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**West Dunbartonshire Council**

**Working4U Employability Grants – Foundation Apprenticeship programme**

**Key Information, Guidance and**

**Sources of Useful Data.**

**August 2024**

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# 1.Introduction

West Dunbartonshire Council's Working4U team is inviting applications for bids to support the delivery of our Foundation Apprenticeship programme. This initiative provides a valuable work-based learning opportunity for senior-phase secondary school pupils, helping them to gain real-world experience and industry-recognised qualifications while they are still in school.

The Foundation Apprenticeship programme, developed by Skills Development Scotland, is designed to address the higher unemployment rates among young people in Scotland. By providing students with earlier exposure to the workforce, we aim to equip them with the skills, experience, and knowledge necessary for successful transitions into employment. The apprenticeships are available in various sectors linked to the growth areas of the Scottish economy, and completion can lead to further education, a Modern or Graduate Apprenticeship, or direct entry into the workforce.

Working4U has been awarded a contract to deliver the Foundation Apprenticeship Framework in Social Services Healthcare at SCQF Level 6. To ensure the success of this programme, we seek a learning provider who can assist in the effective delivery of this framework, providing quality training and support for the apprentices.

This call for applications is aligned with the broader employability goals of the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group and is part of the West Dunbartonshire Employability Grant Programme. This programme seeks to enhance employability pathways, add value to existing resources, and encourage innovation and collaboration in service delivery. The initiative aligns with Education policy through the National Improvement Framework, Developing the Young Workforce, the 15-24 Learner Journey Review and HGIOS? It also supports key local and national policies including the Youth Employment strategy, and West Dunbartonshire's Strategic and Economic Development Plans, contributing to the Apprenticeship Pathway that is further supported by "No One Left Behind," and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

We invite organisations with the expertise and commitment to contribute to this important programme to apply for this opportunity and help us empower the next generation of skilled workers in West Dunbartonshire.

# 2.Grant Outcomes and Principles

**The key outcomes** the West Dunbartonshire – Foundation Apprenticeship Employment Grant Programme will contribute to are:

* To maximise the role that employability plays in delivering national and local aims of tackling poverty, promoting inclusion and social justice, and creating a fair and prosperous Scotland.
* To reduce inequality in the labour market by supporting those further from the labour market to increase their income from employment, by providing relevant employability support through training for employment.
* To improve labour market outcomes by reducing local Economic Inactivity, supporting those who want to work to enter employment.
* To help reduce the Disability Employment Gap by supporting disabled people to enter and remain in the workforce.
* To expand provision that supports the green jobs and net zero commitments.

**There are 6 NOLB principles** that will underpin the delivery expectations for all provision supported by all West Dunbartonshire Employability Grants Programmes.

* Provide flexible and person-centred support.
* Be more straightforward for people to navigate.
* Be better integrated and aligned with other services, particularly with health, justice and housing provision.
* Provide pathways into sustainable and fair work.
* Be driven by evidence, including data and the experience of users.
* Support more people – particularly those facing multiple barriers – to move into the right job, at the right time.

In addition, all provision supported through the grants programme should also comply with the following **additional principles** that the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group feel are critical in providing the best support to people to enable progress towards sustainable outcomes:

* ‘Travel to work’ should be considered with participants to help overcome barriers (both physical and perceived) and support access to opportunities out-with their local area and across West Dunbartonshire and the wider Glasgow City Region.
* Applicants should be prepared to become an active partner, making use of the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group resources such as training and development activity, events and be prepared to participate as appropriate in the West Dunbartonshire Creative Design Group and Community Of Practice (Frontline Workers Forum).
* Applicants should be prepared to use the range of national products such as the Skills Development Quality Assurance Arrangements, Self-Evaluation Quality Action Plan ,Employability Shared Measurement Framework, The Service Standards and Customer Charter developed by Scottish Government.
* SDS Quality Assurance arrangements [quality-assurance-arrangements-24-25.pdf (skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/qz2h5sf0/quality-assurance-arrangements-24-25.pdf)
* SDS Self Evaluation Action Plan <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/fjmdqshq/self-evaluation-quality-action-plan-guidance-for-modern-apprenticeship-provision.pdf>
* Employability Shared Measurement Framework [Employability Shared Measurement Framework December 2022](https://www.employabilityinscotland.com/media/pgujxbke/for-publication-shared-measurement-framework-updated-december-2022.pdf)
* Employability Service Standards [Employability Service Standards](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.employabilityinscotland.com%2Fmedia%2Fcxsp3uch%2Fpublication-employability-service-standards.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK)
* Employability Customer Charter [Employment support services: customer charter](file:///\\west-dunbarton.gov.uk\GlobalShare\Working4U\_1b%20No%20One%20Left%20Behind\_2%20NOLB%20Grant%20Awards\_5%20UKSPF%20NOLB%20CP%20Grant%20Process%202425\_1%20Grant%20info%20-%20web%20pages%20Info%20session\Employment%20support%20services:%20customer%20charter)
* Applicants should also be prepared to make use of the Working4U pages within the West Dunbartonshire Council website and associated social media platforms to advertise activities and promote regular good news stories.
* Applicants should be prepared to evaluate quality of their provision ensuring lived experience shapes service design and delivery.
* Ensure that the design of services have considered the needs of those with protected characteristics.
* Provide additionality to existing provision available in West Dunbartonshire with connectivity, where permissible, to established provision and building progression routes into Further/Higher Education, Modern and Graduate Apprenticeships and other appropriate provision, as well as supporting access to employment.
* Provision must not put at risk participants current eligibility for benefits or lead to a reduction in overall income.

# 3.Priorities

Unemployment affects people across all areas of West Dunbartonshire however there are communities more impacted than others. Whilst the grant programme will support provision open to the priority groups above regardless of where they stay, there is also a need for provision targeting our most deprived communities ( SIMD 2020).

The West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group Data Group has developed a comprehensive set of data around people, health, skills and the local labour market known as the West Dunbartonshire Challenges and Themes document which highlights the key priorities.

Applicants should consider how they would address the relevant challenges when developing their proposals. The West Dunbartonshire Challenges and Themes document is part of the suite of documents that we have made available to support you in completing your application. Applicants should be clear about the target groups they are supporting and specific about the nature of that support (why it’s relevant to the specific target group).

# 4.What types of bids are we looking for?

West Dunbartonshire Councils’ Working4U team have been awarded a Skills Development Scotland contract to deliver Foundation Apprenticeships. We require a learning provider to assist the delivery of a Foundation Apprenticeship Framework in Social Services Healthcare at SCQF Level 6 GL52 46/GR84 46.

Foundation Apprenticeships (FA) are work-based learning programmes available to senior phase pupils across all schools in Scotland. They are designed to sit alongside National 5, Higher and other qualifications within a pupil’s curriculum. They combine sector-specific skills and knowledge, allowing pupils to begin to develop job competence. FAs provide an opportunity for all of Scotland’s young people to develop skills and knowledge in a workplace setting whilst also studying subject-based qualifications at school.

The central component in any FA is the direct engagement of the employer in the learning experience. All FA frameworks are:

• Developed by relevant employer bodies, on behalf of SDS

• Developed in response to identified growth sectors within the Skills Plan, skills need identified via Regional Skills Assessments or other relevant strategic skills needs

• Typically, between 48 and 65 Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) credits

• Set at SCQF level 61

• Designed to fit within a pupil’s S5 – S6 timetable and delivered over a one-year shorter duration model or a 2-year model.

• Comprised of units/qualifications that align with a relevant MA framework(s) and support progression into it

• Designed to also support progression into FE/HE provision e.g. HNC, Degrees or, where relevant, Graduate Apprenticeships (GA)

As part of the contract West Dunbartonshire Council Working4U potentially require a learning provider to deliver the training, assessment and verification of a Foundation Apprenticeship in the following Foundation Apprenticeships frameworks -

Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF Level 6 GL52 46/GR84 46

or school pupils who select the Foundation Apprenticeship via their school column choices options in 5th and 6th year at school. The delivery requires the learning provider meeting Skills Development Scotland quality requirements and is delivered in line with the Foundation Apprenticeship Framework

[FA L6 Social Services and Healthcare Framework Specification (skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)](https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/media/4ihf3wxe/foundation-apprenticeship-framework-specification-social-services-healthcare-at-scqf-level-6.pdf)

and relevant awarding body assessment strategies for National Progression Awards and Scottish Vocational Qualifications/Customised Units.

The delivery will be based on a one-year shorter duration delivery model and a 2-year model, e.g. over one academic school year for both NPA and work-based learning units, although pupils will be expected to use their school holiday periods to achieve the workplace element of the FA. 2 Year model will have NPA in first year and Work based Learning Units in second year.

The delivery of the NPA qualification is slotted into the school timetable on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1.30pm to 4pm within an agreed learning environment e.g. West Dunbartonshire Council host school, Training Providers own location or a Blended learning Approach.

The delivery of work based SVQ/Customised units is timetabled to take place on Wednesday and Friday afternoon 1.30pm to 4pm but depending on the pupil’s timetable this may allow for the placement to be more flexible.

West Dunbartonshire Council Foundation Apprenticeship Team will work with Training Provider to provide placement opportunities for pupils.

## 4a What Working4U will do?

West Dunbartonshire Working4U Foundation Apprenticeship Team will carry out all Learner Registration and Milestone documentation and work with Learning Provider for information to complete required documentation. We will register Pupils for Foundation Apprenticeship Group Award and Certification unit. We will arrange a SQA Partnership Agreement with Learning Provider to combine National Progression Award and SVQ/Customised Units to complete full award requirements. We will also arrange travel for pupils in partnership with West Dunbartonshire Education Department and provide support to pupils and Learning provider throughout delivery

# 5.Safeguarding

Training providers must have comprehensive safeguarding policies and procedures that address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of these priority groups. This includes conducting thorough background checks on staff members involved in the program, implementing appropriate risk assessments, and delivering comprehensive training on safeguarding and child protection to all staff. It is crucial to create a safe and supportive environment, fostering open communication channels for reporting concerns or incidents. Regular monitoring and evaluation should be conducted to identify and address any safeguarding issues promptly. Collaboration with external agencies and stakeholders is also vital to provide holistic support and protection to all participants. By integrating robust safeguarding practices into their bidding proposals, training providers demonstrate their commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of young people and adults throughout the grant programme.

# 6.What Makes a Good Application?

* Please write succinctly and in plain English**.** Use short sentences and avoid acronyms and jargon. There is no need to use formal language. Key to a good application is being as specific as you can and assuming the reader knows nothing about your organisation, track record and project even if you have received local funding before to do similar work.
* Ideally you will provide a clear picture for the reader of what you intend to deliver, how you will do this, and what difference it will make to participants as well as how it contributes to the grant programme strategic outcomes detailed in section 2 above.
* Please complete all sections of the application form.

# 7.Got a Question?

You should be able to find the answers to most of the questions you may have about this Grant Award Programme within the published documentation.

If after checking through the published documentation, you need to ask a question then please email your query to: [fa@west-dunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:fa@west-dunbarton.gov.uk)

# 8.Eligible Spend

Only formal structured training costs will be considered as eligible grant expenditure.

# 9.Decision Making

An Assessment Panel consisting of SEG members will manage the assessment and scoring procedure following the Council’s grant processes.

# 10.Grant Payment Process

Public Sector Funding dictates that grant payments require to be accounted for in the financial year of delivery. As such, all expenditure must be complete by June 2026.

Project costs will be paid per milestone a payment schedule will be discussed with the applicant and will be reflected in the award of grant letter.

Payments will be processed through West Dunbartonshire Council’s normal accounting system and payment to applicants will be by BACS.

Regular contract monitoring meetings will be conducted by Working4U to ensure that: the project has been implemented as described; financial records associated with the project are in order; publicity arrangements; equality and sustainability policies have been complied with.

Where the applicant is unable to demonstrate sufficient progress towards achieving agreed outcomes, future funding may be withheld or reduced. Further details will be outlined in the terms and conditions.

# 11.How will we Monitor and Evaluate the Grants programme?

## 11a Performance Management

Regular contract monitoring meetings will be conducted by Working4U to ensure that: the project has been implemented as described; financial records associated with the project are in order; publicity arrangements; equality and sustainability policies have been complied with.

## 11b Data and Reporting Requirements

West Dunbartonshire Council uses the Management Information System Advice Pro to record service user information including evidence of outcomes and progress.

As well as providing quantitative and qualitative measures, monitoring of projects serves a number of purposes. It helps identify successful elements of projects, but conversely can help to identify areas for concern and suggestions can be discussed as to how these might be overcome. Monitoring is vital in enabling West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group to gain greater insight into individual projects, but also to ensure and verify that the funds have been spent as envisaged and acknowledged correctly. Monitoring procedures will be discussed and agreed with successful applicants on an individual basis.

West Dunbartonshire Council will run reports from the MIS at a project and programme level on a quarterly basis, which alongside qualitative evidence supplied by providers including case studies will be reported to the West Dunbartonshire Strategic Employability Group, The Scottish Government and the UK Government.

## 11c Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

Grant recipients are required to comply with Working4U and Skills Development Scotland’s evaluative processes to drive continuous improvement and monitoring processes will include grant recipients evidencing how they do this and to what effect. This will be discussed both individually at monitoring meetings.

# 12.Key Data Provided to Support Applicants

The remainder of this document provides a range of information and key data to support applicants in the preparation of their applications.

Applicants should:

* Use their own knowledge of working with specific target groups.
* Identify local needs through their own experience of delivering service.
* Propose services which they are confident will be used by and are useful to the client groups to improve their employability outcomes.

The following document will be of use to prospective grant applicants. It contains links to other useful documents.

