

# Addendum to ‘Degree apprenticeships funding competition – Guidance for providers’

## Introduction

1. This document is an addendum to the degree apprenticeships funding competition guidance document published in September 2023.<sup>1</sup> It confirms the timelines and bidding process relating to wave 3 of the funding competition.
2. Up to £40 million in total has been made available to allocate through a competitive bidding exercise over the academic years 2023-24 and 2024-25. Currently we have allocated approximately £12 million through wave 1 of the competition<sup>2</sup> and approximately £14 million through wave 2 of the competition.<sup>3</sup>
3. The competition is open to all higher education providers that are registered, or have applied to register, with us in the Approved (fee cap) category.

## Action required and timeframe

4. Eligible providers are invited to submit competitive bid(s) for wave 3 funding as detailed in paragraphs 108 to 171 of the September guidance document and the additional information provided in this addendum. We have published the wave 3 bidding template that providers will need to complete alongside this addendum at Annex E.
5. The timeframe for wave 3 of funding allocations is set out in Table A below. Bids from eligible providers for wave 3 should be submitted by emailing completed templates to [degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk) by **midday on 16 July 2024**.

**Table A: Timeframe for wave 3 funding submissions**

Activity	Date
Provider webinar event <sup>4</sup>	12 June 2024
<b>Deadline for bids</b>	16 July 2024
Assessment process	July and August 2024

<sup>1</sup> See [Degree apprenticeships funding competition: Guidance for providers - Office for Students](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [£12 million boost for degree apprenticeships to increase access and choice for students - Office for Students](#).

<sup>3</sup> See [£14 million degree apprenticeships funding announced by Office for Students - Office for Students](#).

<sup>4</sup> See [Degree apprenticeships funding competition: wave 3 webinar - Office for Students](#).

Activity	Date
Outcomes announced	September 2024
Funding commences	October 2024
Interim monitoring	March 2025
Funding concludes	31 July 2025
Final monitoring	September 2025

## Additional information for wave 3

### Change to maximum number of bids per lead provider

6. We have reflected on paragraph 54 of the guidance document which states ‘OfS-registered providers in the Approved (fee cap) category are eligible to lead and submit a maximum of one bid for funding for each wave of this competition. Providers may not act as the lead on more than one bid in each wave.’
7. **After consideration, and feedback from providers, we can confirm that an eligible provider can lead and submit a maximum of two bids for wave 3 allowing lead providers to submit one solo bid AND one collaborative bid which includes provider partners.** Please note that all collaborative provider partners need to continue to meet the eligibility criteria set out in paragraph 116b of the guidance document.
8. Paragraph 55 of the guidance document still applies and lead providers can also be named as a partner in other collaborative bids: ‘There is no limit to how many collaborative bids a provider is named as a partner on, provided that they are named as the lead on no more than one.’

### Ring-fenced funding for strand 2 providers

9. As detailed in the guidance document, one of the three specific aims of the programme is to ‘Expand provision of apprenticeship standards with currently lower uptake among providers that are new to the degree apprenticeships market (Strand 2)’.
10. The majority of funding awarded under waves 1 and 2 has been allocated to ‘Expanding provision among providers already offering degree apprenticeships on apprenticeship standards with currently lower uptake (Strand 1)’.
11. **We are therefore ringfencing up to £6 million of the up to £14 million available for wave 3 to strand 2 providers. This strand 2 ringfence will include collaborative bids being led by strand 1 providers working with strand 2 providers collaboratively.**
12. Should there be insufficient demand or quality bids involving strand 2 providers then the ringfenced funds will be released into the main wave 3 allocations.

### Lower and higher uptake standards

13. As detailed in paragraph 135 of the guidance document ‘funding will be prioritised for programmes that deliver against standards with currently lower take-up at a national level’. Under waves 1 and 2 we have also provided funding to support high take-up standards which

have demonstrated 'strong evidence for funding i.e. evidence of a specific local or regional skills need or evidence that the proposal addresses gaps in provision'.

14. For wave 3 funding, we are planning to continue to prioritise funding for lower uptake standards. **We therefore anticipate supporting higher uptake standards, such as those listed below, in exceptional circumstances only:**

- **Chartered Manager (Degree)**
- **Digital and Technology Solutions Professional (Degree)**
- **Chartered Surveyor (Degree).**

### **Standards in development**

15. Table B under paragraph 33 of the guidance document states, 'Proposed apprenticeship standards must be listed as an 'approved for delivery' Level 6 standard on the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) website'.

16. **After consideration, and feedback from providers, we can confirm that wave 3 providers can also bid for Level 6 degree apprenticeship standards where IfATE indicates that the standard is intended for delivery by September 2025. This includes the (Undergraduate) Teacher Standard that is currently in development.** If you intend to apply for a standard in development, please liaise with the OfS team ([degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk)) prior to submission of your bid.

### **Increasing equality of opportunity**

17. Some bids submitted in wave 2 did not evidence how the proposals would address the cross-cutting theme to increase equality of opportunity on Level 6 degree apprenticeships (as detailed in paragraphs 145-149 of the guidance) in sufficient detail. In many cases, whilst providing evidence of providers' current strengths in this area, bids did not include sufficient detail of new deliverable activities to increase equality of opportunity through the funding. **We would encourage all providers bidding for wave 3 to provide information on specific and tangible new activities which will be undertaken to increase equality of opportunity.**

18. We particularly encourage bidders to consider their local Uni Connect partnership as a possible collaborative partner for their bids. Uni Connect partnerships may have a background in addressing challenges to equality of opportunity in access for degree apprenticeships and be well positioned to offer effective support or infrastructure. Bids should also align with other institutional priorities for addressing risks to equality of opportunity, like access and participation plans, to ensure work is strategically aligned.

### **Additionality and value for money**

19. We received wave 2 bids from some providers requesting funding for the same standards that were successful for wave 1 funding. However, in a few of these cases the wave 2 bids did not provide sufficient assurance around additionality i.e. these bids did not explain why wave 2 funding should not be considered duplication of funding for standards that were successful in wave 1. These bids were therefore unsuccessful in receiving wave 2 funding.

20. Successful wave 1 and/or 2 providers bidding for the same standards again under wave 3 will need to demonstrate an exceptional case for us to provide any further funding. Bids will need to include a clear and strong rationale on how wave 3 funding will support additional and new activity from waves 1 and/or 2, with wave 3 costs clearly articulated and reassurance of additionality provided.
21. Where providers are planning on using funding for staff time, we expect providers to demonstrate how the funding is being used to accelerate developments, including details of backfilling of time for staff who are being deployed on the funded activity. This is to ensure the bid represents value for money, and is not funding activity that would be undertaken otherwise.
22. If providers are accessing other public funds, we expect providers to make this clear in their bid, and to outline how the different funding streams are being used.

## Scoring criteria

23. We will score bids against the criteria detailed in paragraphs 167 to 171 of the September 2023 guidance document.

## Grant funding payments, conditions and monitoring

24. As confirmed in Table A of this addendum, interim monitoring for successful wave 3 projects will take place in March 2025 and final monitoring in September 2025. Please refer to paragraphs 172 to 182 of the September guidance document for further information.

## Further information and next steps

25. Eligible higher education providers are invited to download and complete the wave 3 bidding template (Annex E) and email it to [degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk) by **midday on 16 July 2024**.
26. We will be hosting a webinar<sup>5</sup> on 12 June 2024 to answer questions from providers and employers regarding wave 3 of the funding competition.
27. If you have any questions about this competition, please email [degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:degreeapprenticeships@officeforstudents.org.uk).

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<sup>5</sup> See [Degree apprenticeships funding competition: wave 3 webinar - Office for Students](#).