

A black and white photograph of two women in a library or office setting. The woman on the left, with dark curly hair, is gesturing towards a mannequin head. The woman on the right, with light brown hair, is looking at the mannequin. Bookshelves filled with binders are in the background.

Money towards developing your employees

The Workforce Development Fund

If you're an adult social care employer in England, you can claim the Workforce Development Fund towards the costs of your employees completing adult social care qualifications and learning programmes.



What is the Workforce Development Fund?

The Workforce Development Fund (WDF) is funding from the Department of Health which is disbursed by Skills for Care. It's a limited pot of money which funds qualifications, units and learning programmes to support the ongoing professional development of staff across adult social care in England.

Employers can claim back a contribution towards the costs of employees completing health and social care qualifications, units, Apprenticeships and learning programmes. Employers who directly incur costs for learning and development, such as course fees, can access the WDF to reclaim a contribution towards these costs.

Can I apply?

You can if you are an adult social care employer operating in England.

What can I claim for?

You can claim for units, qualifications and learning programmes completed between 1 January 2017 and 31 March 2018.

You can claim WDF towards the cost of course fees (or employer contributions) and associated costs, such as employees' salaries whilst they are undertaking training, coaching and mentoring costs, venue costs for the training and wage replacement costs.

How can I apply?

There are different ways to access the fund depending on your location.

- You can join an employer led partnership.
- If you're based in the advertised local authority areas, you can access funding directly from Skills for Care. These can be found on www.skillsforcare.org.uk/directaccess.
- If you're a large national organisation (with over 1,000 workers in England and operate in two or more Skills for Care areas), you can apply for a grant when tendering is open. If you are successful, you will claim your funding directly from Skills for Care.



Sign up to our enews to keep updated on funding opportunities
www.skillsforcare.org.uk/enews



What's in it for me?

There are over 400 units eligible for funding that make up adult social care qualifications. A list of eligible units, qualifications and learning programmes is available at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFunits.

WDF pays a contribution of £15 per QCF credit, with a maximum of 60 credits per learner per funding year. How much you can claim back will depend on the qualification, the units selected and how many credits make up those units. Learning programmes and RQF qualifications are funded to the value advertised on completion.

Here are some examples of what could be claimed:

- Level 2 Diploma in Health and Social Care (Adults) (46 credits) - up to £690
- Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social Care (58 credits) - up to £870
- Level 4 Diploma in Adult Care (minimum 70 credits) - up to £1050*
- Level 5 Diploma in Leadership for Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's Services, adult pathways (minimum 80 credits) – up to £1200*
- RQF Level 4 Certificate in Principles of Leadership and Management in Adult Care - £400
- 'Lead to Succeed' learning programme - £350



*A maximum of 60 credits per learner, per funding year can be claimed so qualifications larger than 60 credits will need to be claimed over more than one funding year. Funding years run from 1 April to 31 March.

For a list of funded adult social care qualifications and learning programmes visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFqualifications

What if we already receive funding?

WDF is a contribution to the cost of employees completing vocational qualifications and learning programmes from our list of acceptable units. This funding allows employers to claim from more than one source, for example the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) or the Skills Funding Agency (SFA).

There are some important points to note:

- Where employers are claiming from more than one source of public funding, or using the Apprenticeship levy, they must ensure that they do not claim the same cost from more than one source e.g. if the course fee has been covered from one source of public funding, or paid for by the Apprenticeship levy, it cannot be claimed via WDF.
- It is an employer's responsibility to ensure that they do not claim more funding than the cost to them of employees undertaking training. Direct costs such as course fees*, employees' salaries and backfill if required (i.e. wage replacement costs) can be included for this fund. Costs must be incurred before WDF is claimed.
- Employers must ensure that they have records in place to evidence the costs of any funding claim they make.

*Employers paying the Apprenticeship levy cannot claim WDF towards course fees or end-point assessment costs but can claim it towards other direct costs, such as the 20% off the job training time.

Joining a partnership to access funding



1. Identify learning needs of your staff and find a learning provider

Commission learning and development for employees for eligible units, qualifications and learning programmes. For details of these visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFunits.

Before agreeing to any contract with a learning provider ensure they will supply you with unit summary sheets, or equivalent, signed off by an internal verifier on completion of units. You will need this to claim funding (see step 5). Check you will not be charged for this.

2. Get your NMDS-SC number

If you're not already on the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) then you'll need to set up an account. The NMDS-SC is an online data collection for the whole adult social care workforce and sector.

Visit www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk for more information and how to get started.

3. Join a partnership

Review the partnerships and decide which one you want to join. For details of partnerships visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/partnershipaccess.

Send your completed members declaration form to your chosen partnership. Download this from www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFmembersdec. The partnership will send this to Skills for Care.

4. Check that your NMDS-SC account complies with WDF requirements

Update your NMDS-SC account in line with the requirements for WDF. For details of the requirements visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFnmds-sc.

5. Claim for completed units, qualifications and learning programmes

When your employees have completed eligible units, submit the unit summary sheets, or equivalent, signed off by the internal verifier to the partnership. To download unit summary sheets visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/partnershipaccess. For learning programmes and RQF qualifications, submit a copy of the learner's certificate to the partnership.

The partnership will submit the learning to Skills for Care as long as steps 4 and 5 have been completed in full.

6. Receive payment from the partnership

Claim funding directly from Skills for Care

This information only applies to employers operating in the advertised local authority areas that do not have a local WDF partnership and who wish to claim funding directly from Skills for Care.

1. Identify the learning needs of your staff and find a learning provider

Commission learning and development for workers for eligible units, qualifications and learning programmes. For details of these visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFunits.

Before agreeing to any contract with a learning provider ensure they will supply you with unit summary sheets, or equivalent, signed off by an internal verifier on completion of units. You will need this to claim funding (see step 6). Check you will not be charged for this.

2. Get your NMDS-SC number

If you're not already on the National Minimum Data Set for Social Care (NMDS-SC) then you'll need to set up an account. You will need this before contacting Skills for Care (see step 3). Visit www.nmds-sc-online.org.uk.

3. Contact Skills for Care

Complete the Skills for Care direct access declaration form by downloading it from www.skillsforcare.org.uk/directaccess.

Send the completed form to directaccess.wdf@skillsforcare.org.uk.

4. Sign an agreement with Skills for Care

Skills for Care will validate that you meet the eligibility criteria for direct access to WDF. Once done we will issue an agreement to you for signature and return. The agreement will be issued by email and can be signed electronically.

5. Check that your NMDS-SC account complies with WDF requirements

Update your NMDS-SC account in line with the requirements for WDF. For details of the requirements visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/WDFnmds-sc.

When these requirements have been met, Skills for Care will send you a claim form.

6. Claim for completed units, qualifications and learning programmes

Complete the claim form and submit it to Skills for Care along with unit summary sheets, or equivalent, signed off by the internal verifier between the advertised dates. Alternatively you can send a copy of the learner's certificate with your claim form. For learning programmes and RQF qualifications, submit a copy of the learner's certificate with your claim form.

Skills for Care process your claim for valid learning as long as steps 3, 4, 5 and 6 have been completed in full.

7. Receive payment from Skills for Care

You will be contacted directly if there are any queries with your claim. You will be notified in writing if any learning cannot be claimed.



Other useful resources

Adult social care qualifications

Find out more about adult social care qualifications at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/qualifications.

Apprenticeships

An Apprenticeship is a combination of on and off the job learning and development. We have practical tools to help you develop an Apprenticeship programme for your organisation. Find out more at

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/apprenticeships.

Choosing the right learning

Find tools to help you choose the right learning and the right provider for you at

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/choosinglearning.

Including:

Finding an endorsed learning provider - our endorsed learning providers have passed quality assurance processes to ensure high quality learning.

www.skillsforcare.org.uk/endorsement.

New Apprenticeship standards - Apprenticeships are changing moving from the current system of 'frameworks' to standards'. This means that the delivery, structure and funding will be different too. Please visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/newstandards for more information.

National Minimum Data Set for Social Care

If you access WDF, you will need to set up an NMDS-SC account for your organisation. Find out more at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/NMDS-SC.



Other sources of funding

You can find out about other funding opportunities at www.skillsforcare.org.uk/funding.

More information

Visit www.skillsforcare.org.uk/wdf for further information about the WDF, including our most frequently asked questions.

Email wdf@skillsforcare.org.uk if you have any further questions.

