

★ RATEMY**APPRENTICESHIP**

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# **A GUIDE TO CAREER OPTIONS 2021**

For school and college leavers

# WELCOME TO A GUIDE TO CAREER OPTIONS 2021

**Deciding what to do when you leave school or college can be tricky. Throw a planet-pausing pandemic into the mix and it seems even trickier...**

The good news is, most companies have found a way to continue hiring students fresh out of school or college - so you still have tons of options!

This guide is packed with advice to help you take control of your career; from choosing the right path to acing your online application.

It also features the **Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers 2021**, which is based on thousands of reviews written by real apprentices. These employers are the best in the business when it comes to apprenticeships and work experience schemes, so a great place to start your search.

Wherever your career takes you, we're here to help.

Stay safe and look after each other,

**The RateMyApprenticeship Team x**



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## **PETER MUCKLOW, DIRECTOR OF APPRENTICESHIPS, EDUCATION AND SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY**

Anyone aged 16 or over can become an apprentice. There is no upper age limit, enabling many individuals to start their career, change career, or return to the workplace as an apprentice. New apprenticeship standards are available all the time, in a broad range of occupations, including manufacturing engineer, clinical practitioner, and architect and ranging from a Level 3 acoustic technician to a Level 7 specialist community and public health nurse. There really is an apprenticeship for everybody and the variety and richness of apprenticeships on offer means they are becoming a more appealing option for individuals and employers alike.

There are lots of benefits to being an apprentice, from getting paid and training at the same time, with at least 20% of your time spent in 'off the job' training - often at a college, university or with a training provider. Apprentices benefit from receiving the training, needed by industry, whilst being on the career path of their choice.

An apprenticeship can take between one and six years to complete, depending on the apprenticeship standard chosen, the level of apprenticeship and any previous experience an apprentice brings. There are many, many different apprenticeships available all over England, at companies large and small, in a wide range of industries, from local organisations to large national brands.

Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to chase dream jobs, kick start amazing careers and reach your potential.

Visit **[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)** to find out more. Search and apply for apprenticeship vacancies:

**[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentice/  
find-an-apprenticeship](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentice/find-an-apprenticeship)**

**Peter Mucklow,**  
Director of Apprenticeships



# A NOTE TO PARENTS

**With tuition fees costing a hefty £9,250 per year, more and more young people are swapping university for paid apprenticeships with the UK's biggest and brightest employers.**

**But how much do YOU really know about apprenticeships?**

**Let's start by answering a few questions...**

## **HOW MUCH WILL MY CHILD BE PAID?**

Based on the thousands of reviews submitted to [the apprenticeship levy](#), the average salary for an apprentice was **£18,662** in 2020.

## **WHO FUNDS APPRENTICESHIPS?**

Every programme is co-funded by the government and the employer. This is possible because of the apprenticeship levy, which was introduced by the government in 2017 to replace all taxpayer funding of apprenticeships.

## **IS MY CHILD GUARANTEED A JOB AT THE END?**

Not necessarily, but almost, 90% of apprentices go into work or further training after completing an apprenticeship, with two-thirds of those staying with the same employer.

## **HOW HAS COVID-19 IMPACTED APPRENTICESHIPS?**

Certain industries have been hit harder than others. Where possible, employers have moved their programmes online so that school leavers don't miss out on vital work experience. This guide is packed with advice on tackling the likes of virtual assessment days and video interviews.

[The Department for Education](#) is committed to inspiring young people to reach their career goals, whether that starts with an apprenticeship or university.

Armed with this **Guide to Career Options**, you too can do everything within your power to help your child navigate their career path in these challenging times.

**For a closer look at apprenticeships, head to**

# GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT

It's time to shake the stigma attached to apprenticeships...

## MYTH

An apprenticeship isn't a proper job.

## FACT

Apprentices get paid to work on projects that contribute to the business.

## WHY?

Think apprentices get lumped with photocopying and stapler refilling? Think again. Apprentices are given real responsibility from day one, working alongside experienced professionals to develop the skills they need to thrive in the industry. Sounds like a job to us.

## MYTH

Apprenticeships only exist in trade industries.

## FACT

Apprenticeships offer entry-level routes into a vast range of different careers.

## WHY?

These days you can choose to do an apprenticeship in almost anything. Digital marketing. Nursing. Even bee-keeping. And that's because tons of exciting companies, including AstraZeneca, McDonald's and PwC, all hire apprentices fresh out of school.

## MYTH

Most apprentices are men.

## FACT

It's a 50/50 split between the number of men and women starting apprenticeships each year.

## WHY?

More women started an apprenticeship in 2018/19 than men! (50.1% of them to be exact.) The gender gap is even closing in traditionally male-dominated sectors like engineering and construction.

## MYTH

Apprentices don't earn very much.

## FACT

An apprenticeship is a one-way ticket to financial independence.

## WHY?

All employers pay above the National Minimum Wage of £4.15 an hour, with the average apprentice earning £18,662 a year. Imagine what you could spend all that hard-earned dosh on. You could start saving for your first house... or blow the whole lot on UberEats.

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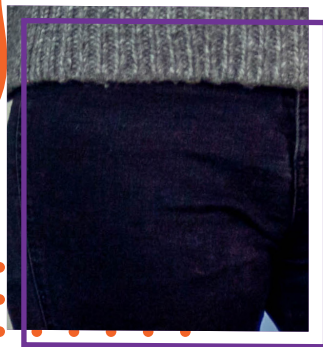
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Sonya  
Senior Associate, Audit, PwC

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# APPRENTICESHIP OR UNIVERSITY?

**After finishing school or college, most students will either go to university, or do an apprenticeship. Let's explore the pros and cons of each option.**

## APPRENTICESHIPS

### THE PROS

Apprenticeships offer qualifications that are equivalent to five GCSEs, all the way up to a Masters degree. (Remember, you don't have to go to university to get a degree!)

There are social perks to doing an apprenticeship, you'll be working alongside other apprentices, and most companies organise socials and after-work activities.

There are no tuition fees if you do an apprenticeship. Apprentices work, learn and earn, all at the same time.

### THE CONS

An apprenticeship really is a job, and that means zero lie-ins, working 9-5, Monday to Friday.

Lord Alan Sugar has little real involvement in apprenticeships.

### OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

You can work your way up and up the apprenticeship ladder, starting as a level 3 apprentice and work towards becoming a degree apprentice.

## UNIVERSITY

### THE PROS

Going to university is an opportunity to leave home, and gain some real independence. There are 130 universities in the UK and 1000s of courses to choose from.

Some degrees offer placement years, or the opportunity to study abroad.

### THE CONS

University is expensive. The average student debt of graduates exceeds £40,000.

Many of the social perks of going to university are void due to COVID. Hopefully, they will return in the future!

Going to university does NOT guarantee you'll get a job after you graduate.

### OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

Some courses are government-funded, such as nursing, so tuition-fees are not inevitable.

# APPRENTICESHIPS AFTER COVID-19

**The pandemic has put a stop to a lot of things. Seeing pals. Watching live sport. The entire festival season. But it hasn't put a stop to apprenticeships - so at least you can crack on with your career.**

## THE FACTS

When Covid-19 first steamrolled through our lives, 23% of businesses announced they were cancelling their apprenticeship and school leaver programmes.

Others were put on hold, with the practical nature of the work in industries like construction, manufacturing and retail, making a fully virtual apprenticeship impossible.

HOWEVER, the majority of companies reacted quickly, moving everything online in a matter of weeks. Interviews. Induction days. Even office tours.

And by the end of 2020, opportunities for school and college leavers were reported to have gone up by 6%! (It was a Christmas miracle.)

## YOUR OPTIONS

Getting work experience during a pandemic will show future employers you're a proactive candidate, who adapted to get ahead in your career.

## VIRTUAL APPRENTICESHIPS

Lots of employers are using tools like Zoom, Skype and Microsoft Teams to run elements of their apprenticeships online.

You might, for instance, have to attend a virtual assessment day, or even be onboarded remotely. Off-the-job training will either be done online or at a college, where you may have to socially distance.

## VIRTUAL EXPERIENCES

Module-based schemes tend to be self-paced, so you can choose your own schedule. All you need is a decent WiFi connection!

Virtual experiences aren't a case of logging on, sending a few emails and then putting Stranger Things on. Instead, you'll carry out a series of tasks that have real value for the business.



Hasan  
Corporate Tax Associate, PwC

# Work Ready Virtual Experience

## Developing soft skills virtually



**Forage**

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has teamed up with Forage and Development Beyond Learning, to launch a FREE work ready virtual experience.

### It's open to everyone

So if your apprenticeship has been cancelled, or you didn't have anything lined up at all, you can still develop the skills you need to thrive in the workplace - from the comfort of your pyjamas.

### What you will learn

#### #1 Wellbeing and resilience under lockdown

The ability to bounce back has never been so important, both in and out of the workplace. Discover how to re-frame your thinking and adopt positive mindsets in these challenging times.

#### #2 Virtual first impressions

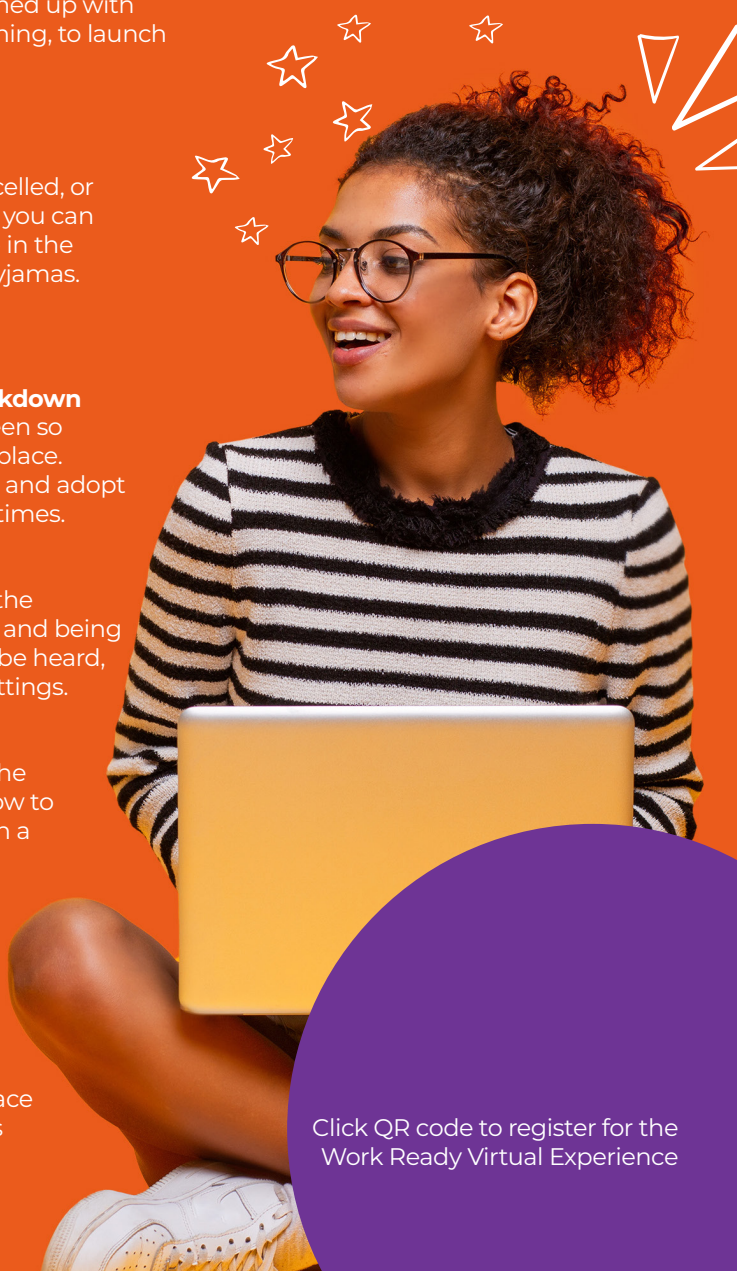
Making a good first impression can be the difference between being offered a job, and being rejected. Learn how to get noticed and be heard, without dominating others in virtual settings.

#### #3 Virtual networking

The new way of working has changed the way we network altogether. Find out how to use networking to elevate your career, in a virtual context.

### Why join?

- Gain a certificate to put on your CV and LinkedIn
- Arm yourself with the skills employers want
- Do it in your own time, at your own pace
- Leverage the experience in interviews
- Be first to hear about apprenticeship opportunities



Click QR code to register for the Work Ready Virtual Experience

# THE LOWDOWN ON T LEVELS

**T Levels are a brand new, post-GCSE qualification designed to take your future to the next level. Here's what you need to know...**

## WHAT ARE T LEVELS?

A T Level is equivalent to three A Levels, and takes two years of full-time study to complete. Students can then go straight into skilled employment, further study OR a higher apprenticeship.

## HOW DO THEY WORK?

T Level students spend **80%** of their time in the classroom, learning the relevant core theory and concepts. And the other **20%** putting this into practice on a 45-day industry placement.

To get your certificate, you'll need to complete the technical qualification and industry placement, plus have passes in English and Maths at Level 2/GCSE.

## WHY CHOOSE T LEVELS?

- Get real workplace experience on your CV
- Develop the exact skills employers want
- Gain nationally-recognised qualifications

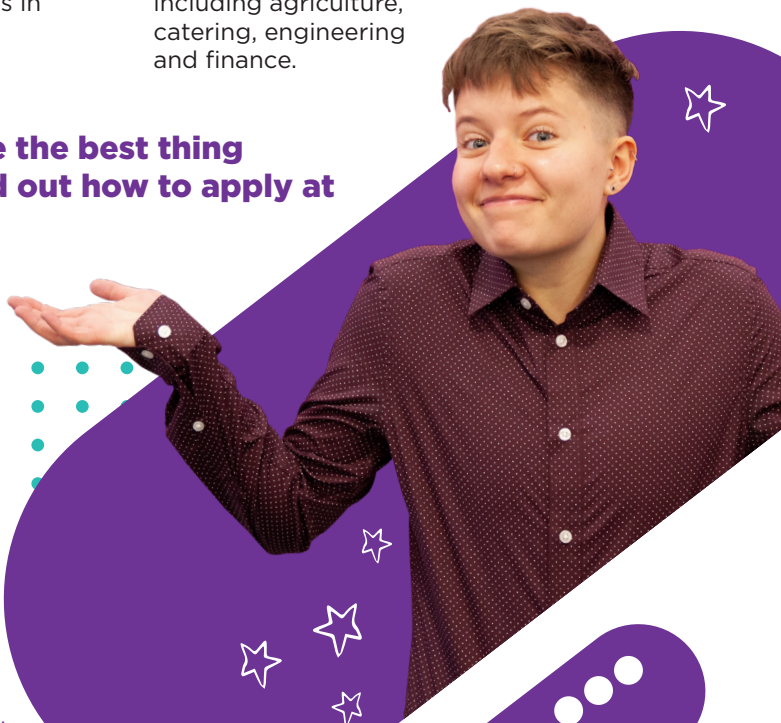
## WHAT SUBJECTS ARE AVAILABLE?

The very first T Levels were launched in September 2020:

- Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction
- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Education and Childcare

And that's just the start. Another 21 subjects are being rolled out over the next few years, including agriculture, catering, engineering and finance.

**Reckon T Levels sound like the best thing since holes in cheese? Find out how to apply at**



Ella  
Junior Management  
Consultant Apprentice, IBM

# TRAINING PROVIDERS EXPLAINED

**Apprentices spend 80% of their time at work, learning on-the-job.**

**The other 20% is for off-the-job training. That's where the training provider comes in.**

## TYPES OF TRAINING PROVIDERS

There are four main types of training providers:

### 1. FURTHER EDUCATION COLLEGES

Just like a sixth-form college but in a much more adult environment. You'll call the tutors by their first names, and students are aged anywhere between 16 to 99 (although most will be 16 to 18).

### 2. INDEPENDENT TRAINING PROVIDERS

Employers that can't deliver the off-the-job training outsource it to these organisations. They only train apprentices, unlike colleges where apprentices mix with students in full-time education.

### 3. IN-HOUSE TRAINING PROVIDERS

Large employers have in-house tutors and training facilities. BAE Systems, Barclays and Virgin Media all have these capabilities within their company.

### 4. UNIVERSITIES

Universities and other higher education institutions act as training providers for level 4, 5, 6 and 7 apprentices.

## HOW THEY SUPPORT YOU

Your training provider is there to ensure you receive...

- an induction when you begin your apprenticeship
- a detailed training plan
- regular progress reviews
- opportunities to practice off-the-job learning
- mentoring and general support throughout your apprenticeship

# APPRENTICESHIPS IN SCOTLAND

**Over 28,000 young people in Scotland started an apprenticeship last year.**

## WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

Apprenticeships are often described as being 'like a real job' - they are a real job. An apprenticeship is an opportunity to kickstart a career at age 16-18, immediately after you finish school.

Apprentices spend 80% of their time at work, and spend the other 20% off-the-job working towards qualifications.

## WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

There are three different levels of apprenticeships in Scotland - foundation, modern and graduate.

### 1 FOUNDATION

If you're studying towards your Highers or National 5s, you can complete a foundation apprenticeship alongside your studies.

After 1-2 years, you'll finish your apprenticeship with work experience and extra qualifications that are equivalent to two Scottish Highers.

### 2 MODERN

Modern apprenticeships is a term used to describe all jobs that include work-based training in Scotland.

There are a range of qualifications on offer between SCQF 5, which is equivalent to National 5s, all the way up to SCQF 11, which is equivalent to a degree.

To qualify for a modern apprenticeship you must have reached the Scottish statutory minimum school leaving age. That's aged 16 for most people.

You also have to be:

- Living in Scotland
- Not in full-time education

### 3 GRADUATE

Graduate apprenticeships are an alternative to a traditional university degree. You'll work for a company full-time, and study towards a bachelors or masters degree on the side.

These apprenticeships can last anywhere between 3-6 years, and have been developed through a partnership between the higher/further education and Scottish industry.

There are a crazy range of graduate apprenticeships currently available, including in civil engineering, financial services and cyber security.

**If you want to  
discover more about  
apprenticeships in Scotland, visit:**

# WHICH PATH WILL YOU TAKE?

Do you know what you're going to do when you finish school or college?  
If you haven't got the foggiest idea, don't panic. Our Next Step Explorer can  
help you find the right path in seconds.

I AM 16-18

I AM 14-16

ARE YOU DOING  
YOUR A LEVELS,  
T LEVELS OR  
A BTEC?

DO YOU WANT TO  
DO A LEVELS, T  
LEVELS OR  
A BTEC?

DO YOU WANT TO  
GO TO UNIVERSITY?

DO YOU WANT TO DO  
AN APPRENTICESHIP?

DO YOU HAVE THE  
REQUIRED GRADES?

DO YOU MEET THE  
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

DO YOU WANT TO  
COMBINE UNIVERSITY  
WITH WORKING IN  
INDUSTRY?

CHECK WHEN  
CLEARING OPENS

A TRAINEESHIP  
QUALIFIES YOU FOR...

NO

YES

YES

NO

NO

YES

NO

YES

YES

NO

NO

YES

NO

YES

# APPRENTICESHIP APPLICATION FORMS

**Most apprenticeships begin with an online application form, which usually includes:**

- A PERSONAL INFORMATION**
- B DETAILS ABOUT YOUR EDUCATION**
- C PREVIOUS WORK EXPERIENCE**
- D QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR HOBBIES, STRENGTHS AND INTERESTS**

**APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME APPLICATION PROCESS**

**A PERSONAL DETAILS**

Surname:  Forename:   
Address:  Mob No.:   
Postcode:  Home No.:   
Date of Birth:  Email:   
Nationality:  National Insurance No.:

**B EDUCATION**

Secondary School(s) and College(s) attended (including current School/College):  From:  To:

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**Qualifications already obtained:**  
Exam: (eg GCSE/A/AS/NVQ)  Subject:  Result/Grade:

**Exams to be taken before starting your apprenticeship:**  
Exam: (eg GCSE/A/AS/NVQ)  Subject:  Forecast Grade:

**C EMPLOYMENT**

**Starting with your most recent employer:**  
Job Title:  Company:   
Duties, Responsibilities and Achievements:

**D QUESTIONS FROM THE EMPLOYER**

Why are you a great candidate for this role?:

Where do you see yourself in 5 years?:

**PROCEED WITH APPLICATION**

## TIPS AND TRICKS

1

Read the form from beginning to end before you start filling it in. Just like an exam paper.

2

Print off the job description and circle all the desired skills. Or write them down and make a checklist. Include these skills in your written answers.

3

If you don't have any work experience, you can include any voluntary or charity work you've completed.

4

Write your responses in a separate Microsoft Word or Google doc. Spell check your work, and then copy and paste it into the form.

5

Once you've finished, save a copy of all your responses. It means you have some answers ready to tweak and tailor for another application.

# YOUR CV



**CVs are kind of like Tinder profiles - except they get you interviews, not dates. Here's how to write one that makes employers swipe right.**

## CONTACT DETAILS

 Email

 Phone

*Add your LinkedIn or even your Instagram (if you have a hobby or work-related account).*

## KEY SKILLS

- Put together a list of your skills, with real-life examples where you've used them.
- Meet the job description by targeting the skills employers are looking for.
- Include both soft skills (e.g. resilience, creativity, critical thinking) and technical skills (e.g. project management, data analysis, PhotoShop).

## INTERESTS

What do you do when you're not studying or watching Netflix? Whether you're a champion chess player or in the school hockey team, stick it here.

# YOUR NAME

## PERSONAL PROFILE

Just two or three sentences that sum up who you are and why you want to apply.

## EDUCATION & QUALIFICATIONS

List your qualifications, starting with the most recent.

Tailor your CV to the job by including any relevant school or college projects you've worked on.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

For each job, highlight the key projects you worked on, how you made an impact and what you learnt.

No relevant experience? Your part-time job at Lidl's bakery, or that lucrative eBay side hustle you're running, will also show employers you're capable, proactive and hardworking.

## WORK EXPERIENCE

Have you got any work experience that is relevant to the scheme you're applying for?

You can also list any voluntary or charity work you have completed.

## REFERENCES

Choose people that know you personally, e.g. a teacher or school careers advisor.

Employers will contact you if they want to speak to your references - so write **'References are available on request'**.

# WRITING A COVER LETTER

**Writing a cover letter is a bit like getting in and out of tight trousers. It's tricky. Here's a guide to writing one...**

Avoid writing 'Dear Sir/Madam' or 'To whom it may concern'. If you're unsure who you're writing to, contact the company and ask. It shows initiative!

Explain where you first heard about the company and the role. Employers love to know where you found them.

Try and avoid using buzzwords and clichés, such as describing yourself as 'always giving 110%'.

Dear Name,

Begin by specifying which job you are applying for, and where you found the job.

Then, explain why you are interested in the job. Do some research and relate it to the company's values, their vision or a recent project they have been involved in.

Next, you need to illustrate why you should be considered for the role. Focus on your experience or qualifications, and what skills you can bring to the party.

Thank the reader for considering your application, and mention that you'd love to discuss your application further in an interview.

Yours Sincerely,

Your Name

Your Name  
Address  
Telephone Number  
Email Address

Date

The reviews on

are a great place to start researching specific companies.

**Re-read your cover letter carefully and check the spelling and grammar before you send it.**

# VIDEO INTERVIEWS

**Many employers have now moved their entire application process online - including the interview. Here are some tips to help you nail your next video interview.**

- Create a distraction-free space with good lighting and a neutral background. (Sitting in front of a Joe Exotic poster doesn't scream professionalism.)
- Dress as if you were going to the interview in person. Ensure your bottom half matches your top, in case you need to get out of your seat.
- Check your laptop is charged and the webcam is working BEFORE the interview begins. (If you don't have either, you might be able to use the camera on your phone.)
- Be aware that any sound you make will likely get picked up by your microphone. So avoid any unnecessary paper rustling or pen clicking.
- If you have a rubbish internet connection or the call cuts out, don't panic! Play it cool and treat it as a test of your adaptability.
- Finally, don't be scared to ask the interviewer to repeat a question. If you can't hear or miss something, just ask!

## THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES OF VIDEO INTERVIEW:

### LIVE

You and your interviewer will see each other in real-time, via a video platform like Zoom, Skype or Microsoft Teams.

### PRE-RECORDED

Instead of having a two-way conversation, you'll answer a set of pre-recorded questions. There's usually a time limit, but most platforms allow you to have 2-3 practice goes before submitting your final answer.



Khamal  
Junior Management  
Consultant Apprentice, IBM

# PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS

You might have to complete psychometric tests and other online tests when you apply for an apprenticeship.

## 1

### ABSTRACT REASONING

Used to judge your flexible thinking and reasoning skills.

## 2

### APTITUDE TESTS

These tests measure your knowledge of a specific subject related to the apprenticeship.

## 3

### PERSONALITY TESTS

You'll answer 50-100 quick-fire questions that analyse personality and character traits.

## 4

### VERBAL REASONING

Here you'll read a detailed extract of written text and pull out the important information.

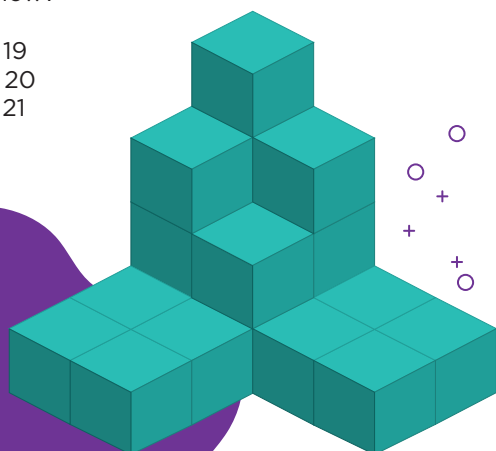
### EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

Most of these tests are designed so that only **1-2%** of candidates answer all of the questions correctly. So don't worry if you can't answer them all!

#### ABSTRACT REASONING

How many cubes are there in the figure below?

- a) 19
- b) 20
- c) 21



#### VERBAL REASONING

Mick paid more for his car than John.  
John paid less for his car than Neil.  
Stevie paid more for her car than Christine.  
Christine paid the same amount for her car as Neil.

If the information above is true, which of the following must also be true?

- a) Mick paid more for his car than Stevie.
- b) Christine paid less for her car than John.
- c) John paid less for his car than Stevie.
- d) Mick paid more for his car than Neil.
- e) Christine paid less for her car than Mick.

# ASSESSMENT DAYS

**Just like family quizzes, gigs and Bumble dates, many assessment centres have gone virtual due to the pandemic.**

## WHAT IS A VIRTUAL ASSESSMENT CENTRE?

Assessment centres are normally the final stage of the selection process. They are hosted at a company's offices, with multiple candidates attending.

The virtual equivalents are very similar, but the whole process is online, and you won't meet the other candidates or the recruiter in-person.

## HOW TO PREPARE

When you're invited to attend a virtual assessment centre, the employer will likely send you a briefing email explaining the process, with instructions on how to join the virtual platform.

Read all the instructions and any supporting material carefully!

You might also have to complete some admin beforehand...

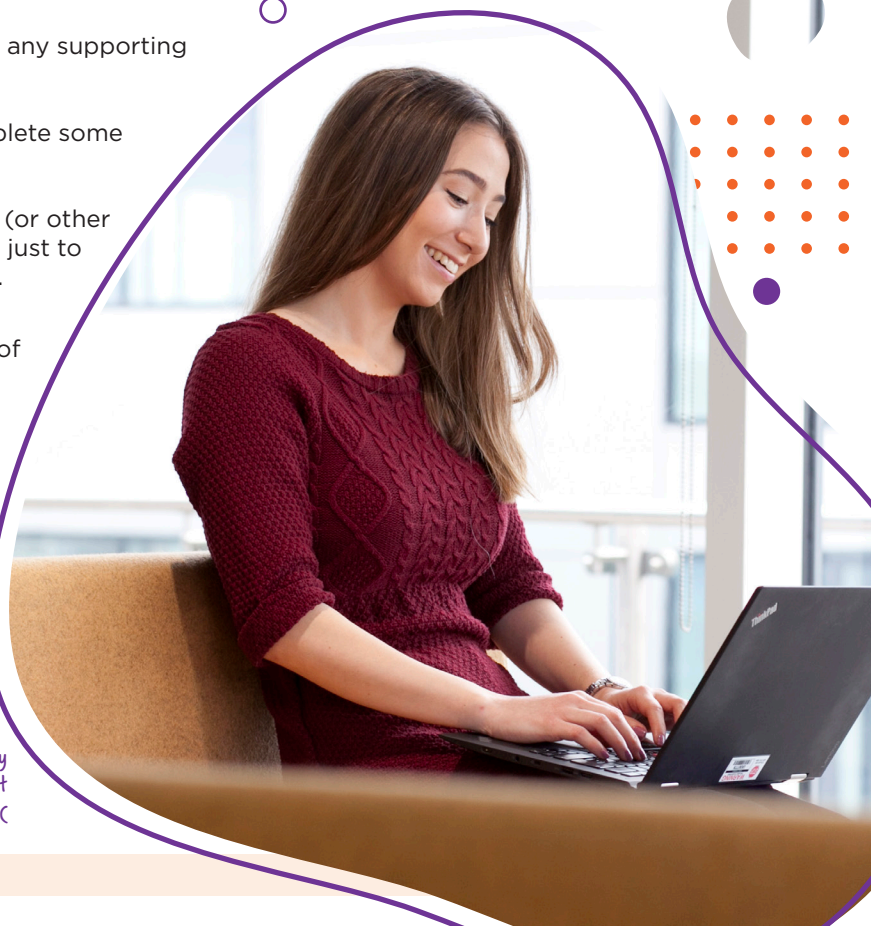
- Emailing a passport photo (or other ID) to the employer. This is just to confirm your right to work.
- Sharing a contact number with the employer in case of any connectivity issues or mishaps on the day.
- Downloading the platform the assessment is hosted on and creating an account. (Most employers use Zoom, Google Hangouts or Microsoft Teams.)

Lucy  
Junior Management  
Consultant, Advisory, PwC

## ON THE DAY

Here's a short checklist of things to do on the day, before the assessment centre begins:

- ☐ Set up in a location with a **strong wifi** connection.
- ☐ Run a quick **test** to check your microphone and webcam are working.
- ☐ Plug your device into a **charging socket** so that you don't run out of battery!
- ☐ Join via the invitation link **15 minutes early**, so if you have any issues, you can resolve them.



## WHAT TO EXPECT

This is an example of what you might encounter on the day...

**09:00**

### WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS

The assessment centre will begin with a welcome from the employer. They will give you an agenda for the day, and give a short presentation about the company.

**09:15**

### ICE-BREAKER EXERCISES

To lighten the mood and put all candidates at ease. Normally a short game.

**09:30**

### GROUP EXERCISE

58% of employers include some form of group role play. You'll be assessed on your behaviour within a team and your contribution to solving a work-based problem.

**10:30**

### BREAK

Run to the toilet, or take a moment to refocus and collect your thoughts. Have a sip of water, or something more exotic, like Orangina.

**10:40**

### PSYCHOMETRIC TESTS

Some assessment centres include psychometric tests to analyse your analytical skills and personality characteristics.

**11:30**

### BREAK

If the assessment centre is an all-day affair, you'll be given a lunch break. Shorter ones will include mini-breaks for going to the toilet and drinking Orangina.

**11:40**

### PRESENTATIONS

Prior to arrival, you may have been asked to prepare a short presentation to be presented in front of interviewers and fellow candidates. And you're going to smash it.

**13:30**

### GOODBYE

Before you go, you might have to fill out a feedback form. Say goodbyes, thank the employer for the experience then run to the biscuit cupboard.

**12:30**

### INTERVIEW

The individual interviews take place nearer the end.

# BEING SOCIAL MEDIA SAVVY

**Social media is FAB for three main reasons...**

- 1 You can keep up-to-date with pals and the news**
- 2 Looking at pictures of cats standing up**
- 3 It's incredibly useful for getting a job!**

## **BE PROFESSIONAL**

Employers use social media to advertise their roles and research candidates. Your public profiles are your personal brand online, so they need to be clean and professional. To be safe, you can always make your accounts private.

## **INTERACT WITH COMPANIES**

Don't be afraid to interact with companies on their social platforms. It's a really good opportunity to network with potential employers without meeting them face-to-face. Follow companies you're interested in and be proactive in reaching out.

### **INSTAGRAM**

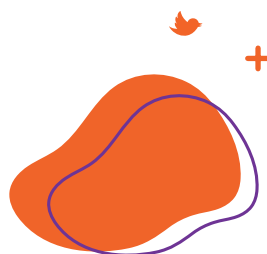
Brands use Instagram to show off their company culture, including their team, offices and social events. If you want to know if you're the right fit for a company, pop over to their Instagram.

### **FACEBOOK**

Most companies still use Facebook to advertise jobs, advice articles and competitions. It's also a really useful tool for getting in touch with employers because of the high frequency of posts and swift replies to comments.

### **LINKEDIN**

Consider setting up a profile on LinkedIn to start connecting with employers. Try writing a catchy headline on your profile like 'Aspiring Project Manager', rather than just 'A Level Student', to get their attention.





Khamal  
Junior Management  
Consultant Apprentice, IBM



Danielle  
Strategy Consultant  
Apprentice, IBM



**We post jobs, careers events  
and competitions on our socials.  
Follow us to get involved.**

# SIDE HUSTLES

**When you can't leave the house, what better way to get work experience than by starting your own business?**

## WHAT IS A SIDE HUSTLE?

A side hustle is a chance for you to gain new skills, channel your creative talent AND do something useful with your free time - all whilst making some extra cash.

Balancing your side hustle with full-time school or work takes passion, commitment and some seriously good time management skills. So it's important to pick something you enjoy.

## STUCK FOR INSPIRATION?

- Develop an in-demand digital skill like coding, data analysis or digital marketing. You could help a startup with their social media, or even try building a website.
- Podcasting, vlogging and blogging are all potentially profitable if you've got something valuable to say. Reach 1,000+ subscribers on YouTube to make some serious £££.
- Get crafty and sell your creations on Etsy. Start painting portraits of other people's pets for a fee. Or offer your Adobe PhotoShop and InDesign skills to small businesses.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Some of the most successful companies in the world started out as side projects, including Instagram, Spanx and Nike.

Nike's founder, Phil Knight, started off selling Japanese running shoes out of his car while working as an accountant. Now he's worth \$34 billion.

## WHY IT SHOULD BE ON YOUR CV

Worried that talking about your side hustle will scare off potential employers?

Don't be. Running your own business shows employers you have the skills they're crying out for; including **commercial awareness**, **entrepreneurial spirit** and **creativity**. (A combination that makes you an almost invincible candidate.)

Of course, not all side hustles are CV-appropriate. But if it's something you're proud of and want to share, don't leave it out.



Zaynab  
Senior Associate, Tax, PwC

# YOUR NEXT STEPS

The following pages contain overviews of every option available to you after school or college. (Except joining the circus - that one you'll have to figure out for yourself.)

PROGRAMME

## LEVEL 2

# INTERMEDIATE APPRENTICESHIP



### DID YOU KNOW?

According to reviews submitted by apprentices on [RateMyApprenticeship](#), the average salary for an intermediate apprentice was £16,321 in 2020.

### First things first, what is an intermediate apprenticeship?

Designed primarily for 16 year olds, intermediate apprenticeships are the first rung on the apprenticeship ladder. They are a brilliant way to break into an industry straight out of school or college.

### How do they actually work?

Intermediate apprentices split their time between working for an employer, and studying towards professional qualifications at a college or training provider.

Each programme is organised differently. You might spend one day a week studying at college and the other four days at work. Or you might work on a full-time basis and be released for study periods throughout the year.

### Why do an intermediate apprenticeship?

As well as paying a decent wage, these entry-level schemes will help you gain the soft skills you need to confidently enter the workplace.

During the apprenticeship, you'll work towards professional qualifications that are recognised across your industry. These are equivalent to 5 GCSE passes graded at 9 to 4 (A\* to C), and can be used to apply for an advanced apprenticeship or find permanent employment.

### What are the entry requirements?

These vary from scheme to scheme, but most require you having two or more GCSEs graded at 9 to 4 (A\* to C) under your belt. An equivalent qualification, such as a traineeship, will also do the trick.

Some companies will accept applicants without these grades if they have relevant work experience. If that is the case, expect to be tested on your numeracy and literacy skills.

### PROGRAMME EMPLOYERS

sage →

AA →

Santander →

Financial Ombudsman Service →

BBC →

# CASE STUDY

## LEVEL 2

## INTERMEDIATE

## APPRENTICESHIP



**Emily**  
**The AA**  
**Automotive**  
**Apprentice**

Hi Emily. First off, tell us what your apprenticeship involves...

The first year introduces you to all different types of vehicles, their classes and how to service and maintain them. The apprenticeship course has taught me about the range of vehicles, faults and the tools available to fix these.

***“My team are great, without them it’d be a very different environment. I’m well supported – everyone is happy to help.”***

What attracted you to The AA?

The AA is such a well-known, reputable brand. I’m proud to say, “I work for the AA.”

The day-to-day work was totally new to me. That’s what attracted me to the role - the fact that I could start something new, with no previous experience. There wasn’t anything else out there that could offer me that.

What are you enjoying most about it?

My team are great, without them it’d be a very different environment. I’m well supported, and everyone is happy to help. I enjoy my monthly

off-site training weeks with the training provider too.

Getting to drive nice cars is also a bonus!

What advice would you give someone taking on an apprenticeship like yours?  
If any girls are thinking of applying, I can say from my experience that being the only female member was daunting at first, but the lads have never made me feel any different. Don’t hold back! Grasp every opportunity you’re given and push for the things you want.

Since this interview, Emily won the AA’s 2019 Apprentice of the Year award.

Congratulations, Emily!



## DID YOU KNOW?

Advanced apprenticeships were the most reviewed programme on last year, with a staggering 1,475 reviews submitted.

### What is an advanced apprenticeship?

These splendid programmes are the next step up from intermediate apprenticeships. They're a great fit for students looking to advance their careers after finishing GCSEs, A Levels/T Levels or Level 2 apprenticeships.

### How do they actually work?

Advanced apprenticeships combine on-the-job training with studying for nationally-certified qualifications. These qualifications (NVQs, BTEC diplomas and HNCs) are generally considered to be equivalent to two A Levels. Programmes last around 24 months, giving you plenty of time to soak up all that knowledge.

### Why do an advanced apprenticeship?

By the time you finish, you'll have at least two years of relevant work experience, a bunch of practical skills and a few qualifications on your CV too. All of which make you every employer's dream candidate. In fact, an impressive 90% of apprentices go into work or further training after completing their apprenticeship.

Did we mention you get paid too? The current National Minimum Wage for apprentices aged 16-18 is £4.15 an hour, with many employers offering heftier pay packets to tempt top students.

### What are the entry requirements?

Employers usually want you to have either completed an intermediate apprenticeship, or to have qualified with a certain number of GCSE passes, including English and maths.

## PROGRAMME EMPLOYERS

Softcat →

sage →

AstraZeneca →

AA →

TechData →

# CASE STUDY

## LEVEL 3

### ADVANCED

### APPRENTICESHIP



**Holly**  
**Tech Data**  
**Qualified Internal**  
**Sales Apprentice**

I chose the IT Technical Sales Apprenticeship because I was very indecisive about going to university. I wanted to go into work and make money, but I still wanted a career that I was interested in and that I could see myself doing for a long time. So I thought doing an apprenticeship would be the best thing as I am gaining valuable on-the-job experience as well as learning.

***“The advice I would give for a smooth transition from school into work is making sure you understand the values and culture of the company you are applying for and what will be expected from you.”***

The first thing I do when I get to work is proactively start planning my day. I make sure I am up to date with emails from the day before, check for any urgent requests and log into our customer relationship management tool.

Within the IT Technical Sales Apprenticeship role my main responsibilities are making sure I am on time, hitting daily call statistics and making sure my pipeline is updated. Other responsibilities are making sure my

apprenticeship work is done on time and to the best standard.

The aspect of my role I enjoy most is prospecting customers. Calling customers and discussing their needs, finding new opportunities and putting my knowledge from working with other areas of the business into play. I enjoy being able to advise and help my customers whilst delivering excellent customer service, my role can be exciting and rewarding.

The advice I would give for a smooth transition from school into work is making sure you understand the values and culture of the company you are applying for and what will be expected from you. Make sure you apply for roles that interest you and are what you want to do. Make sure you realise time keeping and professional behaviour is always important. Start the right way!

My top tip for working as an IT Technical Sales Apprentice is to start networking around the company from a very early stage. Getting to know people helps with increasing your knowledge of products and how the company works. Having a positive attitude even when it gets tough because there is always someone there to help and guide you. Every opportunity you get for technical training or development, take it, as you can never have enough knowledge. Also ensure you don't neglect your apprenticeship and that you stay up to date with your apprenticeship work.

# PROGRAMME LEVEL 4/5 HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP



## DID YOU KNOW?

The average salary for higher apprentices was £20,329 in 2020 (based on reviews submitted by apprentices on ).

### What is a higher apprenticeship?

They're a match made in heaven for students looking to fast-track their career after finishing A Levels/T Levels. Award-winning employers like BBC, Santander and GSK all offer higher apprenticeships in order to find and shape their future leaders.

### How do they actually work?

Higher apprentices work for a company full-time, developing the skills they need to launch a career in that industry. This is coupled with studying towards relevant qualifications; including a Level 4 (or above) competence qualification and a knowledge-based qualification (a Higher National Diploma or foundation degree).

Each scheme is structured slightly differently, with some companies sending you off to study with a training provider or college for one day each week. Others organise study breaks intermittently throughout the year.

### Why do a higher apprenticeship?

Higher apprentices spend up to four years training for a specific role. They finish the scheme dripping in soft skills, specialist knowledge and professional qualifications.

This makes them extremely attractive to future employers, who have been known to burst into spontaneous song when an ex-higher apprentice walks into an interview.

### What are the entry requirements?

Competition for higher apprenticeships is intense. Real intense. Entry requirements vary, but you will need at least two A Levels, graded at 9 to 4 (A\* to C), a T Level, or an advanced apprenticeship on your CV to be in with a chance.

Many employers will expect you to have studied subjects relevant to the apprenticeship. Some form of professional experience will also help set you apart from other candidates.

## PROGRAMME EMPLOYERS

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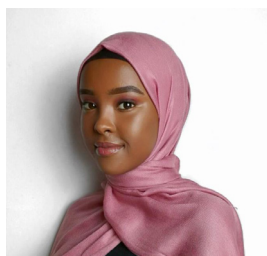
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## CASE STUDY

# LEVEL 4/5 HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP

# mazars



**Yasmin**  
**Mazars**  
**Insolvency**  
**Administrator**

A career at Mazars is one that I might never have had if I'd not gone with my gut instinct! I joined Mazars a few months after I finished my A Levels in the summer of 2018. I had originally applied to university to study Biology after gaining my A Level qualifications in Biology, Maths and Economics. But shortly after receiving an acceptance offer to study Biology at university, I realised this might not be the path I wanted to take and despite all my peers heading straight to university, I felt going into the workplace was the right route for me.

***"I've been working at Mazars for almost two years now, and I have started my AAT's and I couldn't be more excited!"***

I chose the Insolvency Administrator programme at Mazars because when I began applying for work, finding a company that supported my aspirations for gaining more academic qualifications was very important to me. Through my research, I found that Mazars ticked all the boxes; it had an apprenticeship programme that supported school leavers in gaining qualifications and supporting their development goals. This, along with Mazars'

aim to increase diversity, was one of the main reasons that attracted me to apply.

I've been working at Mazars for almost two years now, and I have started my AAT's and I couldn't be more excited!

The advice I would give to others is to do your homework! When trying to find the right company for me I went to jobs fairs, did extensive online research including job boards and company careers websites and frequently checked employment websites. Always remember, just because your ideal job wasn't advertised yesterday, doesn't mean it isn't advertised today!

Once you find the right company for you, always be open to learning new things, and if you are not sure about something – just ask! It's the best way to learn. Try not to be too hard on yourself and make sure to enjoy the experience, and remember, everyone starts somewhere. And finally, follow your instincts, I haven't looked back!



## DID YOU KNOW?

An analysis of the reviews on [Glassdoor](#) revealed that the average salary for a degree apprentice was £21,067 in 2020.

revealed that the average salary

### What is a degree apprenticeship?

A degree apprenticeship does exactly what it says on the tin; combining studying towards a Bachelor's or Master's degree with paid on-the-job experience.

Schemes are currently available in a vast range of sectors - including forensic science, aerospace engineering and bespoke tailoring - with plenty more in the pipeline.

### How do they actually work?

These terrific schemes are designed to give students the best of both worlds. Degree apprentices split their time between working for an employer and studying for a Level 6 (Bachelor's) or Level 7 (Master's) qualification at university.

Not only do degree apprentices earn a proper salary from day one, they don't pay a penny for their degree. The government pays two-thirds of the tuition fees (capped at £18,000), while their employer coughs up the rest.

### Why do a degree apprenticeship?

The traditional university student racks up an average debt of £50,000 and often leaves university with little or no work experience at all. In comparison, a degree apprentice graduates with a full degree, zero debt and three to six years of professional experience on their CV.

Whilst employers are struggling to find 'work-ready' graduates, apprentices are trained in the exact skills they need to thrive in the industry. It's a no-brainer really.

### What are the entry requirements?

Entry requirements vary between programmes, but they tend to be similar to traditional university courses (3 A Levels graded at A\* to C or T Level equivalent).

Most employers also accept applications from school leavers who have completed lower level apprenticeships, with some taking on students with BTEC qualifications.

## PROGRAMME EMPLOYERS



## CASE STUDY

# LEVEL 6/7 DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP



**Rebecca**  
**DWF Law**  
**Solicitor Apprentice**

I really enjoyed law at college and was interested in pursuing a career in law as a solicitor. I knew I didn't want to go to university and when my law tutor told me about legal apprenticeships, the idea really appealed to me as it offered the opportunity to gain practical work experience and obtain a qualification as well as the option to progress as a solicitor apprentice.

***“You will be working with some very experienced people and can gain a lot of knowledge and insight from them so try to have a positive attitude and be willing to learn.”***

The first thing I do when I get to work is check my emails to see what tasks I have in store for the day, and create a to-do list to make sure I am on top of all of my work and aware of my deadlines.

Within the solicitor apprenticeship, my main responsibilities are completing and managing my own work to ensure it is completed to a high standard and completed by the deadline. Ensuring I accurately record my chargeable and non-chargeable time.

The aspects of my role I most enjoy are: drafting legal documents such as Claim Forms, Particulars of Claim and Witness Statements, meeting new people and learning from experienced solicitors, and having a variety of work to complete on a daily basis as it keeps the job interesting.

Be prepared to work hard, maintain a positive attitude and be willing to learn. It won't always be easy having to study alongside your work, but it is very rewarding and if you put the time and effort in, you will reap the rewards. Also, no question is a silly question so don't be afraid to ask if you need help.

My top tips for working as a legal apprentice are to be as organised and prepared as possible. Be a sponge! You will be working with some very experienced people and can gain a lot of knowledge and insight from them so try to have a positive attitude and be willing to learn. Don't be afraid to ask questions if you aren't sure, somebody will always be happy to help you.

# PROGRAMME GAP YEAR PROGRAMME



## DID YOU KNOW?

The Department of Education found that 88% of students who took a gap year felt it made them more employable.

### What is a gap year?

A gap year is a chance for you to get some real life experience before starting university, an apprenticeship or full-time employment.

### How does a gap year work?

After all those years in the hamster wheel of education, you're free to do whatever you want with this time. Here are a few ideas:

- 1. Volunteer in your spare time:** Use your powers for good and pick up a bunch of skills that employers love, such as resilience, emotional intelligence and communication. Charities that tackle issues like mental health, food poverty and homelessness particularly need the extra help right now.
- 2. Start a side hustle:** We've got a whole page on the pros of running your own business - especially in the current climate.
- 3. Get work experience abroad:** Once travel is back on the cards, this is a brilliant way of ticking off your bucket list and kicking off your career at the same time. If you want to stay closer to home, lots of companies in the UK run paid school leaver programmes too.

### Why do a gap year?

Gap years these days are less 'Gap Yah', more 'fill-in-the-CV-gaps year'. With competition for top universities and apprenticeships hotting up, savvy gappers are swapping full moon parties for internships, volunteering programs and employment.

These experiences are all CV gold. But they'll also give you some breathing space to have a real think about what you want from your future. Are you happy with the degree you've chosen? Is an apprenticeship right for you? You might even find your true calling and decide to dedicate your life to rescuing a particularly rare breed of puffin.

## PROGRAMME EMPLOYERS

IBM



## CASE STUDY

# GAP YEAR PROGRAMME



**Tara  
IBM**  
**Apprentice Scheme,  
Junior Management  
Consultant**

I chose a Junior Management Consultant apprenticeship at IBM because I wanted to work for a company that's dedicated to creating innovations that matter for the world (and those that I'm personally passionate about too!). Coming from a legal background I loved the idea of being able to learn the fundamentals of consulting whilst developing my technical skills.

***"The advice I'd give for a smooth transition from school into work is, in the words of our ex-CEO Ginni Rometty, "growth and comfort do not coexist." Embrace the change."***

No two days are ever the same, the amount of incredible opportunities available means that I am able to grow my network and learn beyond what is expected of me from my apprenticeship. Working on different projects enables me to pick up on new skills, develop on those I already have and really understand clients' needs, coupled with cutting edge technology.

As a Junior Management Consultant, I have also been able to use my passion for Diversity

and Inclusion within the workplace, becoming IBM's first Foundation BAME Co-Lead. I have regular meetings with senior IBMers discussing matters that are important to me both personally as well as professionally, such as the #BlackLivesMatter movement.

There is so much that I love about my role, from the variety of projects that I have had the pleasure of working on, to the top teams that I have loved working with. Alongside that, I have really enjoyed the opportunities and growth that I have attained since joining. Having met some of my closest friends has also been great for my work-life balance too.

The advice I'd give for a smooth transition from school into work is, in the words of our ex-CEO Ginni Rometty, "growth and comfort do not coexist." Embrace the change. Working life is a very different environment, and one where the more you put into it, the more you will receive. You will have so much support. It's an incredible journey, enjoy it!

My top tip for working as a Junior Management Consultant is to network, network and network. You will have the opportunity to come across so many people with such different backgrounds and interests, there is always something new to learn and it's also key with developing your career and unlocking doors that you may have never even thought of. (You've got this!)



## PROGRAMME TRAINEESHIP

### DID YOU KNOW?

Traineeships topped the leader board on [RateMyApprenticeship](#), with an average rating of 8.76 / 10 (based on thousands of apprentice-written reviews).

#### What is a traineeship?

Traineeships are short programmes designed to help young people gain the skills and qualifications that, for whatever reason, they may not have picked up at school.

#### How do they actually work?

The content of each programme is tailored to the individual, depending on where they require the most training. However, they all include the following:

- **Work preparation training:** Developing the professional skills that employers are looking for (e.g. communication, problem-solving and time management), as well as help with CV writing, filling in application forms and preparing for interviews.
- **Maths and English tutoring:** Most school leaver programmes require candidates to have GCSEs in Maths and English. If you don't have the grades, a traineeship can offer academic support with passing these core subjects.
- **Work experience:** Put your new skills into practice by working for a local company. These short CV-boosting placements are generally unpaid, but should cover your travel and food expenses.

Your traineeship will finish when you are **work-ready**. This can take anywhere between six weeks and six months.

#### Why do a traineeship?

You need experience to get a job, but you need a job to get experience. It's frustrating!

However, 94% of employers think traineeships increase young people's chances of finding paid work and apprenticeships. That's because trainees develop the relevant skills, technical knowledge and go-getting attitude they need to confidently enter the world of work.

#### What are the entry requirements?

A traineeship is suitable for 16-24 year olds who are unemployed and have no qualifications above GCSE level (or equivalent). In order to apply you also need to be eligible to work in the UK.



## DID YOU KNOW?

There are currently over 2 million students in higher education (undergraduate or above) in the UK. That means around 1 in 23 adults are students!

### Where and what can you study?

The UK is home to 130 universities, but where you apply will depend on what you want to get out of your time there. You might be tempted by Newcastle's wild party scene, or you may prefer a small seaside town like Falmouth.

You can study almost anything at university; including business studies, medicine and journalism. There are some pretty peculiar courses too, such as stand-up comedy or parapsychology (the study of ghosts). People tend to pick a subject they are interested in, or one that will prepare them for their dream role.

### How does university work?

Most students spend 3-4 years studying full-time for a Bachelor's degree. However, there are plenty of options to study part-time and some universities even offer two-year accelerated degrees. These are intense but mean you finish your degree a year earlier, saving 20% on tuition fees.

Lots of courses include a 'placement year', where students take time out of university to work full-time for an employer. This is a dynamite opportunity to get some professional experience under your belt before you graduate; something that employers prize extremely highly.

### What are the entry requirements?

Every university sets their own entry requirements, and these vary depending on the course. They include qualifications (GCSEs and A Levels, or equivalent), your suitability (skills, interests and experience) and an admissions test or interview (not applicable to all courses).

### Why go to university?

For many people, university will be 'the best years of their life'. That's because you get to spend three years becoming an expert in your subject, partying on Wednesdays and living off instant mash potato.

However, it's important to remember that university is not a doss, nor is it cheap. Your lectures might start at 11am, but it takes a lot of self-motivated study to get those top grades - and it will cost you up to £9,250 a year. So unless you've got your heart set on a specialised profession like dentistry, it's worth weighing up all your options.

# REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

This map shows the Top Employers in each region, the average salaries and number of employers in the Top 100 that hire apprentices in that location...



## SCOTLAND

Top 5 Employers:

- 2) **BAE Systems**
- 3) **BT**

5) **M&G**

No. of Employers\*: **32**  
Average Salary: **£17,228**

## NORTHERN IRELAND

Top 3 Employers:

No. of Employers\*: **9**  
Average Salary: **£17,490**

## NORTH WEST

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **Booking.com**
- 2) **BAE Systems**

5) **Whitbread**  
No. of Employers\*: **59**  
Average Salary: **£18,190**

## WEST MIDLANDS

Top 5 Employers:

- 4) **Mitchells & Butlers**
  - 5) **BMW Group**
- No. of Employers\*: **53**  
Average Salary: **£17,892**

## WALES

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **GE Aviation**
- 2) **BAE Systems**
- 3) **Airbus**

5) **Tata Steel**  
No. of Employers\*: **20**  
Average Salary: **£16,784**

## SOUTH WEST

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **BMW Group**
- 2) **BT**

4) **Burges Salmon**  
5) **Rolls-Royce**  
No. of Employers\*: **44**  
Average Salary: **£18,118**

## SOUTH EAST

Top 5 Employers:

- 2) **Gatwick Airport**

5) **Optivo**  
No. of Employers\*: **66**  
Average Salary: **£17,982**

## NORTH EAST

Top 5 Employers:

- 2) **Newcastle Building Society**

No. of Employers\*: **30**  
Average Salary: **£17,043**

## YORKSHIRE & THE HUMBER

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **Syngenta**
- 2) **Solenis**
- 3) **BAM Nuttall**
- 4) **BAE Systems**

No. of Employers\*: **46**  
Average Salary: **£17,531**

## EAST MIDLANDS

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **Siemens**
- 2) **Rolls-Royce**
- 3) **First Response Finance Limited**
- 4) **BT**

No. of Employers\*: **35**  
Average Salary: **£17,035**

## EAST OF ENGLAND

Top 5 Employers:

- 1) **BT**
- 2) **TUI UK**

5) **Willis Towers Watson**  
No. of Employers\*: **40**  
Average Salary: **£18,106**

## CENTRAL & GREATER LONDON

Top 5 Employers:

- 4) **M&G**

No. of Employers\*: **69**  
Average Salary: **£19,210**

\*Number of employers in this region from the Top 100 table.

# NORTH EAST REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT

4 GSK



## WHAT ROLE OPPORTUNITIES DO GSK HAVE IN THIS REGION?

Advanced, Higher and Degree level apprenticeships in Laboratory Science, Data Science, Business and Supply Chain, Manufacturing and Engineering.

GSK's presence in the North East is at Barnard Castle in County Durham. This secondary manufacturing site is one of the largest in our Supply Chain. The site provides global supply and new product introduction for a diverse portfolio of steriles, inhalations and dermatology products.

Our apprentices work across the site in manufacturing, engineering, packaging technology, pharmaceutical technology, laboratory science, project planning, IT and the supply chain providing a diverse range of apprenticeships. The apprentices receive fantastic development opportunities which include off-site events such as Outward

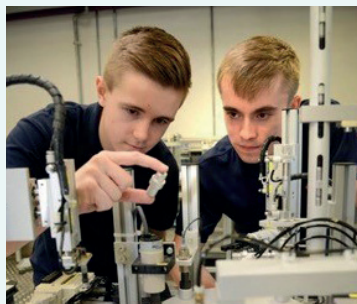


Bound in the Lake District, a Resilience week and a Communications week in Hereford and a Final Year event at our Headquarters working with some of our charitable partners. These events are an exciting opportunity to travel and network with apprentices across GSK.

Our apprentices are fantastic STEM ambassadors and regularly visit schools and colleges to inspire the next generation, from assemblies to careers fairs and contributing to school projects and Industrial Cadets.

The site continues to set stretching challenges for the apprentices. In 2019 the apprentices opened an Early Talent Hub which had been a derelict cottage. Apprentices took the lead in the project management of the redevelopment - finance, drawing plans, dealing with contractors and procurement. The Early Talent Hub is now a fit-for-purpose unit where school groups can come and learn about the site and the science behind our medicines.

## THOUGHTS FROM GSK'S APPRENTICES...



"Working at GSK is fantastic! I am very happy to come into work everyday and work alongside exceptionally talented people. I have been given so many opportunities during my apprenticeship and I am excited for what the future holds."

"I am very grateful for the trust and confidence my teams have invested in me. They have all

given me the opportunity to take on responsibility and make the most out of each rotation I have embarked on."

"It is very rewarding knowing how my day-to-day work impacts the patient/consumer at the end of the Supply Chain."

# HOW IS THE TOP 50 TRAINING PROVIDERS TABLE CREATED?

**The role of training providers is to support you and aid your development during your apprenticeship. A 10/10 training provider goes hand in hand with a 10/10 apprenticeship.**

**1** A young person writes a review of their apprenticeship or work experience and submits it on

**2** They respond to ten questions about their role, the organisation and the social perks of their scheme, ranking each out of ten. Q2, Q6 and Q7 relate specifically to their training provider.

**3** All reviews are checked by the RateMyApprenticeship team.

**4** After the review has been checked, it goes live on the website.

**5** Once a training provider has ten reviews, they are eligible for the Top 50.

**6** Our digital team plug all the scores from Q2, Q6 and Q7 into an algorithm (created by the founders of RateMyApprenticeship) and like magic, RateMyApprenticeship's **Top 50 Training Providers** is created.



Mahmuda  
Senior Associate Tax, PwC

# TOP 50 TRAINING PROVIDERS 2021

## KEY

Position in the  
Top 50 table



1

paragon  
skills

**It's official! These companies are the BEST training providers in the UK for school and college leavers. Take a look at the official Top 50 rankings below and head to [find out more.](#)**

1		2		3		4		5	
6		7		8		9		10	
11		12		13		14		15	
16		17		18		19		20	
21		22		23		24		25	
26		27		28		29		30	
31		32		33		34		35	
36		37		38		39		40	
41		42		43		44		45	
46		47		48		49		50	

# HOW IS THE TOP 100 TABLE CREATED?

RateMyApprenticeship's Top 100 Employers is based on **4,637 reviews** that were written by young people about their experiences on apprenticeships over the last year.

Their honest and thoughtful feedback has helped us put together this list of the very best apprenticeship employers.

**1** A young person writes a review of their apprenticeship or work experience and submits it on

**2** They respond to ten questions about their role, the organisation and the social perks of their scheme, ranking each out of ten.

**3** All reviews are checked by the RateMyApprenticeship team.

**4** After the review has been checked, it goes live on the website.

**5** Once a company has ten reviews, they are eligible for the Top 100.

**6** Our digital team plug all the scores into an algorithm (created by the founders of RateMyApprenticeship) and voila **RateMyApprenticeship's Top 100 Employers** is formed.



Danielle  
Strategy Consultant Apprentice, IBM

# TOP 100

## APPRENTICESHIP

## EMPLOYERS 2021

4 Booking.com 5 syngenta

11 WHITBREAD

21 M & G

23 Mitchells & Butlers

24 WarnerMedia

31 Standard Life Aberdeen

32 BMW MINI Rolls-Royce Power Cars Limited

33 MOTT MACDONALD

34 vodafone

35 WillisTowers Watson

43 SIEMENS  
Ingenuity for life

44 go

52 EDF ENERGY

54 AON

55 Bloomberg

61 FORTNUM & MASON

62 Transport for London

63 AWE

64 Pinsent Masons

71 KIER

75 BRITISH AIRWAYS

81 NetworkRail

82 TESCO

83 HARE

85 BARNETT WADDINGHAM  
Support the market

91 KFC

92 e-on

93 elior

94 NESTLE ACADEMY

95 MOTUS COMMERCIALS

50 RATEMYAPPRENTICESHIP

It's official! These companies are the **BEST** apprenticeship employers in the UK for school and college leavers. Take a look at the official Top 100 rankings below and head to **find out more.**

THE FOLLOWING PAGES FEATURE COMPANIES AND THEIR SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES AND LOCATIONS.

KEY

Position in the Top 100 table

→

Page number

→

6

BT

7

BAE SYSTEMS

9

SOLENIS

16

YOUR LONDON AIRPORT  
Gatwick

17

TUI  
Discover your world

19

Newcastle  
Building Society

20

ROLLS ROYCE

26

OPTIVO

29

Hewlett Packard  
Enterprise

30

ARUP

36

ROKE

37

BDO

40

GE Aviation

46

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

48

BRITVIC

50

Burges Salmon

56

AIRBUS

57

SSE

58

CBRE

66

First Response  
take care of your finance

67

NHS

70

NatWest Group

76

RSA

77

Superdrug

78

GREENE KING  
BURY ST EDMUNDS

79

TARMAC  
A CRH COMPANY

80

TATA STEEL

87

Iceland

88

PREMIER FOODS

89

Pfizer

97

Virgin media

98

direct line

99

BANK OF ENGLAND

100

LAND ROVER JAGUAR

# NOTES

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## GOALS

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## TO DO LIST

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## EMPLOYERS TO CONTACT

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# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Q I HAVE NO IDEA IF I WANT TO GO TO UNIVERSITY OR DO AN APPRENTICESHIP. WHAT DO I DO?**

**A** Ooh, the million dollar question. Each has its pros and cons, but ultimately it depends on the kind of person you are - and what you want from your career. Turn to [page 10](#) to weigh up your options.

**Q CAN I DO AN APPRENTICESHIP IN MATHS, OR GEOGRAPHY?**

**A** Apprenticeships offer real industry experience in a wide range of jobs, including digital marketing, nursing and teaching. 80% of your time will be spent on-the-job, rather than in the classroom.

**Q WHAT APPRENTICESHIP LEVEL CAN I APPLY FOR?**

**A** This all depends on what qualifications you have. For instance, if you left school after GCSEs, you could choose to do a traineeship, an intermediate apprenticeship or an advanced apprenticeship. Use our [Next Step Explorer](#) on [page 10](#) to find the right path for you.

**Q WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO I NEED?**

**A** Entry requirements vary between programmes. You only need two passes at GCSE to do a traineeship, but a degree apprenticeship requires 3 A Levels at A\* to C. Check [page 10](#) to see which qualifications you need to apply for each programme.

**Q WHEN'S THE BEST TIME TO START APPLYING FOR APPRENTICESHIPS?**

**A** Companies take on apprentices all year round, and most don't wait for the application deadline before filling the role - so it's a good idea to get yours in early! When you're ready to apply, go to [page 10](#) to search for live jobs in 19 different industries.

**Q WILL I HAVE TO MOVE TO LONDON TO DO AN APPRENTICESHIP?**

**A** Certainly not! Hundreds of companies across the UK offer apprenticeships and work experience schemes to young people. Check out our map on [page 10](#) to discover the top 5 employers in your region.

# THANK YOU

## Thanks for taking the time to flick through A Guide to Career Options 2021!

We know it's been a difficult year. 2020/21 has been and will continue to be a bumpy ride.

COVID-19 has changed most things, except this... The future is yours, and we're here to help you and inspire you to take the first steps in your career.

We'd like to thank all of the students who've submitted reviews on and all of the companies who have contributed to this guide.

All that's left to say is, regardless of whether you end up on an apprenticeship or at university, we wish you all the luck in the world.

**The RateMyApprenticeship Team.**





★ RATEMY**APPRENTICESHIP**