

Academy issues urgent warning to future leaders in construction and civil engineering industries

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One of the UK's leading training and apprenticeship providers has issued an urgent call to bosses in the construction and civil engineering sectors as the government prepares to withdraw vital skills funding.

National apprenticeships and commercial training provider [S&A Academy](#) – who are leaders in bespoke training and apprenticeships for executive leadership and management skills in construction, engineering, business, science and tech – has urged employers to enrol their employees onto final Level 7 (L7) Senior Leadership courses by November of this year, or face costs of up to £14,000 per employee.

From 1st January 2026 the UK government will no longer provide funding for individuals aged 22 and over. The L7 Senior Leadership apprenticeship – which is an equivalent to a master's degree – is hugely popular with employees who want to become future senior leaders in their organisations. The qualification is a requirement for progression into senior management and can be undertaken alongside full time employment.

Just under £240 million was spent by UK companies and organisations on L7 apprenticeships in the 2023-2024 period. The courses are currently subsidised by the government as part of the enterprise levy scheme which allows companies access to funding for training.

The November course will be the last intake that employers and employees can get access to the subsidised funding. After the 1st January any employee wanting to undertake a L7 Senior Leader apprenticeship will either have to self-fund or seek funding from their employer, which will cost around

£14,000 per employee.

The unwelcome news comes at a time when UK companies are faced with spiralling staffing costs and still absorbing the impact of the employer National Insurance (NI) hike. The NI hike had led to many companies putting the brakes on recruitment and opting for upskilling their employees. But the latest blow to apprenticeship funding is likely to see increased pressure on companies to put the brakes on training and apprenticeships for the first quarter of 2026.

London headquartered S&A Academy which operates across the UK – the sister company to S&A Transform one of the UK's top challenger consultancies – is an independent Ofsted regulated 'Good' provider of professional government funded apprenticeships, commercial training, corporate learning and development programmes (L&D). The S&A Tech Academy was last year awarded a 100% 'achievement rate' for its apprenticeship training.

Commenting on the announcement Managing Director of the S&A Academy Jemma Perks said: "The government's decision to withdraw funding has a direct impact to both employer and employees across the construction and civil engineering sectors. It will mean that after the 1st January 2026 employers will now have to pay £14,000 per employee if they choose to put employees on the L7 senior leader programme. The cost is likely to also be prohibitive to employees looking at the options of self-funding. Employers and employees can benefit by accessing funding for these courses providing they sign up in November before our next intake starts."

The S&A Academy L7 Senior leader program lasts 18 months and is delivered across England in all regions and sectors, working with SMEs through to global corporates. A tailored and bespoke delivery model, the training is provided through a flexible blend of online workshops, one-to-one coaching and on-site training that fits around executive diaries and operational pressures. Executive coaching is included throughout the course ensuring every leader has personalised support to embed learning into their role. There is also cohort-based learning to foster networking across industries, encouraging peer-to-peer exchange at senior level.

Jemma added: "The longer-term impact for the construction and civil engineering sectors will be felt in senior leadership roles with not enough talented future leaders coming through the executive leadership pipeline and in turn this will have an impact on growth in the sector."