

FREE EMPLOYER GUIDE

The Complete Guide to Funding a Marketing Apprentice for Your Business

Everything UK employers need to know about the Apprenticeship Levy, government co-funding, and building a world-class marketing team — without the jargon.

Multi-Channel Marketer L3 Up to £11,000 funded

Content Creator L3 Up to £12,000 funded

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**A note from Tina Lavery,
NTG Training**

This guide exists because too many good businesses are missing out on one of the most powerful — and underused — employer benefits in the UK. The Apprenticeship Levy and government co-funding can put a professionally trained, CIM-qualified marketer in your team for a fraction of what you might expect to pay. We have written everything down, clearly and honestly, so you can make the right decision for your business. If you have questions after reading, I am always happy to talk.

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01 / WHY IT MATTERS

Why a Marketing Apprentice Changes Everything

Every business needs marketing. Most businesses struggle to afford it well. A senior marketing hire costs between £30,000 and £50,000 per year. A decent digital agency retainer can cost more than that — with no loyalty to your brand and no memory of what worked last quarter. Freelancers can fill gaps, but they rarely build the kind of marketing momentum a growing business needs.

A marketing apprentice is a fundamentally different proposition. You hire someone who is committed to your business, learns your brand from the inside, delivers real marketing work from day one — and the government funds up to £11,000–£12,000 of their professional training. That is not a compromise. That is a smart, strategic business decision.

£11,000

Max govt funding for MCM
L3

100%

Training funded for
apprentices 16–21

80%

Of hours in your business

15 mo

Typical programme
duration

Apprentices are not junior employees in a formal suit who need constant hand-holding. They are motivated, often digitally native, and hungry to prove themselves. The businesses that treat their apprentice as a genuine team member — giving them real briefs, real deadlines, and real responsibility — consistently report the strongest outcomes.

And when the programme ends? You have a CIM-eligible, qualified marketer who knows your business, your brand, and your customers better than anyone you could ever recruit from outside.

02 / UNDERSTANDING FUNDING

Understanding Apprenticeship Funding

Apprenticeship funding in England operates through two parallel systems. Understanding which one applies to your business is the first step — and it is simpler than most employers expect.

The Apprenticeship Levy

If your business has an annual payroll above £3 million, you already pay into the Apprenticeship Levy — 0.5% of your payroll is collected each month and placed into a digital levy account (accessed via the ESFA's Apprenticeship Service portal). That money can only be spent on one thing: apprenticeship training.

The 24-Month Expiry Rule

Unspent levy funds expire after 24 months. If your business is not actively using its levy account, that money is being lost — returned to the government. Hiring a marketing apprentice through NTG Training is one of the fastest, most effective ways to deploy levy funds strategically.

Government Co-Investment (Non-Levy Employers)

If your payroll is under £3 million, you do not pay the levy — but you still have access to government funding for apprenticeship training. The government co-invests alongside you, covering the vast majority of the training cost.

Apprentice Age	Government Pays	You Pay (Training)	Your Contribution (MCM L3 £11k)
16–21 years old	100%	0%	£0
22+ years old	95%	5%	£550 over 15 months
Levy employer (any age)	100% from levy account	0% additional	£0

Note: You pay the apprentice's salary in full, regardless of funding route. Entry-level marketing apprentice salaries typically range from £14,000–£18,000 per year — comparable to a junior employee, but with professional training included.

Real Numbers for a Non-Levy Employer

Multi-Channel Marketer L3 training: £11,000 total

Government pays (apprentice aged 22+): £10,450

Your training contribution: £550 spread over 15 months

Apprentice salary: approx. £14,000–£18,000/year

For the cost of two months of a mid-range agency retainer, you get a dedicated, growing, CIM-trained marketer who knows your business inside out.

03 / THE TWO STANDARDS

Which Apprenticeship Standard Is Right for You?

NTG Training delivers two marketing apprenticeship standards. Both are fully funded, both result in nationally recognised Level 3 qualifications — but they serve different business needs. Here is how to choose.

<p>Multi-Channel Marketer Level 3 ST1031</p> <p>Funding: £11,000 · Duration: ~15 months</p>	<p>Content Creator Level 3 ST0105</p> <p>Funding: £12,000 · Duration: ~15 months</p>
<p>Best for: General marketing roles — campaigns, SEO, email, PPC, analytics</p> <p>Assessed by: Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM)</p> <p>Skills covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · SEO & search optimisation · Email marketing campaigns · Paid advertising (Google/Meta) · Social media management · Campaign planning & analytics · Marketing content & copywriting 	<p>Best for: Digital content roles — video, social, creative production</p> <p>Assessed by: Approved End-Point Assessment Organisation</p> <p>Skills covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Short-form video & Reels · Photography & graphic design · Blog & web copywriting · Brand guidelines & visual identity · Content scheduling & community management · Creative briefs & campaign support

Thinking Bigger? Marketing Manager Level 6

NTG Training also delivers the **Marketing Manager Level 6 Apprenticeship** — a degree-equivalent programme for experienced marketers stepping into management. This is an outstanding option for businesses with an existing marketing team member who is ready to lead. Visit ntgtraining.co.uk/marketing-manager-level-6-apprenticeship-course/ for full programme details.

Not sure which to choose? Contact Tina Lavery at NTG Training — she will look at your specific role and business goals and give you a straight recommendation. No jargon, no obligation.
tina.lavery@ntgtraining.co.uk

04 / THE REAL NUMBERS

What It Actually Costs — and What You Save

The most common employer objection is cost. Here is a transparent comparison so you can make a genuinely informed decision.

Option	Annual Cost (approx.)	Business Knowledge	Long-Term Value
Marketing agency retainer	£24,000–£60,000	Minimal	Ends with contract
Freelancer	£15,000–£40,000	Limited	No continuity
Junior hire (unfunded)	£22,000–£28,000 + training costs	Grows over time	Good, if trained well
Marketing Apprentice (NTG)	£14k–£18k salary + ~£550 training*	Deep — learns your brand	Excellent — qualified + loyal

*Non-levy employer, apprentice aged 22+. Levy employers: £0 training contribution.

The apprenticeship model wins on almost every measure. The only thing it requires from you is a genuine investment of time in the person's development — particularly in the first four weeks. That investment pays dividends for years.

05 / HOW TO ACCESS FUNDING

How to Access Your Funding — Step by Step

1

Contact NTG Training

A single conversation — no commitment required. Tina Lavery will discuss your business, your role, and your funding route. This costs nothing and takes about 30 minutes. tina.lavery@ntgtraining.co.uk

2

Choose the right standard

NTG recommends the standard that fits your vacancy — Multi-Channel Marketer L3, Content Creator L3, or Marketing Manager L6. We make the decision simple.

3

Confirm your funding

We verify your levy status and funding eligibility, and guide you through the ESFA Apprenticeship Service portal. You will not be left to navigate government systems alone.

4

Recruit your apprentice

Use NTG's free recruitment service — we advertise, screen, and shortlist. Or bring an existing employee or candidate you have already identified. Either route works.

5

Sign the training agreement

NTG prepares the Apprenticeship Agreement and Training Plan. We handle the paperwork — you review and sign. Straightforward and quick.

6

Your apprentice starts delivering

From day one, your apprentice is in your business doing real marketing work. NTG manages all training delivery, progress reviews, and EPA preparation.

7

Completion and qualification

After approximately 15 months, your apprentice sits their End-Point Assessment. Pass, and you have a qualified, CIM-eligible marketer ready to grow with your business.

06 / UPSKILLING EXISTING EMPLOYEES

You Can Fund Training for Your Existing Team

This is the single most underused employer benefit in the entire apprenticeship framework — and most businesses have no idea it exists.

You do not have to recruit a new person to access apprenticeship funding. If you have an existing member of staff who is working in — or moving into — a marketing role, you can enrol them on a funded apprenticeship programme right now. The same government funding rules apply. The same qualifications are achieved.

The only condition is that the employee must not already hold a qualification at the same or higher level in the same subject area. Other than that, age, tenure, and years of experience are no barrier.

Who This Works For

- A sales or admin team member who has been handling social media alongside their main role
- A business owner's PA who has grown into a de facto marketing role
- A customer service manager who wants to formalise their marketing skills
- A recent graduate who joined in a general role but is doing marketing day-to-day
- Anyone delivering marketing work without a formal qualification to show for it

If any of these sound familiar, call Tina Lavery at NTG Training. There is a very good chance there is funding available for them right now.

Upskilling an existing employee through an apprenticeship also tends to produce stronger retention outcomes. Staff who receive employer-funded professional development are measurably more loyal — and they bring the added advantage of already understanding your business, your customers, and your brand.

07 / WHAT YOUR APPRENTICE WILL DO

Real Work. Real Results. From Day One.

A well-onboarded marketing apprentice is not an intern fetching coffee and doing admin. Here is a realistic picture of what your apprentice will contribute.

Multi-Channel Marketer	Content Creator
· Planning & scheduling social media content	· Creating short-form video for Reels & TikTok
· Writing and sending email campaigns	· Writing blog posts, web copy, social captions
· Supporting SEO — keywords, on-page, content	· Photography and graphic design (Canva, Adobe)
· Assisting with Google & Meta Ads	· Managing content scheduling and community
· Pulling and interpreting analytics reports	· Supporting brand consistency across channels
· Building and maintaining the content calendar	· Interpreting creative briefs and delivering assets
· Supporting multi-channel campaign execution	· Producing content for email and paid campaigns
· Creating marketing copy and creative assets	· Tracking content performance and reporting

The more you invest in your apprentice's first four weeks — giving them real projects, clear briefs, and a named mentor — the faster they become genuinely productive. NTG Training will support you with onboarding guidance throughout.

08 / FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Employer Questions — Answered Honestly

Q. Is my business eligible for apprenticeship funding?

A. Almost certainly yes. You must be based in England, have a genuine marketing vacancy or existing employee in a marketing role, and be able to employ the apprentice for at least 30 hours per week. NTG Training will confirm your exact eligibility in your first conversation.

Q. Do I have to recruit a new person?

A. No. Apprenticeships are available for existing employees as well as new hires, provided they do not already hold a qualification at the same level in the same subject area. This is one of the most powerful and underused employer benefits available.

Q. What if my apprentice leaves before completing the programme?

A. Funding stops if an apprentice withdraws. However, NTG Training works proactively to support both apprentice and employer throughout — identifying concerns early and resolving them before they escalate. Retention on well-managed programmes is consistently high.

Q. How much of my time will the apprenticeship take?

A. Very little, once the apprentice is settled. You will need to provide a named mentor or line manager — someone the apprentice can report to and ask questions of. NTG manages all training delivery, progress tracking, and EPA preparation. We keep you updated with regular progress reviews.

Q. What qualifications does the apprentice achieve?

A. Multi-Channel Marketer L3: A nationally recognised Level 3 qualification, assessed by the Chartered Institute of Marketing, with eligibility for CIM Affiliate membership. Content Creator L3: A nationally recognised Level 3 qualification assessed by an approved EPAO, aligned to the Skills England ST0105 standard.

Q. Can I use my levy for more than one apprentice?

A. Yes. You can fund multiple apprentices simultaneously from your levy account, subject to available balance. If your levy balance is insufficient, the government co-investment rules apply to any shortfall.

Q. What if I have never taken an apprentice before?

A. This is NTG Training's speciality. We guide first-time employers through every step — from eligibility and funding to recruitment and onboarding. You will never be left to figure out the system alone.

09 / NEXT STEPS

Ready to Hire Your Marketing Apprentice?

You have everything you need to make an informed decision. Here is what happens next when you choose to work with NTG Training.

1 Get in touch with Tina Lavery

One conversation. No obligation. Tina will answer every question you have, confirm your funding eligibility, and recommend the right standard for your business.

2 We do the heavy lifting

NTG Training handles the funding paperwork, the ESFA portal, and the apprenticeship agreement. You focus on your business.

3 Recruit with our support

Use our free recruitment service, or bring your own candidate or existing employee. Either way, we will make sure the right person starts on the right programme.

4 Watch your apprentice grow

Regular progress updates, proactive support, and a training programme built around real marketing skills — not just theory. Your apprentice will be delivering value from week one.

Contact Tina Lavery — NTG Training

Email: tina.lavery@ntgtraining.co.uk

Web: ntgtraining.co.uk

Multi-Channel Marketer L3: ntgtraining.co.uk/multi-channel-marketer-level-3-apprenticeship/

Content Creator L3: ntgtraining.co.uk/level-3-content-creator-apprenticeship-course/

Marketing Manager L6: ntgtraining.co.uk/marketing-manager-level-6-apprenticeship-course/

NTG Training is registered on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) and is subject to Ofsted inspection. We are proud of our track record of employer outcomes and learner achievement.