

# Training for Success (TfS)

## Description

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In Northern Ireland, the 'Training for Success' initiative offers training to help young people develop personal and social skills, employability skills, essential skills in Communications, Application of Number and Information Communication Technology whilst working towards nationally recognised qualifications.

## Beneficiaries

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- ▶ **Early leavers from education and training**
- ▶ **Unemployed young people**
- ▶ **Young people with disabilities and/or special educational needs (SEN)**

Unemployed young people (16-17 years old) who have left compulsory education and do not wish to avail of full time education provision post-16, either at school or further education (FE) (with extended eligibility for persons under 22 years with a disability, and under 24 years for persons from an in care background).

## Countries

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 **United Kingdom**

## Education level and sector

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- ▶ **Secondary education**
- ▶ **Upper secondary education**
- ▶ **Upper secondary vocational education and training (school-based)**
- ▶ **Upper secondary vocational education and training (work-based learning)**

Upper secondary Vocational Education and Training (VET)

## Type of policy/initiative

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- ▶ **Compensation**

Compensation

## Level of implementation / Scope

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- ▶ **National level**

## Stage of implementation

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 On-going

Ongoing

## Aims of policy/initiative

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The measure aims at enrolling students in further training, to gain qualifications and employability skills required to progress into employment, apprenticeship training or further learning.

The current target set by the Department for the Economy is that 65% of all TfS students will, by the end of the programme, achieve a nationally recognised qualification at level 1 (basic skills), level 2 (lower secondary education) or, in some cases level 3 (upper secondary education)[1].

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[1] Level 1 programmes offer basic skills and competencies, Level 2 qualification is equivalent to the secondary-level exams (General Certificate of Secondary Education – GCSEs) and Level 3 is equivalent to an upper-secondary leaving qualification (A levels).

## Features and types of activities implemented

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The programme guarantees training up to 104 weeks (156 weeks for disabled students) and offers training and qualifications across 4 distinct curricular areas:

- personal and social development
- employability
- professional and technical qualification
- essential skills in communications, application of number and information technology, where appropriate

The programme is delivered across 4 strands:

- **‘Skills for your life’** – addressing personal and development needs of young people who have disengaged from learning and/or have significant gaps, including essential skills.
- **‘Skills for work’ level 1** - helping young people gain skills and a vocational related professional and technical qualification at level 1 from the Register the Regulated Qualifications (RRQ).
- **‘Skills for work’ level 2** - ensuring that participants who have been assessed as capable of achieving at level 2 from the RRQ, are prepared for future progression to an apprenticeship.
- **‘Skills for work’ level 3** - ensuring that participants who have successfully completed the ‘Skills for work’ level 2 strand and still retain training entitlement but have not yet progressed to paid employment, can develop level 3 knowledge and skills, again drawn from the level 3 ApprenticeshipsNI framework.

Main activities of the training provision include work-based learning at the training contractor (‘directed training’) and work placements with employers (‘non-directed

training'). A disability learning support provision is available for participants with a physical, sensory or learning disability. This service is provided by five contracted Disability Support Suppliers, Disability Action, the Cedar Foundation, Sensory Learning Support Services, Clanrye and Ulster Supported Employment Limited.

## Resources

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Training contractors are selected through a public procurement exercise. The current contract is for two years with possible extension for a further one year plus one year. Training is delivered by both contracted training contractors and the Department's six Further Education Colleges. The funding is performance related, based on targets related to the number of students entering and staying on programme and their outcomes (success rates) and progression rates.

The Department also provides an allowance of £40 per week to TfS participants. This allowance is non-means-tested and does not affect other income support/social benefits that the students or their parents may be receiving (e.g. Employment Support Allowance/job seeker's allowance or housing benefit, etc.). In addition, students can receive additional 'participant bonuses' of £40 at various stages of the training, paid by the Department through the training supplier, to motivate their retention and completion of the programme. Students may also receive travel, lodging and childcare financial assistance if required.

## Evaluation of the measure

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The Education and Training Inspectorate conducts scheduled inspections of training contractors to assess the effectiveness and quality of TfS delivery. The Department also carries out regular contract management and compliance visits and tests for the contracted training contractors to ensure adherence to the terms and conditions of the programme contract. In addition, a statistical bulletin is published for TfS. Please see below link which dates from September 2007 to April 2018[1] <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/articles/training-success-statistics#toc-1>

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[1] The latest version was published 29<sup>th</sup> August 2018 <https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/publications/training-success-statistics-...>

## Evidence of effectiveness of the measure

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### Statistical bulletin:

#### Skills for Your Life Outcomes

Between the academic years 2013/14 and 2017/18 (up to April 2018), 1,371 participants left Skills for Your Life. Of these, 59% gained a qualification and 4% progressed.

#### Skills for Work Outcomes

Between the academic years 2013/14 and 2016/17 (up to April 2018), 13,446 participants left Skills for Work. Of these, 65% gained a qualification and 11% progressed.

<https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/...>

## Success factors

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The following success factors are based on the testimonies of participants in the measure interviewed for the Cedefop study:

1. **High quality mentoring support:** TfS students receive strong and differentiated support from mentors to prepare them for the world of work.
2. **Personal training plans, individualised training and learning plans drawn up for each student at their own pace and level:** Through initial assessment, students are placed at the right level and a personal training plan is drawn. Students are encouraged and supported to decide themselves the pathway to follow.
3. **Holistic approach to supporting students:** Mentoring is key to get students to develop behavioural skills as well as self-confidence.
4. **Inclusiveness of the programme:** All students with special educational needs have a yearly plan prepared for them in school and additional funding support is provided to training contractors to help deliver the support needed.
5. **Strong collaboration with employers:** Training contractors **including our six FE Colleges** usually work with a wide range of business and industry sectors, community and statutory agencies, resulting in high levels of economic engagement across the provision.

## Contact details for further information

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### Contact website

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## Related intervention approaches

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