AI and Automation Practitioner Level 4 apprenticeship (ST1512)

Turns an existing employee in any department into the person who finds repetitive work, automates it with no-code tools, and builds and governs AI agents that stay in use. Live online, around 15 months, levy or government funded, no coding.

Around 15 months
12 months of live online teaching; 8-month fast-track for closed cohorts

Up to 5
qualifications alongside the apprenticeship certificate

72%
distinction rate across TESS

67.2%
published achievement rate at Level 4 and above, 2024/25, against 64.9% nationally

20 Nov
next induction; then 14 December 2026 and 25 January 2027, monthly after

What it is

Skills England standard ST1512, version 2.1 for starts from 22 May 2026, in the Level 4 funding band published on GOV.UK. Some providers sell the same standard as "AI Automation Specialist" or "AI Workflow Specialist"; it is the same apprenticeship.

Apprentices learn to map a process, decide what AI should and should not do, build the automation, measure the time returned and keep it in use. Every module ends in a workplace build; the programme ends with a live workplace automation project signed off by their manager.

Who it is for

- Existing staff in HR, finance, marketing, operations, customer service or any other function. Most TESS apprentices are being upskilled, not newly hired.
- Aged 16 or over, living in England, not in full-time education, in a job where the apprenticeship develops new skills. No upper age limit.
- No degree, no maths or coding background required. English and maths are completed in line with the funding rules where needed.

Platforms and tools

Microsoft Copilot Studio, Power Automate, Google Gemini Gems, AppSheet, Make and Zapier, with Microsoft Copilot, Gemini and Claude as assistants. Projects include agentic, multi-agent workflows that run on the tools your business already uses.

Qualifications

INCLUDED	Microsoft Certified: AI Business Professional (exam AB-730), or Google AI Essentials BCS Foundation Certificate in Artificial Intelligence NCFE Level 3 AI Prompt Mastery
OPTIONAL ADD-ONS	NCFE Level 3 Data NCFE Level 3 Cyber Security Practices
FOR MANAGERS	The AI for Team Leaders edition carries a CMI Level 3 in Management and Leadership as a complimentary add-on

Plus the Level 4 apprenticeship certificate on completion.

Assessment and results

A workplace project and a professional discussion, assessed independently by NQual (Ofqual-recognised, approved for ST1512 v2.1); employers may choose 1st for Awarding or BCS on open cohorts. Graded Pass or Distinction; results in an average of five working days.

How it is delivered

- One live online workshop a month (Zoom or Teams), every session in the diary from day one.
- Coachy, TESS's AI tutor, available 24/7 on Teams and mobile, with a Manager Mode so line managers can see progress.
- Two personal tutors per learner; workplace project support throughout.
- Open cohorts monthly; hybrid or closed cohorts for one employer, in person at your site if preferred.

Funding, checked on GOV.UK on 2 November 2026

YOUR SITUATION	WHAT YOU PAY FROM 1 AUGUST 2026
Levy-paying employer with funds	Nothing beyond your levy. Training and assessment are drawn from your Growth and Skills Levy account up to the Level 4 funding band. Funds entering your account from 1 August 2026 expire after 12 months; balances held before then keep 24 months.
Non-levy employer, apprentice aged 16 to 24	Nothing. The government funds training and assessment up to the band maximum.
Non-levy employer, apprentice aged 25 or over	5% of the training cost; the government pays 95%.
Levy payer whose funds have run out, apprentice aged 25 or over	25% on new starts; apprentices aged 16 to 24 stay fully funded.
The apprentice	Nothing, ever.

Apprenticeship funding sits with the DWP since 1 April 2026; standards are set by Skills England. We confirm your exact position on the discovery call. Levy Clock: tessgroup.co.uk/levy-clock · Calculator: tessgroup.co.uk/levy-calculator.

How the 15 months run

INDUCTION
Dated induction day; Coachy set up; manager briefed; first process mapped.

MONTHS 1 TO 11
One live workshop a month, eleven modules, each ending in a workplace build on your own tools.

MONTH 12
Live workplace automation project, measured before and after, signed off by the manager.

THEN
Independent assessment: project and professional discussion. Results in about a week.

Editions

By function: HR and L&D (open cohorts, inductions 1 December 2026 and 12 January 2027), Finance, Marketing and Commercial (private cohorts from six learners). Same standard; every workshop and project rebuilt around that function's work.

By toolset: Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini or Claude editions for closed cohorts standardised on one stack.

Fast-track: all eleven modules in 8 months for a single employer's closed cohort, with the workplace project at month five.

What the employer gets

- A practitioner who automates the repetitive work in their own team and measures the hours returned on every project.
- Manager Mode in Coachy: progress, attendance and project status without chasing.
- Monthly workshop dates fixed for the whole programme.
- Published case studies at tessgroup.co.uk/case-studies: Colart, DPD, HTG, Covéa, what3words.

Next inductions

Friday 20 November 2026	Open cohort, online
Monday 1 December 2026	HR and L&D edition
Monday 14 December 2026	Open cohort, online
Tuesday 12 January 2027	HR and L&D edition
Monday 25 January 2027	Open cohort, online

Monthly starts after that. From discovery call to a team in learning is usually four to six weeks.

Next step: a 30-minute discovery call

We map the most repetitive tasks in your team, confirm funding and recommend the cohort and edition.

tessgroup.co.uk/book · 0333 0523 003 · info@thetessgroup.com

Individuals without an employer: tessgroup.co.uk/programmes/ai-automation-l4-learner-readiness

About TESS Group. Independent training provider founded in 2009, based in Northampton. Ofsted Good. 72% distinction rate across TESS. 4.9/5 from 776+ reviews (Google and Trustpilot combined). Over 10,000 learners trained. Cyber Essentials certified. Assessment partner NQual; awarding bodies BCS and NCFE; Microsoft and Google certification pathways.