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Planning

Top Apprenticeship Employer Rankings 26-27 Preliminary market engagement notice

Department for Education

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Published 8 August 2025, 2:22pm

Scope

Description

The DfE is seeking to engage parties who are interested in bidding to deliver Top Apprenticeship Employer Rankings for 2026 and 2027.

Please note that this notice is for early market engagement and exploratory purposes and is not a call for competition. The Department reserves the right not to enter any formal processes or agreements. Accordingly, the authority will not be liable for any bid cost, expenditure, work, or effort incurred by a provider in acting based on this notice.

The DfE is keen to maximise opportunities to participate in procurement for Small to Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) and Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises (VCSEs). Consideration will also be given to consortia and collaborative bids from all forms of organisations.

Total value (estimated)

- £316,667 excluding VAT
- £380,000 including VAT

Above the relevant threshold

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 December 2025 to 30 November 2027
- 2 years

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 80000000 - Education and training services

Engagement

Engagement deadline

15 August 2025

Engagement process description

This is a notice seeking early engagement from interested parties in relation to the Department for Education Top Apprenticeship Employer rankings 2026 and 2027.

Please note that all references to procedure, value and term length are purely illustrative and subject to change.

The Top Apprenticeship Employers rankings form an integral part of a three-point employer and stakeholder celebration strategy (alongside National Apprenticeship Week and National Apprenticeship and Skills Awards), to ensure a continual drumbeat of celebratory activity throughout the calendar year. The rankings, now in their fourth year, support wider government and departmental priorities for upskilling the nation and increasing the prestige of apprenticeships. The Top Apprenticeship Employers helps develop a recognition and resonance with employers and students of apprenticeships. This helps support access and progression and helps to increase consideration of skills across all audiences and influencers.

The key objectives of the Top Apprenticeship Employers rankings are to:

- Celebrate and promote outstanding apprenticeship employers, through significant high-profile publicity of the rankings and listed employers.
- Encourage employers more widely to improve the quality of their apprentice offer, through feedback, best practice sharing and case studies.
- Help potential apprentices and parents easily find high performing employers offering apprenticeships, through employer publicity, improved relationships with careers advisors, Careers and Enterprise Company and Amazing Apprenticeships.

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The DfE shall be hosting a virtual event on Thursday 14th August 2025 at 10:00 to discuss the vision for the scheme for 2026 and 2027 and would like to encourage any parties who are interested in contributing to the success of a future scheme to register for this event. To do so, please register for the event at:

<https://events.teams.microsoft.com/event/1edc1e9e-6f57-43d7-9007-8d8223d923b0@fad277c9-c60a-4da1-b5f3-b3b8b34a82f9>

Contracting authority

Department for Education

- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PDZG-3487-DPVD

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Organisation type: Public authority - central government