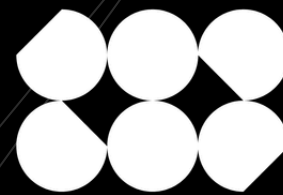


The Rocket Review



Professional Training Market Insights

May 2026

A quarterly look at what we are seeing across the UK Professional Training Sector

Professional Training Market Insights

What we are hearing from our Professional Training Partners

- ① Learner finance adoption continues to grow, with finance-enabled enrolments now representing 55–60% of sales for providers utilising finance, up an estimated 5–7% since May 2025. As cost of living pressures and global economic uncertainty make upfront training costs harder to manage, providers who are well positioned to offer learner finance are finding themselves better placed to attract and convert learners.
- ② UK M&A activity across the Professional Training sector remains subdued, with macroeconomic headwinds, ongoing government funding uncertainty, and a sluggish Private Equity market, all continuing to dampen deal flow. For cash-stable operators however, acquisition opportunities are beginning to emerge at attractive valuations for companies looking to grow market share.
- ③ AI adoption within training delivery is accelerating fast. Providers are redesigning learner journeys around personalisation, and those moving quickly to secure credible industry accreditation for AI courses are pulling ahead of the field.

Professional Training Market Insights

Trend: Learner Finance to Reduce Reliance on Public Funding

Providers who run both apprenticeship programmes and commercial self-funded courses are increasingly adding learner finance as a payment option, helping to diversify their revenue.

With government funding for apprenticeships continuing to shift, including the ongoing uncertainty around levy fund allocation and course eligibility, providers are increasingly looking to strengthen and diversify their cash flows.

Learner finance is proving an effective lever for diversifying, helping to convert more self-funded learners at the point of enrolment while generating upfront cash flows that reduce reliance on public funds.

Learner Finance Stats

25-30%

Typical Uplift in Enrolments

3-48 Month

Finance Terms

98%

Acceptance Rate on Finance

Rocket Learner Finance

>95,000

Learners enrolled via finance across
our UK Professional Training Partners
in the past two years

Learner Finance

Rocket is partnered with over 50% of the UK's leading training providers to integrate finance to allow learners to spread the cost of training, driving enrolment growth and strengthening cash flows. If you're interested in learning if this could be a fit for your business, please get in touch.

M&A Advisory

Rocket's executive team provides specialist M&A advisory for the UK professional training sector, leveraging an extensive portfolio of providers seeking acquisition or a strategic exit. In Q1 2026, Rocket finalised two M&A Deals in the Training Sector. If you are exploring an acquisition or considering an exit, we would be happy to talk.