

The Open University in Northern Ireland

Skill Up Flexible Skills Fund 2025

Guidance Notes

March 2025



Department for the
Economy
www.economy-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn
Geilleagair

Skill Up

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1.0 KEY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Welcome to The Open University's Skill Up, Flexible Skills Fund guidance notes for our March 2025 microcredential course offering.

1.1 Residential eligibility criteria

- To be eligible for a fully funded place you must be domiciled in Northern Ireland
- eligible to work in Northern Ireland
- settled in Northern Ireland, and ordinarily resident in the UK for at least three years or have indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK
- over 18 years of age

Please note that as part of the application process and entry requirements stipulated by the Department for the Economy, you will be asked to provide proof of residential status in Northern Ireland. We are required to verify residential status for every round of funding and all applicants are required to provide this with every application.

The department's guidance also stipulates that applicants must not enrol in more than two Skill Up courses with any provider in the same academic year.

1.2 Further eligibility

For this presentation, we have a limited number of funded places available. Please review the eligibility requirements for the course you wish to apply for.

1.3 Shortlisting criteria

The panel when assessing applications will consider the following:

- The overall quality and strength of the application and supporting statement. The panel will assess evidence of how funding will aid career and/or personal development.
- Where applicable how applicants meet their chosen course entry requirements.
- Under guidance from the Department for the Economy, where a course is oversubscribed, priority will be given to applicants that have not previously studied through Skill Up funding with The Open University.

The decision of the panel is final.

1.4 Making an application.

Please note that to be considered for a fully funded place, an application form must be completed via the application form on the Skill-Up webpage:

<https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/choose/skill-up>

Complete the application form for the course that you would like to apply for. The application form is available from: [Skill Up | Northern Ireland | The Open University](#) under “**How to Apply**”.

Whilst it is extremely unlikely, we cannot guarantee that **all courses** will run.

The closing date for applications is:

- **10 February 2025 at 12 noon**

Late applications will **NOT** be accepted.

You must only submit one application form with one course choice.

Additional application forms will be disregarded so consider your course choice carefully before applying.

If you have studied with us previously, you will be required to provide your personal identification (PI) number with your application. If you are unsure of this number or need to confirm any detail from your study record, please contact our student support team by e-mailing northernireland@open.ac.uk

1.5 Deferred Students

If you have formally deferred a funded place and are applying to return to your module within the permitted timeframe outlined at the time of your deferral, please make an application as via the deferred application link:

- Microcredential link – <http://www3.open.ac.uk/forms/SkillUpMCform>
- Postgraduate link - <http://www3.open.ac.uk/forms/SkillUpPGDeferral>

Please note that if you intend to take up your deferred place, you will not be eligible to apply for a further funded course to study concurrently along with the course you are returning to. An application to return to a deferred module will supersede any additional application for a further module. Additional applications will not be considered by the panel.

1.6 Registration

If you are successful in securing a place on a funded course, you will be notified by email. (Please see section 2 for key timescales for anticipated dates of notifications) The email will outline the steps you are required to complete registration and the deadlines for this process.

All applicants will be notified of outcome of decision **by email**.

2.0 KEY TIMESCALES

2.1 Key timescales

Submit your application form by:

- **10 February 2025 at 12 noon**
- Late applications will **not be accepted**.
- Confirmation of receipt of application form will be sent to you within 24 hours (if submitted on a Friday, it will be Monday before we can confirm).
- Following this, if you still haven't received a confirmation, please email:
Ireland-skillup@open.ac.uk

2.2 Decision outcome

We hope to provide the outcome of applications **by the following date:**

Microcredential Applications:

- All applications will be notified by **week commencing 3 March 2025**.

Due to the significant volumes of applications, we are likely to receive, we are unable to provide unsuccessful applicants with feedback on their application.

3.0 KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

For all further enquiries, please email Irelandskillup@open.ac.uk

4.0 FUNDED MODULES AND QUALIFICATION INFORMATION

4.1 Microcredential study general information

A microcredential is a shorter and sharper type of university-level online learning experience. Courses are delivered at undergraduate and postgraduate level and usually take 10-12 weeks to complete. Microcredentials are becoming more popular in industry and education due to their focused and flexible delivery.

There are many benefits to undertaking a microcredential:

- Current course content that is fully accredited to address specific skills gaps within a reasonable timeframe;
- Self-paced to suit professional and personal commitments; and
- Meets a range of diverse learning styles and preferences, contributing to professional growth.

The fully funded microcredentials on offer through the Skill up, Flexible Skills Fund include:

Undergraduate microcredentials

Courses start **24 March** and run for **10 weeks**.

Green skills

- [Climate Change: Transforming your Organisation for Sustainability](#)

Leadership and Management

- [Business Management: Marketing Principles and Practice](#)
- [Business Management: Improving Organisational Practice](#)
- [Business Management: People Management and Leadership](#)
- [Business Management: Project Management](#)
- [Business Management: Financial Accounting for Non-Financial Roles](#)
- [Business Management: Fundamentals of Management Accounting](#)