

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 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.

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. You can search and apply for vacancies on Find an apprenticeship on 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. 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

Contact the National Apprenticeship Helpdesk for further support on **0800 015 0400** or by email: 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 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.

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 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 for a web-chat with an adviser or call: 0800 100 900 (free from landlines and mobiles).

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