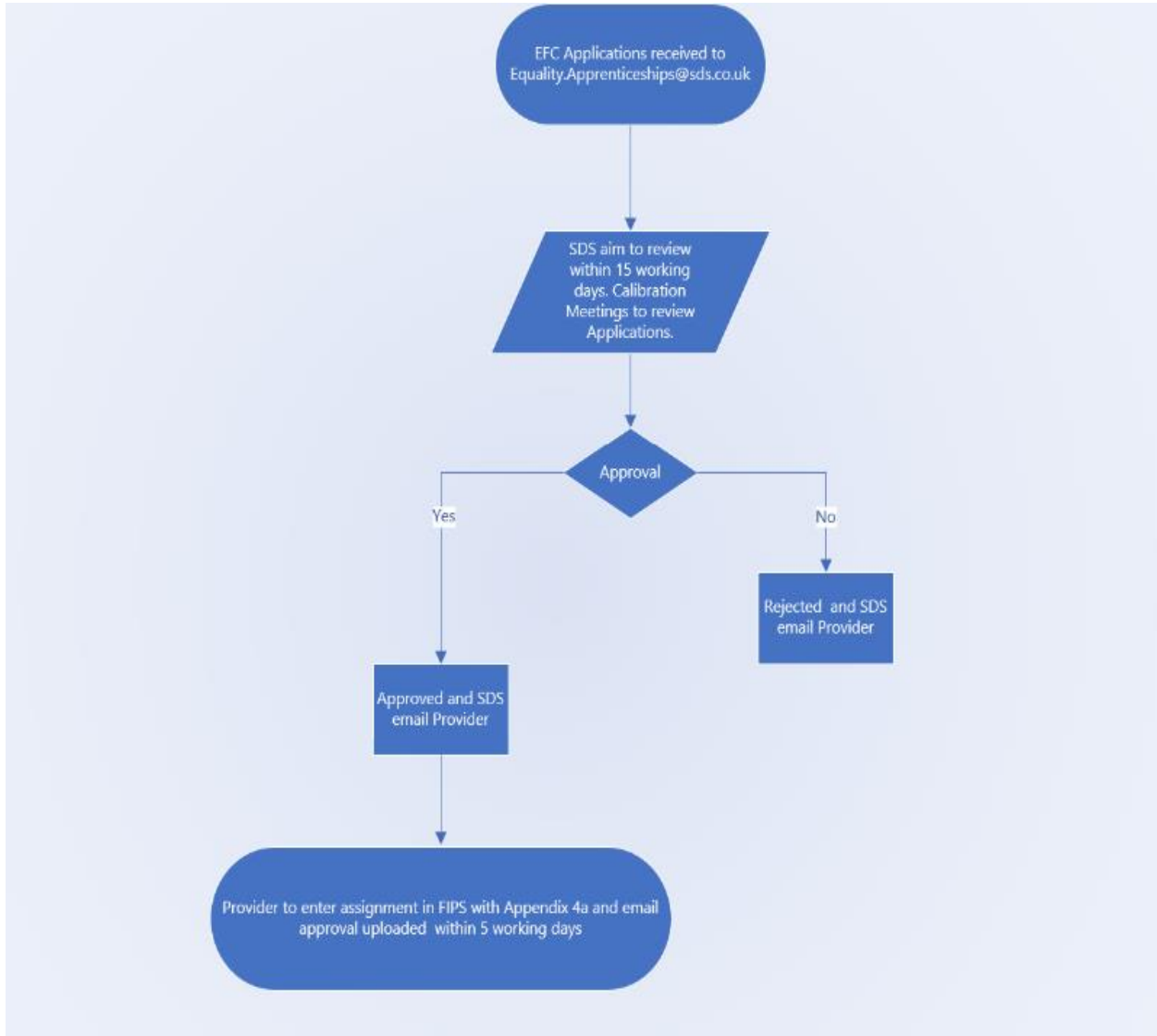
Training Category Comment:
Enter: Enhanced 1, Enhanced 2 or Enhanced 3 as per Table 1 above

Training Category:
Change to 16-19

NOTE: If the above FIPS recording guidance has not been followed as described above, or if the correctly completed Appendix 4a is not uploaded to FIPS the assignment will be rejected. Example. the Training Category Comment must be Enhanced 1, Enhanced 2 or Enhanced 3 to qualify for the higher contribution rate.

EFC PROCESS MAP FOR MA PROVIDERS

This process map should be read in conjunction with the MA Specification 2024-2025 and Enhanced Funding Guidance and the support delivered shall be audited.



Enhanced Funding Change of Support Requirements (CSR)

If you believe that any of the support you have identified in:

- Appendix 4 approved prior to 31st March 2024, or
- Appendix 4a approved from 1st June 2024

requires to be significantly amended, you are required to submit details of the proposed amendments on Appendix 4b – Enhanced Funding Change of Support Requirements.

Without prejudice to SDS's other rights and remedies, failure to implement all the measures you have identified and that have been approved by SDS may result in the enhanced funding being withdrawn and recovered.

The completed form should be sent: Equality.Apprenticeships@sds.co.uk. SDS will aim to review the application form within **15 working days** and confirm their approval or rejection.

If the form is approved, then you should upload the approved Appendix 4b Enhanced Funding Change of Support Requirements to FIPS with the approval email from SDS within 5 working days.

If the form is not approved, you will be notified by SDS, and the form will be emailed back to you from Equality.Apprenticeships@sds.co.uk