Annual Skills Implementation Plan 2025–26

Q4 Progress Update (August 2026)

Progress has continued during the final quarter of the 2025–26 Annual Skills Implementation Plan (ASIP), with a strong focus on evaluating delivery, preparing the next Annual Skills Implementation Plan and ensuring the foundations are in place for the next phase of workforce and skills activity associated with Sizewell C. During this period, significant work has been undertaken to finalise the 2026–27 ASIP, progress skills funding programmes and strengthen the evidence base that will support future workforce planning.

Progress overview

Q4 focused on:

- Developing and consulting on the ASIP 2026–27.
- Updating workforce and skills evidence through the Regional Skills Needs Assessment Framework and Early Workforce Information.
- Confirming future funding priorities and delivery arrangements.
- Progressing the mobilisation of funded skills and employment programmes.
- Reviewing delivery arrangements and priorities for the next annual cycle.

What has been delivered

ASIP 2026–27 completed

The draft Annual Skills Implementation Plan 2026–27 has been completed and prepared for approval through the established governance process. The new plan incorporates updated workforce forecasts, labour market intelligence, skills needs assessments, funding priorities and stakeholder input. It provides the framework for skills, employment and workforce activity during the next phase of Sizewell C construction.

Regional skills evidence strengthened

The Regional Skills Needs Assessment Framework has continued to evolve, providing a stronger evidence base for future decision-making. Updated skills needs analysis, workforce intelligence and information on regional infrastructure projects have been incorporated into planning for the 2026–27 period.

Skills funding programmes progressing

Important milestones have been reached across the skills funding programmes.

Asset Skills Enhancement Capability fund

- Grant agreements for the first two ASEC fund projects have been completed and issued for signing. The projects will support expanded skills provision through East Coast College's Lound Campus project and Suffolk New College's Transforming Built Environment Skills project.
- Work has continued to encourage additional applications, particularly those supporting future workforce requirements and the transition toward Mechanical, Electrical and HVAC (MEH) activity.

Employment Outreach Fund entering delivery

Two delivery partners have been appointed through the Employment Outreach Fund.

- Suffolk New College will lead a partnership with East Coast College and Inspire Suffolk.
- The Salvation Army will deliver a second employment outreach programme.
- Services are scheduled to commence from September 2026, supporting people who are economically inactive and those facing barriers to employment.

Improvements to the Bursary Scheme

Following review of the first year of delivery, changes have been made to improve access to the Sizewell C Bursary Scheme.

These include:

- Increasing the household income threshold to £35,000.
- Extending eligibility to learners living just outside Suffolk who study with Suffolk-based providers.
- Expanding support for self-employed learners undertaking short-term skills training.
- Allowing bursary support for eligible internships where travel costs are not provided.

These changes are intended to increase participation and maximise the impact of the fund in future years.

Looking ahead

The priority for the next ASIP period will be moving from mobilisation into delivery and impact.

This will include:

- Implementation of ASEC-funded projects.
- Full delivery of Employment Outreach Fund programmes.
- Ongoing development of workforce intelligence and skills needs assessments.
- Continued support for apprenticeships, employment pathways and education initiatives.