

**The kick in Kickstart: The Guild helps Members band together to meet the minimum thirty recruits**

The Government has finally issued some long-awaited clarification on the new Kickstart scheme. While the wait is now over, and clarification has been given, the scheme is not as simple to access as first thought.  To be able to claim a grant in the Kickstart Scheme to fund the direct creation of high-quality jobs for young people at the highest risk of long-term unemployment, agencies will need to make a minimum of 30 new appointments.  Sadly, this gives an unfair advantage to the larger corporates who can employ several new recruits, but what about smaller independent estate and lettings agents who wish to take part in the scheme?

Iain McKenzie, CEO of The Guild of Property Professionals, says that The Guild has several Members who are eager to be a part of the scheme and who wish to take on recruits but are unable to accommodate 30 new appointments. He adds that the scheme states that if a business is unable to offer this many job placements, they can partner with other organisations to reach the minimum number, which is what The Guild will administer for its Members.

“To help our Members compete on a level playing field with the larger corporates, The Guild are proposing to act as a representative for our Members who would like to offer a new position to a young person who has been long-term unemployed on the Kickstart Scheme.  As long as there are enough Members within the network who are interested in taking up the scheme to create 30 new jobs, The Guild will be able to assist Members with administration and registration. The 30 new jobs can be spread across the number of Members who are interested in signing up to the scheme, depending on the size of their office and requirements,” McKenzie comments.

According to The Guild’s Head of Employee Engagement and Development, Jennifer Scott-Reid, Members will be able to use to scheme to create a high quality, six-month work placement for 16-24 year olds who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. She adds that the job placements should support the participants to develop the skills and experience they need to find work after completing the scheme.

“The government will fund 100% for each job of the relevant National Minimum Wage for 25 hours a week, plus the associated employer National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. There is also £1,500 per job placement available for setup costs, support and training,” says Scott-Reid.

She adds that some of the requirements stipulated by the scheme include that the job placements created must be new jobs. They must not replace existing or planned vacancies and they must not cause existing employees or contractors to lose or reduce their employment.

McKenzie says that the Kickstart Scheme gives young people the chance to build their confidence and skills in the workplace, and to gain experience that will improve their chances of going on to find long-term, sustainable work.  “Taking part in the scheme is an ideal way our Members and the industry to introduce the next generation of talent at no cost, and it will be a way for estate and lettings agents to help young people find a career and get back on their feet,” he concludes.

-ENDS-

**Editors’ Notes**

**The Guild of Property Professionals (The Guild)**

The Guild is a network of 800 of the best independent estate agents from across the UK. The Guild is a sign of professional excellence that agents can use to differentiate themselves from their competitors and assure clients that they will act with knowledge and integrity to achieve results, the three core values of The Guild. To allow agents to perform a superior service, The Guild offers marketing, business and technology services to its members.