

The Option Explained



Why should I take the Option (Part 5) on the 2025 Annual Levy Return form?

1. Only take the Option if your total PAYE and Labour Only Subcontractor emoluments were more than £80,000 in the 2024/25 tax year. Do not include emoluments relating to work outside NI.
2. Only take the Option if the total gross emoluments for the 2025/26 tax year will be less than the previous tax year. Payments for work outside NI are not included in the levy calculation.
3. You must select the Option if you want to claim CITB NI grant aid and you only commenced trading in the 2025/26 tax year.

What happens when I take the Option (Part 5) on the 2025 Levy Return?

4. You must complete Part 5 of the 2025 Annual Levy Return form and submit it to CITB NI by the deadline advised on the Return.
5. **Do not** complete figures in Part 7 of the Return.
6. You will receive a 1st Option Return in October 2025 requesting emoluments for the first 6 months of the tax year i.e. 6 April 2025 - 5 October 2025.
7. CITB NI will issue your invoice after we receive your 1st Option Return if your total emoluments for work in NI are greater or equal to £40,000.
8. You will receive a 2nd Option Return in April 2026 requesting emoluments for the 2nd 6 months of the tax year i.e. 6 October 2025 - 5 April 2026.
9. CITB NI will issue a further invoice if your total emoluments for the full tax year are £80,000 or more and a credit note if your total emoluments for the year are less than £80,000 and you previously received an invoice.
10. When you have completed the 2nd Option Return form, the figures submitted for the 1st and 2nd Option Returns should represent the total Gross PAYE and total Gross LOSC payments for the 2025/26 tax year. Any percentage deducted for work outside NI, should represent the total for the 2025/26 tax year.
11. Please Note: If you do not complete one or both Option Returns, your levy will revert back to the 2024/25 tax year and you may not be able to avail of CITB NI grants for the 2025/26 training year.

Can I pay by Direct Debit if I take the Option?

No, this is not possible. **However**, if you wish to pay monthly, please set up a Standing Order with your bank and advise CITB NI that this is how you wish to pay.

Do I need to take the Option every year?

No, the decision to take the Option is an annual decision and should be based on whether it is of financial benefit to your business.

If I take the Option, does this mean I opt out for a year?

No, the Option allows your business to pay a levy based on the emoluments paid in the current year instead of the previous year. It is your choice whether to pay on the previous tax year which is normal, or the current tax year. Please remember emoluments relating to work outside NI are not included in the calculation and should be omitted from your CITB NI Returns.

If I take the Option can I change my mind if business picks up during the year?

No, once you have decided to take the Option, you cannot change your mind. Therefore, it is important to work out the benefit of the Option prior to completing the 2025 Levy Return.

When do I need to advise CITB NI if I wish to take the Option?

The deadline for receipt of the 2025 Annual Levy Return form is **4pm on 29 August 2025**. This is when you must decide if you are taking the Option or not. If you do not take the Option, you must provide figures in Part 7 of the Return based on the emoluments paid in the 2024/25 tax year. Exclude emoluments relating to work outside NI.

CITB NI
Nutts Corner Training Centre
17 Dundrod Road
Crumlin
Co Antrim BT29 4SR

Tel: 028 90825466
Email: levy@citbni.org.uk
www.citbni.org.uk

