

# WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

We've summed up the five main points that help to explain what makes up an apprenticeship.

To find out more, visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and search for apprenticeships.

An apprenticeship gives you the opportunity to combine on the job training with study meaning you can earn while you learn.

With some apprenticeships you can even get a degree.

It usually takes between one and four years to complete an apprenticeship depending on which level you take.

Apprenticeships are available across a wide range of industries and many high quality, prestigious companies offer them.

Pay is dependent on the industry, location and type of apprenticeship. The minimum wage for apprentices aged 16-18 is currently £3.70 per hour however many employers pay more than this and some higher apprenticeships can pay as much as £500 per week.

# WHY BE AN APPRENTICE?

**A**chieve your career goals

**P**aid employment while you train



**P**rofessional qualifications available in some sectors

**R**eal jobs and a real future



**E**mployment prospects: 90% of apprentices stay in employment

**N**o limits: from nursing to nuclear engineering



**T**ransferable skills for life

**I**mproved employability through real work experience

**C**areer progression from intermediate up to degree

**E**mployers you know: from Sky to British Airways to the BBC



# A guide to apprenticeships

## What's an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a genuine job and under all circumstances you should be employed from day one. Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice, you'll:

- work alongside experienced staff
- gain job-specific skills
- earn a wage and get holiday pay
- be given time for study related to your role (the equivalent of one day a week)

## What levels are there?

All apprenticeships include elements of on the job and off the job training, leading to industry recognised standards or qualifications. Some apprenticeships also require an assessment at the end of the programme to assess the apprentice's ability and competence in their job role.

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at grade A* – C or 9 – 4
Advanced	3	2 A level passes/Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

## What can I earn?

The national minimum wage (NMW) for apprentices is £3.70 per hour as from April 2018. The apprentice NMW applies to apprentices aged under 19 or aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

Apprentices aged 25 and over, and not in the first year of their apprenticeship, will be entitled to the National Minimum Wage.

Year	25 and over	21 to 24	18 to 20	Under 18
April 2018	£7.83	£7.38	£5.90	£4.20

This is the legal minimum pay per hour, most receive more. The Apprenticeship Pay Survey 2016 estimated the average gross hourly pay received by apprentices in Great Britain was £6.70 an hour for level 2 and 3 apprentices which is equivalent to nearly £14,000 per year. More details on salaries and entry criteria in specific apprenticeship occupations can be found on [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) and search 'apprenticeships'

## What's in it for me?

- Earn a real wage;
- Be trained in the skills employers want;
- You will set yourself up for the future – apprentices enjoy marked salary increases when they complete their training, and those completing a higher apprenticeship could see increased earnings of an estimated £150,000 over their lifetime.\*

## Entry requirements

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16, living in England. The National Apprenticeship Service is committed to ensuring that high quality apprenticeships are a prestigious option, accessible to all people from all backgrounds. All vacancies on Find an apprenticeship will clearly state what the entry requirements are for the job role being advertised. There will be different entry requirements depending on the industry, job role and apprenticeship level.

Recent changes to the minimum English and maths requirements now mean that people with a learning difficulty or disability can now access a level 2 intermediate apprenticeship as long as they can achieve an entry level 3 qualification during their apprenticeship.

A Disability Confident Employer will generally offer an interview to any applicant that declares they have a disability and meets the minimum criteria as defined by the employer. For more details, search Disability Confident on [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK).

### Where do I look for an apprenticeship?

You can 'get in and go far' with an apprenticeship at some of Britain's biggest and brightest companies. With so many opportunities on offer, there are several ways you can find the apprenticeship that is right for you.

More information, including videos of current apprentices, is available at [getingofar.gov.uk](http://getingofar.gov.uk). You can search and apply for vacancies on Find an apprenticeship on [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK). Once you register on Find an apprenticeship, you can set up email and text alerts about new apprenticeship vacancies that may interest you.

If you would like to view more information on a selection of well-known employers you can visit the vacancy snapshot at [amazingapprenticeships.com](http://amazingapprenticeships.com). It displays a range of employer fact files outlining the types of apprenticeship vacancies available at these companies across the year. If you have a specific interest in a certain employer, it is also worth going direct to their recruitment site.

You could also meet employers and their apprentices through our new live broadcast feature. In these 30 minute interviews, we take a look behind the scenes of a range of different employers and meet some of their apprentices. [amazingapprenticeships.com/live-broadcasts](http://amazingapprenticeships.com/live-broadcasts)

Contact the National Apprenticeship Helpdesk for further support on **0800 015 0400** or by email: [nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk).

Our YouTube channel has useful hints and tips on applying plus other videos on apprenticeships, visit [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) and search apprenticeships/NAS.

### How do I apply?

At any one time on Find an apprenticeship, in a variety of careers and industries across England, there are between 12,000 - 20,000 apprenticeships vacancies online. Visit [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) and search 'apprenticeships'. You can search by keyword (job role, occupation type or apprenticeship level) and by location. In addition, some employers advertise vacancies on their website.

Once the right job comes up, you can simply register on the website and follow the step by step instructions to apply for the role.

### What is the role of my training provider?

Your training provider has a key role to play in providing off-the-job training, assessing your progress towards achieving your qualifications and supporting you generally during your apprenticeship. They work very closely with your employer to ensure that you receive

- an induction programme on starting
- a detailed training plan (including on-the-job training)
- regular progress reviews
- opportunities to put into practice off-the-job learning so that you can achieve your qualifications/requirements of the apprenticeship
- mentoring and general support throughout your apprenticeship

This will all be documented in a commitment statement that is part of the Apprenticeship Agreement. This is an individual learning plan that your provider, your employer and you will all sign up to.

You can find out more about learner satisfaction with training organisations and colleges by accessing the learner satisfaction survey results on the FE Choices pages of [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK).

### How many hours per week should I be working?

The minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, including any off-the-job training you undertake.'

However, this does not apply in every circumstance. For example, people with caring responsibilities or people with a disability may work reduced weekly hours. Where this is the case, the duration of the apprenticeship will be extended to take account of this.

The time spent on off-the-job training should be at least 20% and should be included as part of your hours. Your employer must allow you time to complete your apprenticeship within your working hours. If you need support with English and maths this should also be within working hours.

### Further Support

Not quite ready for an apprenticeship or job? Traineeships are open to those aged 16-24 and consist of a high quality work placement with an employer, work preparation training and English and maths for those who have not achieved a GCSE Grade A\* – C/9 – 4 or equivalent.

Visit [GOV.UK](http://GOV.UK) and search 'traineeships' for more information or to apply for traineeship opportunities.

If you need help with your apprenticeship application or professional advice on making the right choices, visit: [nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk) for a web-chat with an adviser or call: 0800 100 900 (free from landlines and mobiles).

### Follow National Apprenticeship Service:

**Twitter**  
[@apprenticeships](https://twitter.com/apprenticeships)

**Facebook**  
[facebook.com/getingofar](https://facebook.com/getingofar)

Search for apprenticeships on **GOV.UK** or call **0800 015 0400**

# Apprenticeships provide real world skills

Apprentices will be learning skills they'll need for life from day one.

One of the great benefits of the apprenticeship pathway is the exposure and support that the apprentice will receive to develop new skills. From the beginning of their programme, apprentices will be learning and refining a mix of important behaviours and skills.

Skill	Personal development
<b>Professional skills</b>	From learning the basics of writing emails in a professional tone, to understanding the do's and don'ts of the workplace, apprenticeships introduce individuals to working life in a supportive environment.
<b>Industry skills</b>	Apprentices gain immediate exposure to how businesses work. They will gain an understanding of sector priorities and trends linked to the industry. Apprentices will also work with up-to-date technology and learn from experienced colleagues working alongside them every day.
<b>Confidence</b>	Apprentices are given lots of support by their employer to help them to build their confidence. Tasks such as working on projects, contributing to the organisations' goals and speaking with clients will help to build up confidence as a professional and in their everyday life.
<b>Resilience</b>	Finding and securing an apprenticeship can be competitive and just like any job in the real world, not everyone that applies will be successful first time. The rigorous application processes, as well as finding solutions for challenges that may occur in the job role, will teach apprentices to develop and build their resilience.
<b>Time management</b>	Getting up early, meeting deadlines and managing their workload whilst studying for their apprenticeship, can make apprentices some of the best individuals at managing and prioritising their time.
<b>Interpersonal skills</b>	Working in a team with colleagues of various ages and backgrounds is very different to the school environment young people are used to. Learning how to communicate effectively, work collaboratively, share/receive feedback, listen and manage relationships in a professional environment will provide the opportunity to develop amazing interpersonal skills.
<b>Public speaking</b>	Apprentices may need to present ideas to colleagues on team/individual projects, speak in meetings or even deliver a speech at a conference. There are likely to be lots of opportunities to develop this skill in their job role.

# APPRENTICESHIPS

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### WHAT ARE THE LEVELS OF APPRENTICESHIP?

There are four types of apprenticeship: Intermediate, Advanced, Higher, and Degree. It will depend on the job role and your prior qualifications and experience as to which level you will need to start at.

INTERMEDIATE



DEGREE

### IS GETTING AN APPRENTICESHIP COMPETITIVE?



Securing an apprenticeship is the same as getting any other job: there will be other applicants and you'll need to impress to get shortlisted. Stand out by researching the employer, identifying the skills and qualities that make you unique and tailoring your application form.

### HOW DOES THE APPLICATION PROCESS WORK?

The organisation will usually advertise on the Find an apprenticeship website, so you will be able to apply online. After the closing date, the employer will shortlist the applicants. Interviews could be a mixture of face to face meetings, online tests, and assessment centres.



FIND AN  
APPRENTICESHIP

### DO YOU NEED ENGLISH AND MATHS?



Some employers ask for English and Maths GCSE before you start. However, if you don't have English and Maths it doesn't mean you can't do an apprenticeship. If you're willing to work towards Functional Skills then you will still be able to achieve your apprenticeship.

# THE ESSENTIALS: HIGHER & DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

Find out the essentials about higher and degree apprenticeships.



## WHAT ARE HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS?

A real alternative to full-time university study, you will build your career, gain professional skills, status and accreditation all whilst being in a job and earning a salary.



## A DEGREE WITHOUT THE DEBT

Apprentices do not need to pay for this fantastic opportunity as your employer and the government will fund the apprenticeship programme.



## WHAT DO THE LEVELS MEAN?

Levels 4 & 5 are equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate /Diploma or Foundation Degree, Level 6 to a Bachelor's or Honour's degree and Level 7 to a Master's degree.



## DESIGNED BY EMPLOYERS AND UNIVERSITIES

Degree apprenticeships are designed to be relevant for the skills industry is looking for. Apprentices split their time between studying and being in the workplace.



## WHAT JOB ROLES HAVE DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS?

Accountancy, Aerospace, Banking, Broadcasting, Civil Engineering, Cyber Security, Healthcare, Laboratory Science, Law, Management, Nursing, Policing, Solicitor, Surveying, Teaching and many more.

# QUESTIONS FOR APPRENTICES

There are now more than **half a million** people undertaking apprenticeships in England, working in all sorts of industries - from engineering to accounting to media - and for really exciting employers like the **BBC, John Lewis, BMW and the Ministry of Defence**.

There's no better source of information about what it's really like to be an apprentice than an apprentice themselves. If you get the chance to talk to someone currently doing an apprenticeship, here are some ideas for questions you might want to ask them.

**WHAT** is it like being an apprentice? Do you feel like one of the team and part of the organisation? Can you give me an idea of a typical day?

**WHERE** did you start when you were applying for your apprenticeship in terms of research or other preparation? How did you get ready for the interview or assessment stage of the process? Can you give me any tips?

**HOW** do you balance studying whilst working at the same time? Do you find that you are given plenty of time off work to study? How do you manage your time?

**WHO** helped and encouraged you to think about becoming an apprentice- was it your parents, your school, your friends? Where would you suggest I go to find the most useful information about apprenticeships?

**WHY** did you choose to become an apprentice. How important was it to you to earn a salary whilst learning?

**WHEN** you are at work, how supported do you feel by your employer? Do you get lots of training and mentoring? Can you give some examples of the help they give you?

# 5 TIPS TO HELP YOUR STUDENT APPLY FOR AN APPRENTICESHIP

As a teacher you want what's best for your students. Full time University isn't for everyone and some of your students are going to need your help in applying for an apprenticeship. If you're not too sure where to start to help them, follow our tips below.

**1 Register on Find an apprenticeship**  
Find an apprenticeship is a live jobs website. Students can quickly and easily register for an account, allowing them to get email and text alerts about new apprenticeships and track existing applications.

**2 Sign in**  
Once your students have an account they can get started immediately. Encourage them to sign in and explore the search options and alert features.



**3 Search for jobs**  
Students can search by keyword, location and apprenticeship level. The results can then be easily filtered by closing date, distance and date added.



**4 Apply**  
The application process for an apprenticeship is very similar to applying for university. The online application form should be carefully written and completed to a high standard.

**5 Preview and submit**  
Once students have completed every section of the application, it's important they review it thoroughly before submitting. Encourage them to get someone else to proof read it with a fresh pair of eyes.



# NEW STYLES OF APPRENTICESHIP RECRUITMENT

Lots of companies are using new technology as part of their apprenticeship recruitment process. Read about some of the latest methods below:

## ADAPTIVE TESTS (COMPUTERISED ADAPTIVE TESTING)

These short on-line tests that can last around 6 minutes adapt to how quickly you answer. The more that you get right, the more difficult the questions will become.

They can include numerical reasoning and verbal reasoning as well as critical thinking. Most employers using these tests, will have some sample tests available on their site. If they don't, you can search on the internet for free practice tests.



## SITUATIONAL JUDGEMENT

A situational judgement test is a type of psychological aptitude test that assesses your judgement for solving work-related problems. The test will give you an example of a workplace scenario and present you with three or four options. You must select what you would most and least likely do in that scenario. They will typically link to the organisation's competency framework (which you can usually find on the company website).

## BEHAVIOURAL QUESTIONNAIRE

These questionnaires focus on how you like to work. They are not concerned with your abilities, but how you see yourself in how you relate to others, your approach to problems, and how you deal with feelings and emotions. With this assessment, there are no right or wrong answers.

It will be very specific to the organisation's competency framework. You will be able to see the kinds of behaviours that the employer expects from their employee



# FIVE EXTRA–CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES THAT LOOK GREAT ON YOUR CV

Did you know that employers don't just look at your qualifications? Your interests, and hobbies, the sports you do and the clubs you attend help an employer to get a better picture of who you are. We've picked the top five extra-curricular activities that look great on your CV, to get you thinking about what it says about you!

## 1 CHARITY WORK

Maybe you've set up a fundraiser for a charity close to your heart or planned a sponsored event? Charity work displays planning skills and the ability to manage and raise money for a worthy cause.

## 2 EXTRA-CURRICULAR CLUBS

Being on a sports team shows you're a team player and a reliable worker, while being a part of a club like Explorers or Guides allows you to show leadership and learn new skills.

## 3 MUSICAL ACTIVITIES

Learning a musical instrument is not easy as it requires patience and commitment, valuable skills for any employer. Taking exams to learn different grades on an instrument shows hard-work and progression: definitely something to write on your CV.

## 4 VOLUNTEERING

Taking the initiative to volunteer displays a proactive approach to work and shows employers you're highly motivated. During volunteering you're likely to gain many skills that help prepare you for working life.

## 5 FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Taking the time to learn a foreign language shows dedication, a willingness to learn and helps you think creatively.

# QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYERS

When you start looking for a job, you're going to meet employers whether at careers fairs, interviews or open days and tours. It is always best to have some questions ready, to show them you're interested in their company and committed to the apprenticeship.

## WHEN IS THE CLOSING DATE?

Ask employers what time of year they advertise vacancies and when the closing date is so you'll know soon as it goes live on Find an apprenticeship, the online apprenticeship recruitment portal.

## ARE THERE ANY ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

Find out what they're looking for in terms of grades and experience, as well as what other qualities they look for in their apprentices, so you know what you're aiming for.

## WHAT TRAINING WILL I RECEIVE?

An employer wants to see that you're interested in your own development. Ask them what training they provide and how they help their apprentices develop to their full potential.

## WHAT ARE THE PROGRESSION OPPORTUNITIES?

Most employers want to keep their apprentices once they've finished their apprenticeship. Ask about career progression and the sorts of job roles their apprentices usually go into.

## WHAT REALLY IMPRESSES YOU?

Some employers will have hundreds of applicants for their apprenticeship programmes. Ask what makes them really notice someone, what one thing impresses them about candidates?

## WHAT'S NEW?

Employers love to hear that people are interested in their company and the work they do. Research the company so that you can ask questions about new products they've launched, services they offer, or awards they've won.

## DO YOU OFFER TOURS OR VISITS?

Many employers offer tours and visits, which are a great chance to see behind the scenes of a business. Make sure you turn up on time, dress smartly and look interested and happy. Although it may feel like an informal chat, this is a great way to impress a future employer and make yourself memorable.

# 4 PLACES TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT APPRENTICESHIPS

Stuck on where to go for more apprenticeship information?  
You are only a few clicks away.  
Here are our top four...



## Find an apprenticeship

[www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

Create an account, search for the latest jobs, apply and receive text and email alerts about your applications online.



## Amazing Apprenticeships

[www.amazingapprenticeships.com](http://www.amazingapprenticeships.com)

Your central hub for all the latest apprenticeship information. Download the free Apprenticeship Pack, watch short films, download free posters and much more. Sign up to the newsletter so you never miss a free resource again!

## National Careers Service

<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>

Find out more about the different types of careers available to you, receive job search advice and personalised help from careers advisers. You can also access face to face advice, speak to someone on the phone or chat online.

## Apprenticeship Guide

[www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk](http://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk)

The Apprenticeship Guide contains brief summaries of every apprenticeship offered in England, plus general careers advice, real life case studies, employer advertising, a directory of training providers and much more.



# TRAINEESHIPS, A ROUTE INTO AN APPRENTICESHIP OR A JOB

If you would like to develop your confidence or experience before applying for an apprenticeship, a traineeship could be the perfect opportunity for you.

## WHAT ARE THEY?

Traineeships help to develop skills and confidence in a real workplace, whilst being supported by a training provider

## HOW LONG ARE THEY?

Traineeships last from a minimum of 6 weeks to a maximum of 6 months, with the content tailored to your individual career needs

## HOW DO THEY HELP?

Typically, more than 50% of trainees progress to an apprenticeship or job and 4 out of 5 say they are satisfied with their traineeship

## WHAT DO I GET?

Traineeships can give you: Employability skills; High quality work experience; English and Maths support if needed

# WHAT NEXT?

**1** Hear from trainees. Search for GREAT Traineeships on: [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) or visit: <http://amazingapprenticeships.com/need-to-know/traineeships/>

**2** Read the Traineeship fact sheet: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/traineeships-are-they-for-me](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traineeships-are-they-for-me)

**3** Speak to your Work Coach. They will be able to advise you about local programmes and opportunities.

**4** Register on Find a Traineeship and start applying for opportunities today: [www.gov.uk/find-traineeship](http://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship)

**5** Speak to a local training provider and search the course directory: <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/course-directory/home>

**6** Get some advice:

- webchat
- phone
- email
- call back
- face to face
- text
- textphone
- other languages
- post

Visit: [www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/contact-us/home](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/contact-us/home)