

JOBS **GUARANTEE** PHASE ONE

A guide for employers



CONTENTS

- What is the Jobs Guarantee?
- Why should your business take part?
- What to expect
- Things you need to know
- How this fits with the Youth Guarantee
- How to get involved
- Still have questions?



WHAT IS THE JOBS GUARANTEE?

The **Jobs Guarantee** helps young people who have been out of work or education for a period of time take their **first steps into employment**, as part of the government's Youth Guarantee.

In its first phase, the scheme is open to **eligible* 18–24 year olds who have been on Universal Credit** and seeking work for 18 months and live in one of six areas:

- Birmingham & Solihull,
- East Midlands,
- Greater Manchester,
- Hertfordshire & Essex,
- Central & East Scotland,
- Southwest & Southeast Wales.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will fully fund employers to offer six months of paid work at 25 hours a week covering 100% of wage costs – reimbursed at the age relevant National Minimum Wage, including associated employer NICs and pension contributions – and up to £250 per young person for onboarding.

Each young person will receive tailored training and DWP-funded support from a DWP appointed Delivery Partner helping them prepare for, engage with, and progress in their job.

Later this year, the scheme will expand across Great Britain.



* To be eligible, individuals must have been in the intensive work search regime of Universal Credit for the last 18 months and have earned less than the equivalent of 50hrs of earnings over that period.

WHY SHOULD YOUR BUSINESS TAKE PART?

Taking part lets you **grow your business** and **strengthen your workforce** while making a real difference to someone's life.

In addition to the financial benefits above, you will also have access to untapped talent in your local community and the opportunity to trial a candidate for six months, with the option to retain them afterwards.

In return, you will need to:

- Offer a genuine paid job you would otherwise recruit for, with day-to-day support for the young person.
- Confirm your organisation meets reasonable requirements to ensure roles are safe, fair and good quality (usually via a simple declaration).
- Work with your Delivery Partner to support a young person, providing a named point of contact and notifying them of any changes affecting the young person's role.



WHAT TO EXPECT

Young people on the scheme can **bring fresh perspectives, diversity and loyalty to your organisation.** They may also face barriers to employment, which is why Delivery Partners provide them with personalised support specific to the needs of the young person and the employer.

Young people typically want to gain confidence through secure stable employment, feel valued and develop skills for a long-term career. Although some of these young people face barriers, securing a job can help increase motivation and confidence, give them solid experience in work and ultimately transform their lives.

The young person is most likely to thrive with a supportive employer offering clear structure, on-the-job training, flexible working where possible, and access to a workplace buddy or mentor.



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Lead Delivery Organisations

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Birmingham & Solihull
Catch 22 | 4 Hertfordshire & Essex
Reed in Partnership |
| 2 East Midlands
Ingeus | 5 Central & East Scotland
King's Trust |
| 3 Greater Manchester
The Growth Company | 6 Southwest & Southeast Wales
Itec Training Solutions Ltd |



To recruit a young person, you should contact the **Delivery Partner** for your area.

Meaningful work

Jobs must be equivalent to roles not funded by the scheme and must not involve significant classroom or online training beyond what is offered to regular employees.

To qualify, a job must:

- Offer work for up to six months at a minimum of 25 hours a week (unless fewer hours are agreed to meet individual needs).
- Pay at least the age-relevant National Minimum Wage, in line with similar roles at your organisation.
- Not replace existing staff or reduce their hours.
- Give the young person the opportunity to develop skills that support progression into sustained employment.

Key dates

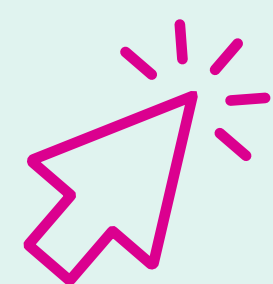
The first phase of the scheme runs from **April 2026 – April 2027.**

The last start date for employing a young person in the first phase is **31 October 2026.**

HOW THIS FITS WITH THE YOUTH GUARANTEE

The Youth Guarantee is the government's commitment to ensure every young person aged 16–24 has **access to support to find a job, training or an apprenticeship.**

The Jobs Guarantee is part of a package that includes financial support for employers, funded apprenticeships, and work experience and training opportunities, designed to support young people to earn and learn.



Find out more about the range of help available at **[Build Your Future Workforce](#)**



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

National employers with vacancies across multiple locations can **reach out** to the DWP Strategic Relationship Team.

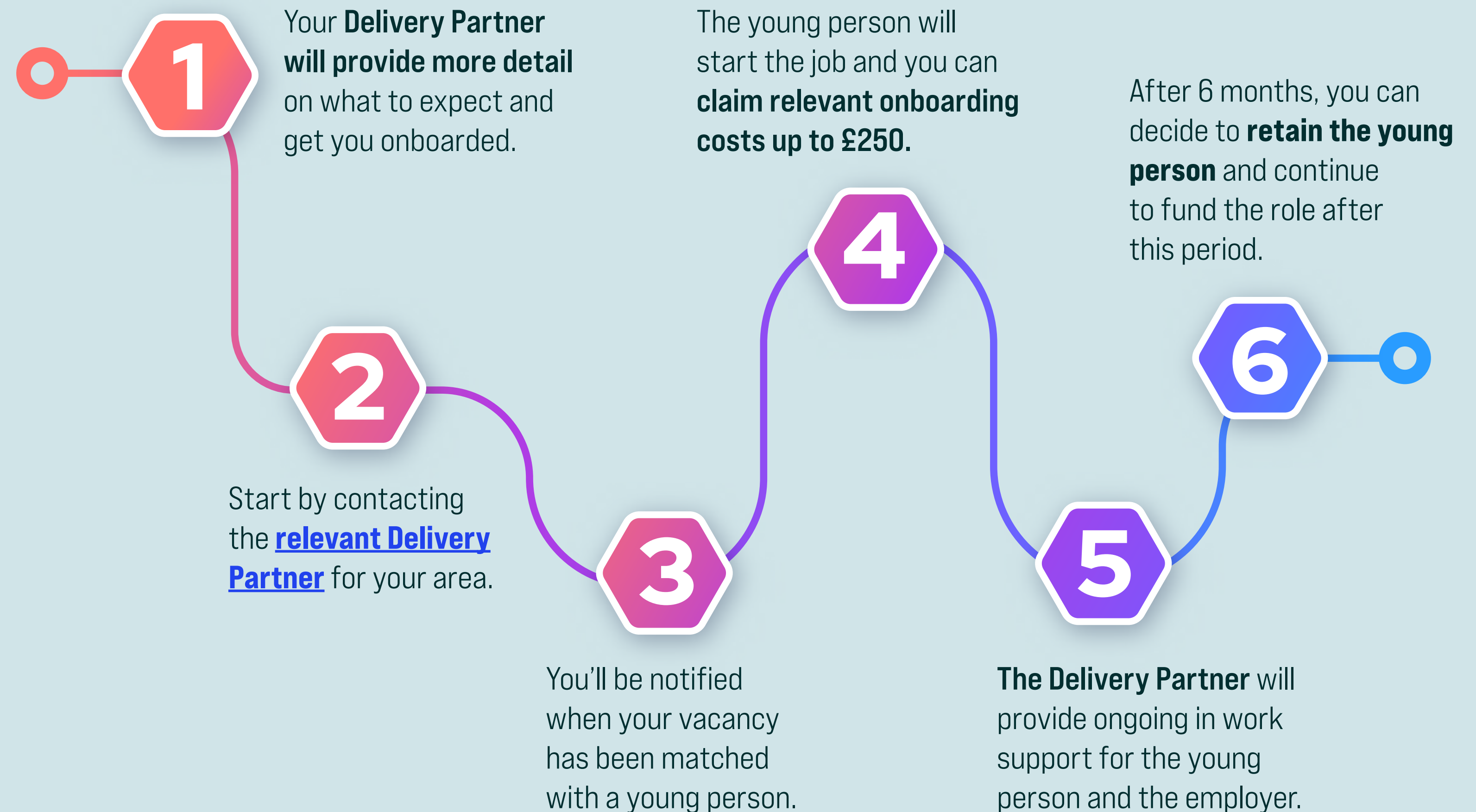
They'll be able to:

- Discuss the roles you are offering and link you up with the relevant Delivery Partner.
- Provide a clear overview of all employer support that is available to help you with recruitment.



You can email the DWP Strategic Relationship team at **srt.recruiterofchoice@dwp.gov.uk**

NEXT STEPS



STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Is the Jobs Guarantee open to all employers?

Yes. Any employer able to offer acceptable employment equivalent to an unfunded role is eligible.

What's different from Kickstart?

The scheme is different from Kickstart, which supported a broader group of young people following the COVID-19 pandemic. The Jobs Guarantee focuses on young people who may have had fewer opportunities to access work.

Does the Jobs Guarantee fund regular jobs?

Yes. The young person should be treated like any other employee.

How are wage reimbursements processed?

Wages and associated costs (employer NICs and pension contributions) are reimbursed in arrears via your Delivery Partner (the first wage reimbursement will take approximately 8 weeks). You do not need to submit anything to DWP as part of the process, however

you should retain payslips in case of spot checks or discrepancies. If a young person leaves before six months, reimbursement will cover wages paid up to their last day.

What onboarding costs are funded?

Eligible costs include role-specific items (such as uniform or PPE), IT set up, software licences and workplace adjustments not covered by statutory duties or other public funding (including Access to Work).

Employer onboarding costs are reimbursed monthly in arrears, with payments made to employers by the Delivery Partner. Your Delivery Partner will provide further details on this.

Can I pay above the funded rate?

Yes, but any top-up above the minimum wage must be funded by the employer.

Can jobs be more than 25 hours a week?

Yes, but only 25 hours per week will be funded by DWP.

What happens at the end of six months?

Although there is no obligation to offer a permanent role, we would encourage you to consider the young person's potential to continue in the role. However, if employment does not continue, the young person will exit the scheme and be referred back to their jobcentre. We hope, however, that the experience will demonstrate the value they can bring to your business.



STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

Is there a limit on how many young people I can take on?

For the National Jobs Guarantee scheme (coming later in 2026) employers can receive up to £25m in funding. This is roughly 2,400 jobs, depending on the age of the employee and pension contributions.

For Phase One (running May 2026 - March 2027) a different approach was taken and funding is provided under the [**Minimal Financial Assistance**](#) (MFA) exemption

of the Subsidy Control Act 2022. This permits a maximum cumulative funding limit of £315k per enterprise across any subsidies provided under this exemption only. For employers with no existing MFA funding this could represent around 30 jobs worth of funding.

Will I be able to provide feedback on the Jobs Guarantee to DWP?

DWP values employer feedback and will engage with business membership

organisations and trade associations to understand employers' views throughout this process. Employers participating in the scheme can also provide feedback to their Delivery Partner during the process. To help us understand how the Jobs Guarantee is working for employers and identify improvements, we may carry out evaluation and research. DWP or its research partners may contact you to request feedback or invite you to

take part in activities such as surveys or interviews. Participation is voluntary, handled securely in line with data protection legislation, and choosing not to take part will not affect your involvement in the Jobs Guarantee.

Will I have the chance to interview young people before agreeing to take part?

Employers can meet with the young person before offering them a job to understand

their suitability for the roles you have available. However, we would not expect this to be a formal interview. The delivery partner will work with the young person and the employer to match the young person with suitable roles that employers are offering.

