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UK Apprenticeship Levy - the story so far...

In spite of some basic principles being confirmed in the chancellor's Autumn Statement in November, there is still very little information available from UK government on the Apprenticeship Levy and its impact on the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) and smaller companies. In December, CPA attended a meeting between the CITB and trade associations to hear the latest information, and discuss the possible effect on the CITB. A summary of the main points follows.

What we DO know..

The Apprenticeship Levy will be set at half a percent of PAYE payroll.

There will be an annual allowance of £15,000. This means that employers will start to pay the Apprenticeship Levy on payrolls over £3,000,000, regardless of the number of employees.

The Apprenticeship Levy is due to start in 2017.

What we DO NOT know yet..

At time of writing, information on the issues below has not been released by the Treasury.

Age limits or the form of the 'Apprenticeship' that can receive funding from the Apprenticeship Levy.

How funding will work in Scotland and Wales; or for national employers. This is in part a matter for the devolved governments.

The interaction of the Apprenticeship Levy with Trailblazers, and any funding caps imposed on Trailblazers.

The formation, governance or operation of the Institute of Apprenticeships, and its function in quality assurance.



CITB into the future...

It is apparent that the Treasury is expecting the CITB to adapt to the Apprenticeship Levy, with the support of the construction industry. There will be no adjustment or accommodation within the Apprenticeship Levy for construction employers.

The CITB is intending to bring the date of consensus one year early. This is to avoid any overlap of the CITB levy with the Apprenticeship Levy (for those firms paying it) when the Apprenticeship Levy starts in 2017. It is possible that any new CITB Levy Order will wholly or partly exempt firms that are paying the Apprenticeship Levy. The CITB acknowledges that forming a consensus will not be straightforward, as discussion needs to take place in 2016, when it is probable that full information on the Apprenticeship Levy will still not be available.

The CITB intends to provide individual statements for each Federation - including CPA - on the effect of Apprenticeship Levy. It will also forecast the potential effect of the Apprenticeship Levy on its own operations, based on the current estimate of the amount that it will remove from the current CITB levy income.

The CITB will provide a list of Frequently Asked Questions for employers on apprenticeship issues, including the Trailblazers, Apprenticeship Funding and the Apprenticeship Levy. The list of questions is likely to be subject to continuous development as more detail is released. The CITB will also run workshops to look at issues such as priorities for employer funding including apprenticeships.

The CPA will update Cranes & Access readers as more information is released.



Stars of the Future Awards 2016

The CPA has announced that the fourth annual Stars of the Future Awards will be held at Vertikal Days, Haydock Park on Wednesday 15th June 2016. Hosting the awards and talking about his experiences is none other than Nicolas Hamilton, a racing driver in the BTCC and the brother of F1 driver Lewis Hamilton.

Hamilton will talk to the students about his strive to become a successful racing driver and continuous battle against Cerebral Palsy - he is a prime example of 'you can do anything if you put your mind to it' - making him the perfect host for the Stars of the Future event.

The Stars of the Future competition is an annual award scheme, devised by the CPA to recognise talented youngsters on plant mechanic apprentice schemes in colleges across the UK.

The awards recognise and reward outstanding apprentices who not only bring ability and commitment to their learning and work, but who possess additional capabilities that mark them out. In 2015 there were almost 900 entries - this year the sky's the limit!