

RISE

Retrofit information,
support & expertise

Warm homes skills Programme

Toolkit

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Introduction

The **Warm Homes Skills Programme** is an England wide initiative created to address one of the most persistent barriers to scaling retrofit delivery: the shortage of skilled professionals. As the UK accelerates its transition towards net zero, the need for a competent and well-trained energy efficiency workforce has never been greater. The guidance outlines the structure, expectations, and delivery framework for this open grant competition, which is designed to support both new entrants and existing professionals in gaining accredited retrofit skills. Operating under the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ), and delivered by the Midlands Net Zero Hub, the programme plays a central role in building training capacity across the retrofit sector. The funding is intended to expand learning opportunities across England, increase workforce resilience, and ensure that retrofit installations are delivered safely, effectively, and in line with national quality standards.

Readers that would like this document in a more accessible format should contact rise@turntown.co.uk.

Why this programme matters

Across the country, local authorities, housing associations, contractors, and energy efficiency providers all face a consistent challenge: there simply are not enough trained professionals to meet growing retrofit demand. Poor-quality installations, delays in project delivery, and bottlenecks in scaling whole house retrofits often stem from workforce capacity limitations. The Warm Homes Skills Programme addresses this challenge by investing directly in the training infrastructure needed to support high-volume, high-quality retrofit work. The Warm Homes Skills Programme aims to address this gap by:

- Increasing access to accredited training.
- Supporting those already in construction or energy efficiency to upskill.
- Bringing new entrants into the workforce.
- Strengthening regional delivery through consistent training provision.

Together, these measures support long-term national energy efficiency goals and ensure retrofit workforces can meet rising demand.

What the programme is

The Warm Homes Skills Programme is structured as an **open grant competition that funds accredited training aligned with retrofit and energy efficiency skills**. Phase 1 makes up to £8 million available, and subject to confirmation, up to £9.283 million may be released in Phase 2, enabling delivery into July 2027. This multiphase approach reflects the government's intention to build sustained capacity rather than short-term workforce boosts.

The programme supports training across a wide range of disciplines — from insulation, ventilation, and airtightness to retrofit assessment, coordination, and technical system installations. It aims to meet both immediate and future skills needs by encouraging applicants to design training pathways that directly support sector growth. The Midlands Net Zero Hub administers the competition, ensuring consistent quality control and alignment with wider national decarbonisation strategies. Applicants are encouraged to engage with sector employers, supply chain partners, and local authorities to demonstrate clear workforce relevance and demand.

Competitive objectives

At its core, the Warm Homes Skills Programme is designed to expand both the capacity and the capability of the retrofit workforce. It focuses not only on increasing the number of people trained but also ensuring that the training delivered is robust, accredited, and aligned with sector needs. It aims to:

- Increase the number of accredited installers and professionals in retrofit fields.
- Expand regional training availability.
- Improve training quality and consistency.
- Provide subsidised training to reduce cost barriers for learners.
- Support long-term capacity growth across the sector.

The competition supports a broad mix of skills, from insulation and ventilation to retrofit coordination and renewable energy installations.

The GOV.UK guidance states four distinct work packages:

- WP1: Fabric insulation & solar PV installation.
- WP2: Skills for working on nondomestic buildings.
- WP3: Retrofit assessor & coordinator (PAS 2035/2038).

- WP4: Entry-level courses for new entrants.

Eligibility and requirements

The competition invites applications from organisations able to deliver accredited, high-quality training in England. This includes Further Education (FE) colleges, private training providers, and other organisations with the infrastructure to support retrofit aligned learning. Applicants must provide strong evidence of delivery capability, including trainer expertise, facilities, equipment, and operational readiness.

The guidance emphasises the importance of demonstrating:

- Clear learner demand and pathways into employment or progression.
- Robust operational planning, including scheduling, facilities management, and resource allocation.
- Strong governance and quality assurance processes.
- Ability to collect, report, and validate learner data.
- Compliance with subsidy control legislation.

The organisation must also show how their proposed training supports broader workforce needs, for example by aligning with employer requirements, regional labour shortages, or the needs of ongoing government funded schemes. Applications that clearly link training outputs to real-world retrofit delivery outcomes are likely to be more competitive.

Additional eligibility requirements:

- Evidence of learner demand and employer engagement.
- Evidence of facilities, equipment, scheduling and staffing.
- Clear statement of governance, quality assurance, and data collection processes.
- **Consortium rules:** providers can bid individually or in consortia but must remain within the £1m per provider per phase cap.

Funding levels and structures

Funding is distributed over two phases to support sustained sector growth. Phase 1 provides up to £8 million, which is available to a wide range of training organisations. Phase 2, planned at up to £9.283 million, remains subject to confirmation but enables long-term delivery through 2027.

Funding may cover:

- Training delivery costs, including operational and support fees.
- Trainer time, materials, and equipment.
- Accreditation and assessment fees
- Infrastructure essential for training delivery.

The programme requires all applicants to adhere strictly to subsidy control requirements. Each applicant must clearly outline how funds will be allocated, ensuring transparency, cost-effectiveness, and value for money. The financial assessment checks alignment with overall programme goals and confirms that planned expenditure is realistic, deliverable, and appropriate.

The payment structure:

- 20% mobilisation funding.
- 70% completion payment for a Completed Course.
- 10% uplift for underrepresented workers.

New payment route includes that providers can claim half of the 70% payment when a learner completes training but fails their assessment(s). This was the most important change made in June 2025.

Subsidy control requirements:

- Cap per provider per phase.
- Treatment of cumulative subsidy.
- Compliance expectations.

Monitoring and delivery requirements

The programme places strong emphasis on ongoing monitoring to ensure training is delivered to a high standard and achieves its intended outcomes. Successful applicants must participate in continuous performance monitoring, providing regular data on learner engagement, completion rates, progression outcomes, and overall delivery performance.

Monitoring requirements include:

- Regular reporting to the Midlands Net Zero Hub.
- Evidence of learner outcomes, including completions and certifications.
- Financial tracking, validating appropriate and compliant use of grant funding.
- Participation in evaluation, contributing to sector wide insights.

Monitoring Detail:

- Learner evidence required (attendance, completion, certification).
- Requirement to report financial claims with evidence.
- Requirement to participate in evaluation activities.
- Support delivery to learners who fail assessments with re-sits.

This structured approach ensures accountability and supports consistent, high-quality delivery across all funded organisations. It also helps DESNZ evaluate the effectiveness of national investment in developing the retrofit workforce.

Application process

The application window closed on the 17th June 2025. Applicants must provide a comprehensive submission supported by robust evidence, ensuring all sections of the application form are complete and aligned with the competition criteria.

Applications are judged based on:

- Delivery capability.
- Workforce relevance and demand.
- Quality and accreditation of training.
- Value for money (VfM).
- Monitoring and evaluation readiness.
- Alignment with overall programme objectives.

Assessment and scoring:

- Weighting of scoring criteria (e.g., delivery capability, VFM, quality, monitoring readiness).
- Requirements for complete evidence and consequences for incomplete submissions.
- Timeline and rules around clarification questions.

Because the competition is likely to be oversubscribed, applicants must demonstrate strong strategic alignment and clear, measurable impact. Incomplete or insufficiently evidenced applications may be disqualified or scored lower.

Submission requirements checklist

- ✓ Application form
- ✓ Delivery plan

- ✓ Project budget spreadsheet
- ✓ Evidence of facilities
- ✓ Subsidy control declaration
- ✓ Consortium agreements (if applicable)

Final thoughts

The Warm Homes Skills Programme represents a major commitment to strengthening the retrofit workforce and supporting national decarbonisation goals. By investing in high-quality training provision, the programme helps build the capacity needed to deliver largescale retrofit upgrades across England. Its structured, multiphase funding model, rigorous eligibility requirements, and focus on workforce outcomes ensure that the sector receives not just more training, but **the right training** delivered **consistently, professionally**, and with **lasting impact**. As the UK's retrofit ambitions continue to grow, the Warm Homes Skills Programme stands as a foundational pillar in preparing the workforce that will deliver this essential national transformation.

Links to resources:

[Warm Homes Skills Programme: guidance](#)



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