

Apprenticeships for SMEs

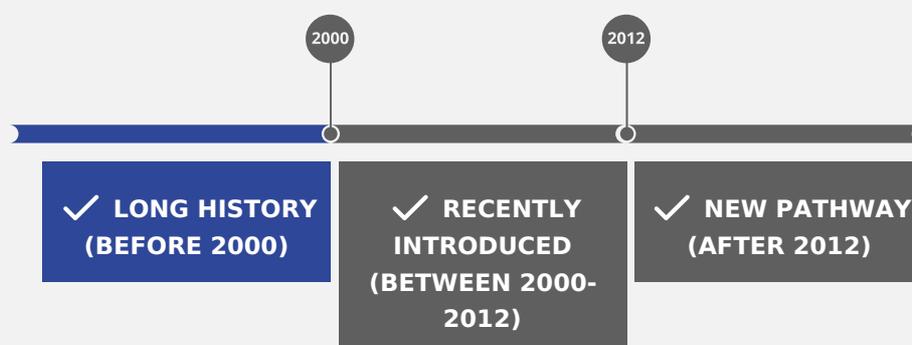
Leertijd

 Belgium-FL

Reference year 2019

① SCHEME HISTORY

Q1. When was the scheme introduced?



Apprenticeships 'Leertijd' have a longer history. Work-based learning has been around for centuries in Flanders. During the middle ages professions were taught by 'guilds'. Youngsters could learn a profession under the supervision of a 'master'. After 'a masterproof' they themselves could become 'gezel' or master. From 1906 these arrangements were written in regulations and law. its current form it has its origins in the early 60s.

Q2. How did the apprenticeship scheme originate?



✓ TRADITIONAL CRAFTSMANSHIP (MASTER-APPRENTICE RELATION) TO PREPARE APPRENTICES FOR THE OCCUPATION



✓ SCHOOL-BASED VET TRACK BY INCLUDING MORE WORK-BASED LEARNING TO SUPPLY SKILLED WORKFORCE TO MATCH LABOUR MARKET NEEDS



✓ EX-NOVO



✓ OTHER

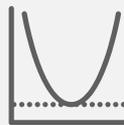
Apprenticeship 'Leertijd' originated from the demand for skilled workers for small and medium enterprises. In this scheme the SME trained the pupil, together with the training center.

2 BENEFICIARIES

Q3. Does the legal basis define the minimum and maximum age limits for enrolment of the target group of this scheme?



✓ MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED



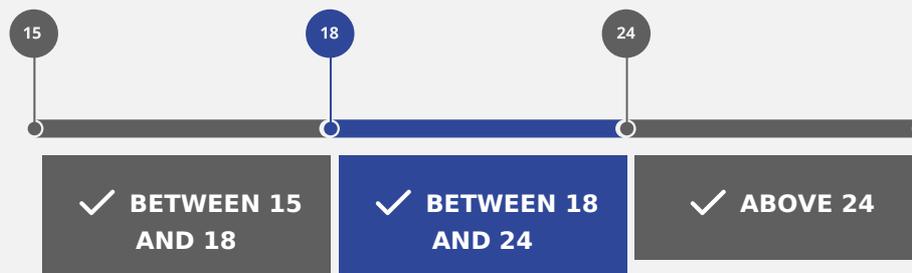
✓ MINIMUM AGE LIMITS DEFINED ONLY



✓ OTHER

The scheme is available for young people between the age of 15 and 25. Exceptionally, pupils can start at the age of 14.

Q4. What is the average age of learners in practice?



Age	%
14*	0.06
15	5.66
16	14.29
17	21.40
18	21.08
19	15.17
20	10.01
21	7.68
22	2.96
23	1.01
24	0.69

Data: Syntrum

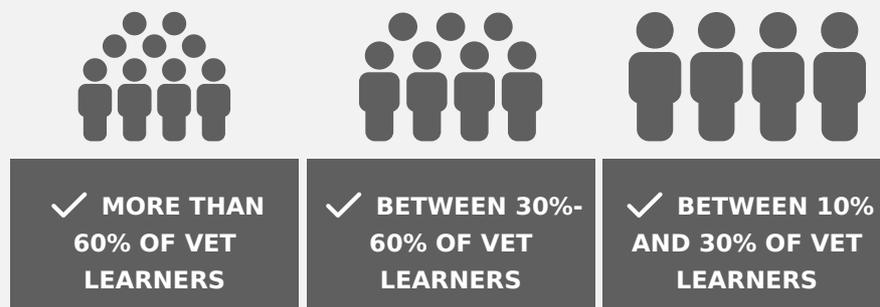
Q5. How many learners are enrolled in this scheme?

1,978 apprentices in Apprenticeship 'Leertijd' in Flanders (2017-2018)

Source: SYNTRUM

2019-2020: 1,058 apprentices (source: Syntra Flanders)

Q6. What is the share of apprentices enrolled in this scheme in relation to all VET students for the corresponding educational level(s)?





✓ LESS THAN
10% OF VET
LEARNERS

Total amount of apprentices in VET-orientations in 2017-2018 (only vocational training, not technical) in the 2nd and 3rd stage of secondary Flemish education: 69 967.

This implies that in 2017-2018, 2,84% of the number of pupils in VET were in Leertijd.

3 QUALIFICATIONS

Q7. Are the qualifications included in the National Qualification Framework (NQF)?

		
✓ YES	✓ NO	✓ THERE IS NO NQF

Programmes combining learning with working are at level 2 and 3 of the NQF[1]

[1] <http://www.vlaamsekwalificatiestructuur.be/wat-is-vks/kwalificatienivea...>

Q8. Is the scheme included in the ISCED 2011 mapping?

		
✓ YES	✓ NO	

354, ISCED level 3

Q9. Are the qualifications offered only through apprenticeships?



✓ QUALIFICATIONS CAN ONLY BE OBTAINED THROUGH THIS APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

✓ THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS CAN BE ACHIEVED ALSO THROUGH OTHER SCHEMES (I.E. SCHOOL-BASED VET)

Q10. Which is the type of qualification obtained through the apprenticeship scheme?



✓ FORMAL VET QUALIFICATION (WHICH DOES NOT INDICATE THE PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL VET QUALIFICATION (WHICH INDICATES THE PATHWAY)



✓ FORMAL APPRENTICESHIP QUALIFICATION (JOURNEYMAN, ETC.)



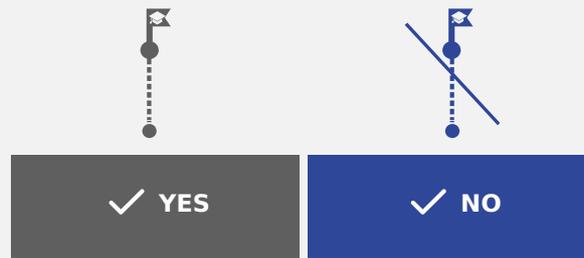
✓ OTHERS

Depending on the duration the apprentice remains in the apprenticeship, the following educational qualifications can be obtained:[1]

- Certificate (successfully completed a programme)
- Certificate of the 2nd stage of secondary education (at least 2 years in upper secondary education and successfully completed programme)
- Certificate of the 2nd year of the 3rd stage of secondary education (at least 4 years in upper secondary education and successfully completed programme)

Diploma of secondary education (at least 5 years in upper secondary education, obtained Certificate of the 2nd year of the 3rd stage of secondary education and successfully completed programme)

Q11. Does the scheme provide direct access to higher education?



If the apprentice obtains a VET-qualification and a diploma for secondary education, access to higher education is possible.

Q12. What is the typical duration of the apprenticeship programme?

The training programme takes from 1 up to 3 years. Specialisation is possible, and can add an extra year to a training programme.

④ GOVERNANCE

Q13. Is there any organization at the national level with roles in co-ordinating the scheme?



SYNTRA Vlaanderen (Government Agency) is responsible for the funding of 'apprenticeship Leertijd' and stimulating innovative approaches in 'Leertijd' and fostering a broad network of qualitative accredited employers as workplace for apprentices.

Syntrum assembles the training centers and coordinates their organisational policies and implementation. The training centres/schools are funded by the government, but not run by the government. They are NGOs.

Q14. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives, sectoral councils (if existent), in shaping apprenticeship content, as per regulation?



✓ ROLE IN DESIGNING QUALIFICATION



✓ ROLE IN DESIGNING CURRICULA



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

Professional sectoral organisations are involved in the development of 'professional qualifications', on which education based its training programmes.

Q15. What is the role of chambers, employers' and employees' representatives in implementing the apprenticeship scheme, as per regulation?



✓ ROLE IN FINAL ASSESSMENT OF APPRENTICES



✓ ROLE IN ACCREDITATION OF COMPANIES



✓ ROLE IN MONITORING OF THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ OTHER



✓ NO ROLE

For all three schemes The Flemish Partnership of Dual learning (Het Vlaams Partnerschap Duaal Leren) has a set of powers and responsibilities concerning the implementation of the apprenticeship scheme. It delegates a number of these authorities to sectoral partnerships (Sectorale Partnerschappen). The set of authorities

delegated to the sectoral partnerships depends on the sectoral council and is stipulated in a contract between the sectoral partnership and the Flemish council of dual learning. In case the sector or enterprise is not part of one of the 16 sectoral partnerships, the Flemish partnership of dual learning will take up the responsibilities. The different roles/responsibilities are:

- inform sectors, companies (and schools)
- mobilize sectors, companies (and schools)
- accreditation of companies (including termination and exclusion)
- monitor in-company training (contracts, mentors, quality in general)
- give advise on matters concerning apprenticeships and dual learning and provide yearly monitoring report (Flemish Partnership only)

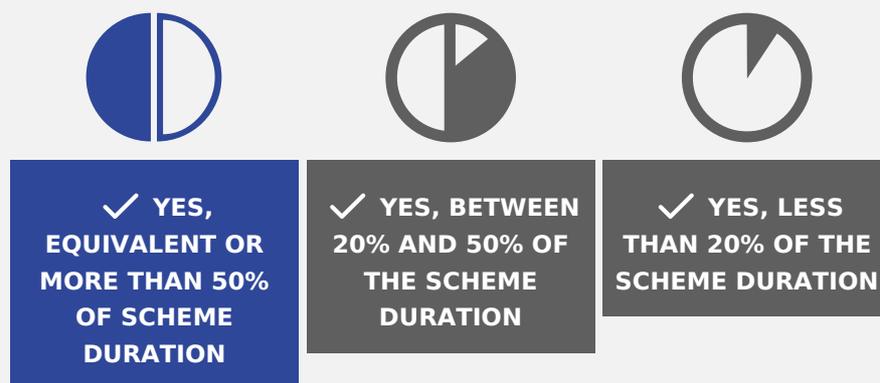
5 TRAINING AT THE WORKPLACE

Q17. Is it compulsory to alternate training between two learning venues (school and company)?



Article 31 of the Decree on learning and working, covering also this apprenticeship scheme, stipulates: Workplace learning (Praktijkopleiding) and complementary theoretical education are inextricably linked.

Q18. Is the in-company training defined as minimum share of the apprenticeship scheme duration?





✓ NO, NO
MINIMUM SHARE IS
COMPULSORY

Article 31 of the Decree on learning and working, covering also this apprenticeship scheme, stipulates that the theoretical education (school based learning) is minimally 8 hours per week (4 hours general education and 4 hours vocation specific).

When using an Alternation training contract, apprentices spend at least 20h a week on average during a year.

Exceptions:

- In certain sectors, an ordinary part-time employment contract is still used for this scheme.
- For certain courses, in-company training may be from 10h a week on average during a year.

Q19. Is there a distinction between the training time and working time for the period spent at workplace, as per regulation?



✓ YES, THE
LEGAL FRAMEWORK
MAKES THIS
DISTINCTION



✓ NO, THE LEGAL
FRAMEWORK
MAKES NO
DISTINCTION

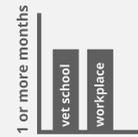
Q20. What is the form of alternation of training between workplace (company) and school?



✓ **EVERY WEEK INCLUDES BOTH VENUES**



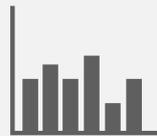
✓ **ONE OR MORE WEEKS (LESS THAN 1 MONTH) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE WEEKS AT WORKPLACE**



✓ **ONE OR MORE MONTHS (LESS THAN 1 YEAR) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY ONE OR MORE MONTHS AT WORKPLACE**



✓ **A LONGER PERIOD (1-2 YEARS) SPENT AT SCHOOL FOLLOWED BY A LONGER PERIOD SPENT TRAINING AT WORKPLACE**



✓ **VARIOUS - DEPENDS ON AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND THE COMPANY**



✓ **OTHER**



✓ **NOT SPECIFIED**

Under the “leertijd” scheme, 1 day per week is spent in school and 4 days in the company.

Q21. What is the basis for the training offered?



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED VIA A SPECIFIC APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED ON THE BASIS OF THE SCHOOL-BASED VET PROGRAMME



✓ THE SCHEME IS IMPLEMENTED BASED ON THE VET STANDARDS (VALID GENERALLY FOR ALL VET SCHEMES)



✓ OTHER

The law[1] clearly defines which qualifications can be achieved after what number of years. Whereas the standard length of the programme is three years according to the ISCED mapping, apprentices may choose to continue to up to 5 years in upper secondary education to get their secondary education diploma.

The 'leertijd' scheme is part of the decree of learning and working. Training programs are approved by the Flemish Government.

[1] <http://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=14032>...

Q22. Is the company hosting apprentices required by regulation to follow a training plan at the workplace?



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS BASED ON THE NATIONAL/SECTORAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE IN-COMPANY TRAINING



✓ YES, THE TRAINING PLAN IS AGREED AT THE LEVEL OF SCHOOL AND COMPANY



✓ NO, IS NOT REQUIRED FORMALLY

The contract consists of a training programme, that is agreed upon on the level of the

training center, the employer and the apprentice. The overall training programme is defined by law.

Q23. What are the requirements on companies to provide placements, as per regulation?



Employers should have an accreditation in order to provide in-company training in the apprenticeship 'leertijd' scheme.

In order to obtain this accreditation, the company:

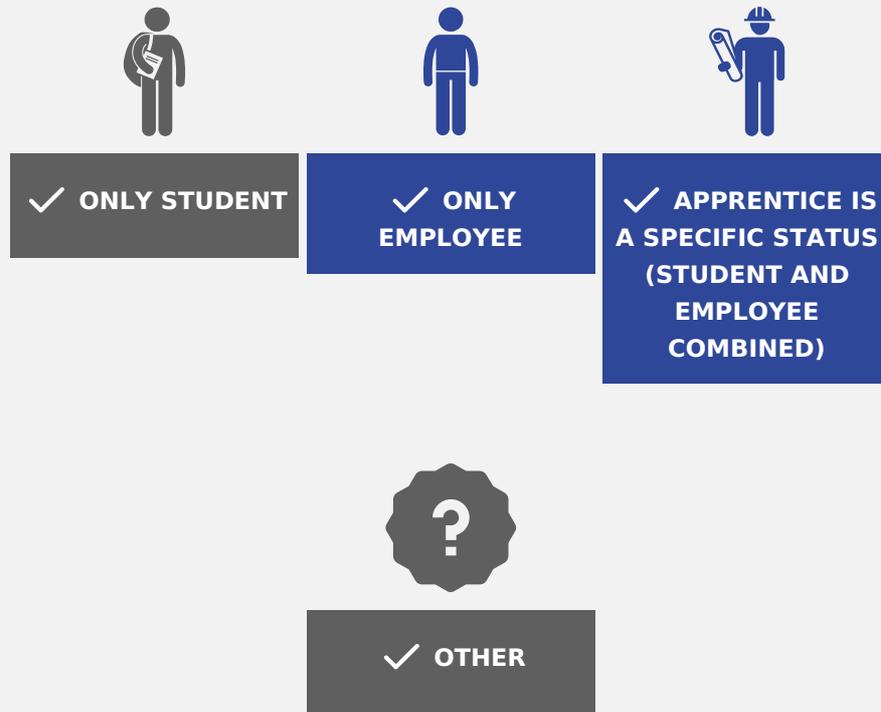
- Should appoint a supervisor/tutor on the workplace that is of impeccable behaviour, is at least 25 years of age and has at least 5 years of experience in the profession. (as an exception the supervisor can be at least 23 years of age)
- Should comply to the standards of equipment and company organisation in order to provide a training according to the training programme.
- Should have a proficient financial basis in order to guarantee the continuity of the company
- Did not face any criminal convictions.

Q25. Are there any sanctions on companies that do not provide training to apprentices at the workplace?



⑥ **CONTRACT AND COMPENSATION**

Q26. What is the status of the learner?



In the Apprenticeship (Leertijd) scheme in Flanders, 2 different types of contracts are used, each with their own status.

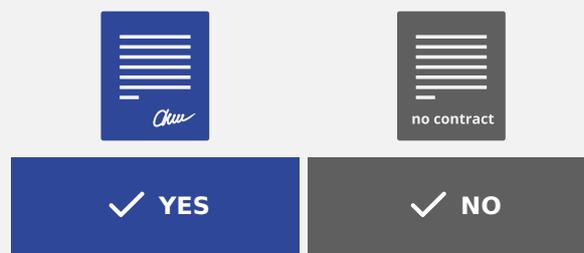
Most of the apprentices use a 'alternation training contract', and have the status of 'alternating pupil' (apprentices). According to social security-regulations the apprentice is equated with regular employees. Therefore, apprentices also build up social security rights. Due to the used contract, apprentices are covered on several fronts: paid leave, an illness- and invalidity-allowance, unemployment allowance, accidents at the workplace and professional illness. From the year in which they become 19 years old, they also build up rights linked to retirement and medical benefits.

In the context of the second possible contract, the ordinary part-time employment contract, apprentices have the same status as a regular employee and build up the same social security rights.

<https://www.socialsecurity.be/employer/instructions/dmfa/nl/latest/inst...>

[1] http://www.ejustice.just.fgov.be/cgi_loi/change_lg.pl?language=nl&la=N&c...

Q27. Is there any written arrangement between the learner and company, required as per regulation?



From 2016 on an Alternation training contract is used for this scheme:

- Start and end date of the contract, subject of the contract
- Details of the employer and supervisor
- Details of the apprentice
- Details of the provider of the programme (school) and the apprentice counsellor (address, time, etc.)
- The allowance
- Schedule of in company learning and school based learning
- Rights and Duties of both parties
- The training programme
- Specific regulations of the company

In a Part-time labour contract, the aspects are mentioned that are asked by our federal law.

[1] <http://data-onderwijs.vlaanderen.be/edulex/document.aspx?docid=14032>

Q28. What is the nature of the written arrangement?



✓ APPRENTICESHIP
ARE AN ORDINARY
EMPLOYMENT
CONTRACT



✓ APPRENTICESHIP
ARE A SPECIFIC
TYPE OF CONTRACT



✓ ANOTHER TYPE
OF FORMAL
AGREEMENT, NOT A
CONTRACT

There are 2 types of contracts for in-company training, which are:

- an Alternation training contract, apprentices spend at least 20h a week on average during a year.
- an ordinary part-time employment contract, apprentices spend less than 20h a week on average during a year.

Q29. Where is the contract or the formal agreement registered?



✓ AT THE
SCHOOL



✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EMPLOYMENT



✓ AT THE
CHAMBERS



✓ AT THE
MINISTRY OF
EDUCATION



✓ OTHER

The contracts are checked and registered with the Flemish Partnership for dual learning.

[1] <http://abvvjongeren.be/art/pid/15217/Deeltijds-leren-en-werken-voor-18-j...>

Q30. Do apprentices receive a wage or allowance?



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A WAGE
(TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ YES, ALL
APPRENTICES
RECEIVE AN
ALLOWANCE (NOT
A FORM OF
TAXABLE INCOME)



✓ APPRENTICES
RECEIVE A
REIMBURSEMENT
OF EXPENSES



✓ NO FORM OF
COMPENSATION IS
FORESEEN BY LAW

- Apprentices with an alternation training contract receive an allowance
- Apprentices with an ordinary part-time employment contract receive a salary

Q31. How is the apprentice wage (taxable income) set?



✓ BY LAW
(APPLYING FOR
ALL)



✓ BY CROSS-
SECTORAL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS AT
NATIONAL OR
LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY SECTORAL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS AT
NATIONAL OR
LOCAL LEVEL



✓ BY FIRM-LEVEL
COLLECTIVE
AGREEMENTS OR
INDIVIDUAL
AGREEMENTS
BETWEEN
APPRENTICE AND
COMPANY



✓ OTHER

In case the apprentice receives an allowance:

- 29% of the GGMMI (guaranteed average minimum monthly income) in the first year of the programme
- 32% of the GGMMI: after succeeding in a first year of the programme, or after already succeeding in the 2nd year of the 2nd stage of secondary education).
- 34;5% of the GGMMI: After succeeding in a second year of the programme (or after already succeeding in the 1st year of the 3rd stage)

In case the pupil receives a salary it is set by collective agreements.

⑦ FINANCING AND INCENTIVES

Q32. Who covers the cost of the wage or allowance of the apprentice?

		
✓ EMPLOYERS	✓ STATE	✓ OTHER

Q33. What are the sources of financing of the direct costs for the in-company training part of the apprenticeship scheme?

		
✓ SINGLE EMPLOYERS HOSTING APPRENTICES	✓ TRAINING FUNDS	✓ STATE
		
✓ OTHER		

Costs for in-company training (for those acquiring work experience in companies, not as part of training projects provided by public training services) are covered by companies hosting apprentices but tax reductions and subsidies are available through sectoral funds as described in question 14 below.

Q34. Are there any financial incentives for companies that offer apprenticeship places?

		
✓ YES, SUBSIDIES	✓ YES, TAX DEDUCTIONS	✓ YES, OTHER INCENTIVES



✓ **NO FINANCIAL INCENTIVES**

Specific social security contribution reductions apply to mentors/supervisors of apprentices (besides the companies which are located in the Brussels Capital Region).

Workplace learning bonus (Stagebonus) is available for employers offering in-company training within this scheme with an Alternation Training Contract or an Ordinary part-time employment contract and are located in Flanders. Employers receive 500 EUR annually in the first and second year of the apprenticeship and 750 EUR in the third year.

The company's profit for tax purposes may be reduced by 20% of the salary costs of the apprentice.

Other incentives may be available at the regional level and from sector funds

Q35. Does the wage or allowance of the apprentice cover both the time spent at school and in the company?



✓ **YES**



✓ **NO, IT COVERS ONLY THE TIME SPENT IN THE COMPANY**

The alternation training contract is a fulltime contract and is applicable to the full training period. The allowance paid accounts for both the share at school and at the company. There is no difference in calculation between school and company days; each day represents the same share of the allowance.

In case of an Ordinary part-time employment contract, this covers only the time in the company.

Q36. Are there any incentives for learners?



✓ YES, GRANTS
PAID TO LEARNERS
TO TOP UP THEIR
REMUNERATION



✓ YES, GRANTS
PAID TO LEARNERS
RELATED TO OTHER
COSTS (TRAVEL,
FOOD ETC.)



✓ YES,
RECOGNITION OF
PRIOR LEARNING /
FAST-TRACK
OPPORTUNITIES



✓ YES, GUIDANCE
OR LEARNER
SUPPORT



✓ YES, OTHER
TYPES OF
INCENTIVES



✓ NO