

Kickstart Scheme FAQs

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1. What is the Kickstart Scheme?

The Kickstart Scheme was set up by Government to create new six-month job placements for young people who are currently on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.

The job placements should support the participants to develop the skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme. This scheme aims to create meaningful placements for young people.

The portal opened for bids in September 2020 and the scheme ends in December 2021 – when the last placements will be employed. The final placements will come to an end in June 2022.

2. Funding

Funding is available for 100% of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment pension contributions.

There is also a £1,500 grant per job placement available for setup costs (PPE, laptop etc), support and training.

As a gateway, Somerset Chamber receives a £300 administration fee per candidate that is successfully placed. This is to handle the administration for each placement. This is NOT taken from the £1,500 grant.

3. How to apply for a Kickstarter

There are two ways of applying for the Kickstart scheme:

- 1- **Apply via a Kickstart Gateway** – a gateway will handle all the administration and application processes, while offering support and experience along the way. As a gateway, Somerset Chamber will not take any of the £1,500 grant to offer your business this service.
- 2- **Apply directly with the DWP** – on February 3, 2021 the DWP changed the rules on this. Where businesses could only apply directly with the DWP previously if they were requesting 30 or more candidates, this has now been changed and any business wanting to apply for any quantity can now apply directly.

4. I am a sole trader can I apply?

Sole traders can apply to the scheme through a Kickstart gateway. Although if they are not registered with Companies House and/or do not have the systems to pay participants through PAYE then, unfortunately, currently they are not eligible.

5. How many Kickstarters can I apply for?

There are no hard and fast rules for this although a **one to three ratio** would be advised to work to, one Kickstarter for three existing employees.

6. How long will the Kickstart process take?

The DWP aims to process applications within **one month** however experience has shown us that this can take longer, as the number of applications the DWP has received has been significantly greater than anticipated.

7. How will my application be assessed?

The DWP assesses each application by checking applicants through its Spotlight tool which is used across Government to carry out due diligence checks for grant applications.

The DWP focuses on applying key tests to safeguard public money, while ensuring a wide range of organisations can access the Kickstart Scheme

The DWP then considers the quality of the application in full and to assess the evidence on how:

- The proposed placement will develop a young person's employability
- The job placement is new and not replacing existing jobs or other planned recruitment
- The role will be for a minimum of 25 hours a week and last for six months

8. Who can apply for my job?

The Scheme is for any young person aged 16-24 on Universal Credit and at risk of long-term unemployment.

If you have an individual in mind that is eligible for the scheme, ask them to speak to their Job Centre work coach and request that they be made aware of the job opportunity when it is uploaded.

Job Centre Work Coaches have established relationships with those eligible and will make referrals based on the requirements of the role and qualifications and experience of the young person.

9. Can somebody that is already employed by us apply?

If the candidate has been volunteering at the business or on unpaid work experience (and meets the scheme criteria) then yes, they can apply.

10. How can I apply through Somerset Chamber of Commerce?

Follow the link and complete the form in full ensuring you read the terms and conditions before submitting:
<https://www.somerset-chamber.co.uk/business-support/kickstart-employment-expression-of-interest/>

11. I have submitted my EOI, what next?

Once you have submitted your EOI to Somerset Chamber, we will then submit your application on your behalf. You will be notified once your EOI has been submitted to DWP.

At this stage there is nothing more that can be done until the DWP has responded to let us know whether your application has been successful or not.

12. Will my application be submitted to the DWP immediately?

In all honesty no, this is unlikely. Somerset Chamber will work with the DWP Account Managers to assess when the optimum time is to submit your application for the quickest possible turnaround.

13. I've been sent an employer agreement, bank details form and job vacancy form, what now?

Congratulations, this means that you have been approved by the DWP for the number of placements you have requested!

Please complete all of these and return them as soon as possible so that there are no delays.

Job vacancy – please complete this form in full providing as much information as possible, especially where it requests information on employability skills – this is a key requirement of the programme and a condition of your taking on an individual.

Please ensure that the very last page with the grid is completed in full, including full contact details (name, email, phone number) for the primary point of contact. If you wish for a CV and covering letter to be sent, please include these words and the contact name and email address for the recipient within your organisation.

What does it mean by '**Number of referrals**'? This is the number of potential candidates you wish your job to be shared with by the Job Centre. For example, if you put 10, the job centre will share your job with 10 individuals.

Employer agreement – you will need to read and sign this agreement and return it to policy@somerset-chamber.co.uk and a second copy needs to be sent to Somerset Chamber HQ: Equity House, Blackbrook Park Avenue, Blackbrook Business Park, Taunton, Somerset TA1 2PX

Bank details – to ensure we can get payment to you successfully all bank details need to be completed on this form and returned to policy@somerset-chamber.co.uk

14. Training - a lot of our training can be provided in-house, is that okay?

Yes! This is really important so that the Kickstarter learns how the company does things, however, there may be external training that they need such as first aid training, excel training, forklift training etc that is required that will provide them with an official qualification/skill they can use as evidence in future roles if your placement doesn't work out.

The Kickstart placement should help the young person get basic work skills, which can include timekeeping, teamwork and communication.

Mentoring the young person can also form a key part of developing employability skills.

Keep a record of all training that takes place whether this is internally or external training.

15. We need to offer training, can Somerset Chamber as our gateway help with that?

If you need to find a local training provider, why not take a look at this handy guide which details list of [training providers](#).

This document is a list of Somerset Chamber members who are offering training, many will offer other members discounted rates, so it's worth getting in contact with them.

We would also suggest keeping a record of any training that takes place to demonstrate where those essential 'employability skills' have been given.

16. Can I increase the hours and wage I pay?

Yes – the minimum number of hours you can offer is 25 per week, however, if you wish to increase the hours and or the wages this is your prerogative as the employer.

If you decide to do this then you will need to pay anything over and above the 25 hours and National Minimum Wage that the DWP will pay.

17. How do candidates find the job?

The job vacancies are not publicly advertised. For those that are eligible and the role thought to be suitable/ of interest, then the Job Centre Work Coaches will upload the job details to a candidates 'dash board'.

If you wish to promote the role you are offering the this is ok however you need to point people towards their local job centre work coach as all candidates have to come via the DWP.

18. The Candidate

I have received an email from the DWP that includes an Introduction ID and the name of a candidate that has been referred for our role.

When your job vacancy is uploaded to a young person's Dash Board you will be informed and sent an Introduction ID. These IDs are eight characters E.G KL7D-PWZZ – do not delete this.

If a candidate then decides they like the job they can then approach you directly with a CV and covering letter (if this was what was requested on the vacancy form). If you like the candidate, you will need the Introduction ID to confirm the candidate's identification when contacting the DWP/Somerset Chamber to say you have a successful candidate.

19. I've got a successful placement, what next?

Congratulations you have a successful candidate! You need to make sure the DWP and Somerset Chamber have all the relevant details to start the payment process.

On the candidates *start date* you need to contact the DWP by email (jobplacement.kickstart@dpw.gov.uk) with the following details:

- The unique introduction ID
- Name of the successful applicant
- Job placement title
- Start date of the job placement

And you need to complete the following Somerset Chamber form to ensure funds can be matched up with your placement.

<https://www.somerset-chamber.co.uk/business-support/kickstart-employment-expression-of-interest/kickstart-starter-notification/>

Please note: no payments can be made under the scheme until Somerset Chamber is sent this information by you. Delays in receiving this may delay payments.

20. If things aren't working out do I have to keep the candidate on?

No. If it isn't working out then you are under no obligation to keep the candidate on. However, before letting the candidate go, we would encourage you to talk to their Job Centre Work Coach and see if issues can be resolved before this stage.

For example, it maybe that the candidate continues to be late for work, could it be that the bus doesn't arrive until after their start time?

21. What happens after the six month placement?

Hopefully the placement has worked out well and you would like to keep them on permanently. If not, then after the six months placements the candidate leaves your business with the new-found work experience and employability skills that your work placement has provided.

22. How and when do I receive the funding for the placement?

Once the candidate has started and you have informed the DWP of this, they will then activate the payment process.

The grant - it takes 10 days* for remittance and funds to be sent to Somerset Chamber and we aim to get these funds to you no later than one week after they have been received.

* (from the start date or date in which you inform the DWP if after the start date)

Wages – wages will be paid to you one month in arrears. More specifically: Candidate start date + 10 days + four weeks.

You do not need to provide any evidence of the wages you have paid them. HMRC confirms the amount you have paid with the DWP and that PAYE has taken place, this exact amount* is then sent to Somerset Chamber to pass on.

* If you have increased the hours above the 25 hours offered by the DWP or a wage of minimum wage then only that offered by the DWP will be passed on. The employer must cover any additional expenditure

* Please ensure Somerset Chamber has been informed of your successful placement by using the following form: <https://www.somerset-chamber.co.uk/business-support/kickstart-employment-expression-of-interest/kickstart-starter-notification/>

23. Do I need to keep receipts for what we spend the grant on?

Yes, you are required to keep evidence of how this has been spent., DWP will conduct checks to prevent fraud and will undertake spot checks. DWP will be empowered to reclaim amounts claimed dishonestly.

We would also suggest keeping a record of any training that takes place to demonstrate where those essential 'employability skills' have been given.