



1. General

Q1.1 What level of grant is available through AAA?

A1.1 For AAA applications received on or after the 1st April 2022-a Standard Rate grant of £2000 is available. An Enhanced Rate grant of £5000 is available for applications from employers within the oil and gas industry or supply chain.

Q1.2 What is the application process for AAA?

A5.2 The Training Provider applies via the FIPS system on behalf of the Replacement Employer. Incomplete or inaccurate applications will cause delays in the approval process.

Q1.3 What support is available for Providers with using FIPS?

A5.1 A FIPS Quick Start Guide on the creation and submission of an AAA Application is available on the [FIPS page of the SDS Provider Web Pages](#).

Q1.4 Why do Apprentices and Employers have to validate their email address once they have been entered to FIPS?

A1.4 SDS key performance levels require that email addresses of the apprentice and the apprentice's employer are entered and remain accurate at all times on FIPS. These must be in accordance with paragraph 4.2 of the MA Programme Specifications. To help support you with this we have introduced some improvements to FIPS, making use of latest technology to create an improved financial control environment which strengthens our payment process and data protection. More information can be found within the '[Information on the FIPS MA email validation process](#)' which is situated within the [FIPS Quick-Start Guides](#) Miscellaneous section on the SDS Provider web pages. Both the Apprentice and Employer email addresses must be validated prior to an AAA application being submitted.

Q1.5 What does SDS mean by "signature"?

A1.5 SDS has provided detailed information on signatures in paragraph 3.9 of the MA Programme Specification. If you are unable to provide signatures as detailed in the MA Specification you can apply the COVID interim measures for signatures as outlined [here](#).

Q1.6 What do Providers do if the AAA application has been suspended on FIPS?

A1.6 Providers must contact AAA@sds.co.uk

2. Eligibility

Q2.1 Which Apprentices are eligible for AAA?

A2.1 Training Providers will be able to apply for AAA on behalf of Replacement Employers taking on a Modern or Graduate Apprentice who has been made redundant on or after the 1st April 2019 and who meets the requirements set out in the AAA Programme rules available [here](#).

The Training Provider must be satisfied that the Apprentice has been made redundant, and this must be recorded as part of the Application. Proof of redundancy should be a person-specific notification of redundancy from the previous employer for example, an official letter from the Outgoing Employer, notifying the Apprentice of their redundancy. Where this is not available, advice should be sought from the aaa@sds.co.uk inbox.

The Training Provider must ensure that details of the reason for redundancy are checked with the Outgoing Employer and record these details as part of the Application.

Q2.2 Are all employers eligible to be a Replacement Employer for an adopted Apprentice?

A2.2 Any employer in the public or private sector where they have a genuine, reasonable expectation that the adopted Apprentice will complete their apprenticeship is eligible to become a Replacement Employer for an adopted Apprentice.

Training Providers who wish to be a Replacement Employer for an adopted Apprentice are eligible for AAA if there is a genuine vacancy.

AAA is **not** available for an Apprentice in respect of whom a grant incentive payment (such as but not limited to a grant under this programme) has been paid to a linked employer.

“Linked employer” means the Replacement Employer or a company, sole trader, partnership or other business entity substantially controlled by: -

- (i) the same person(s) (including the Replacement Employer) who control the Replacement Employer; or
- (ii) person(s) substantially connected (whether commercially or otherwise) with the person(s) who control the Replacement Employer.

Q2.3 A member of my family had been made redundant from his employer and needs to complete their MA. Can I apply for the Adopt grant?

A2.3 – Yes as long as all other grant eligibility criteria is met.

Q2.4 How many times can a redundant Apprentice utilise AAA funding?

A2.4 An Apprentice is eligible for AAA once per redundancy. Should an Apprentice be made redundant on more than one occasion and continue to meet the eligibility criteria they would be eligible for AAA for a second or subsequent time. Please also see the AAA Programme Rules paragraph 7.6 in relation to training needs.

Q2.5 If an Apprentice starts on an Apprentice Transition Plan, are they eligible for the grant if they enter employment?

A2.5 Yes, if they meet all other eligibility criteria for AAA

Q2.6 Is a P45 suitable evidence of redundancy?

A2.6 A P45 on its own is not evidence of redundancy. Please see Paragraph 7.2.2 of the AAA Programme Rules for further information.

3. Leaving within the specified 12 month period

Q2.1 What happens if a Replacement Employer makes an adopted Apprentice redundant within the specified 12 month period?

A2.1 The Replacement Employer must notify the Training Provider within 10 working days if they make an adopted Apprentice redundant within the specified 12-month period.

The Training Provider must update FIPS with the required redundancy details as early as possible and email the aaa@sds.co.uk inbox with specific details and circumstances.

SDS will recover the full amount of the grant paid out.

Q2.2 The Replacement Employer has gone into liquidation. Will SDS still look to recover the AAA grant?

A2.2 Yes. Training providers must immediately inform SDS of the employer and number of apprentices involved.

Q2.3 The adopted Apprentice decides that they wish to leave to programme/employer Will SDS still look to recover the AAA grant?

A2.3 Yes. Training Providers should inform SDS as soon as it is known the Apprentice has left the programme/employer and provide all details known.