

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP? – information from www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

It's a real job, with hands-on experience, a salary and the chance to train while you work. You're treated just like all the other employees, with a contract of employment and holiday leave.

If you're 16 or over, you can become an apprentice as long as you spend at least 50% of your working hours in England - for the duration of the apprenticeship and you are not in full-time education.

When you're an apprentice:

- you get paid and train 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
- you train to be fully competent in your chosen occupation
- you're on a career path - with lots of future potential for you

Your apprenticeship can take between one and six years to complete, depending on which apprenticeship you choose, what level it's at, and your previous experience.

Different apprenticeships are available all over England, at companies large and small, in a wide range of industries and organisations. From local organisations to large national brands.

You get valuable hands-on experience working whilst you learn, which helps you progress in your working life.

Completing your apprenticeship means you've earned and learned. Given your training is funded by contributions from the government and your employer, and you receive a regular salary, apprenticeships are a great option for getting on the job ladder or supercharging your career.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF APPRENTICESHIPS?

There are hundreds of different apprenticeships to choose from. Whether you're at the start of your career, want to change career direction, or if you're returning to work after a break.

All apprenticeships make sure you're 'job ready' for the role you have trained for.

Apprentices earn a salary right from day one of their employment and training.

If you think you need better skills and need more work experience so that you're ready to apply for your chosen apprenticeship - you could consider **doing a traineeship**.

SO, YOU'VE FOUND THE APPRENTICESHIP YOU'D LIKE TO APPLY FOR?

Once you've searched and found the right apprenticeship for you, you can get on with the application process.

If you haven't found your ideal apprenticeship yet, you can [search for the latest apprenticeship vacancies](#) by job title or employer, or just browse to see what's available in your area.

You can then manage your applications and even get alerts about new apprenticeships.

APPLY FOR THE JOB AND SEND THE APPLICATION TO THE EMPLOYER

[Get help](#) with writing applications, creating a good CV and covering letter.

WAIT FOR THE APPLICATIONS TO BE SHORTLISTED

If you haven't applied for many jobs before, this can be the nail-biting bit, where you're waiting to hear back from the employer. Sometimes it might help to check when the closing date was for applications - this should give you a clue as to when they'll be in touch.

It's a good idea to apply for more than one apprenticeship vacancy at one time. Try and get a number of applications to potential employers; that way you're increasing your options and not waiting for a response from one employer.

If you don't get an interview, don't take it personally. It's usual to apply for a number of vacancies before you find the right apprenticeship for you. This happens to everyone and it's part of the normal process.

IF YOU'RE ON THE SHORTLIST, YOU'LL BE INVITED FOR AN INTERVIEW WITH THE EMPLOYER

This first interview could be an online chat or video call, rather than a face-to-face one. Remember to brush up your research into the organisation for each stage of the interview process.

TRAINING PROVIDERS

Your employer will find a training provider that is best suited to deliver the training for your apprenticeship. Some training providers also offer support to help you apply for an apprenticeship.

Your teacher or careers adviser can help you find out about training providers and how to get in touch. There are also other local organisations that can help you find out more, like a job centre or other community programmes.

THE INTERVIEW PROCESS

Everyone goes through the interview process at some stage of their working life. When you apply for new jobs, you will almost always have an interview, whatever stage you're at in your career.

If you want to up-skill or are returning to the workplace after a break, you may already know how to prepare for an interview and what you're expected to take with you on your first day.

If that's the case, then all you need to do is [Find an apprenticeship](#).

If you're planning on working for bigger organisations, you might have two or three interviews. A smaller employer may just want to meet you face-to-face, to see if you fit into their organisation.

Employers will each set their own application process for an apprenticeship, which will be similar to applying for any other job within that organisation. This typically, will involve an interview.

Interviews can range from face-to-face, a panel interview, on the telephone or online. It just depends on how the employer wants to conduct it.

If you've not done an interview before, the following tips should help you through the whole process:

BEFORE YOUR INTERVIEW

CHECK WHERE AND WHEN

Find out what time your interview is, then figure out the best way to get there in plenty of time. Also check the employer's website for the address, directions and any useful advice on finding their premises.

KNOW YOUR STUFF

It's worth finding out as much as you can about the apprenticeship, and the organisation that's interviewing you. You might also want to keep up to date with the relevant news in your industry, just in case your interviewer asks your opinions on any relevant news stories.

PRACTICE

Try a mock interview with a teacher, adviser or even a friend. A simple practice interview can help you feel more confident, and see what questions and answers you need to practice.

Remember to include a few questions that you think you might be asked e.g. Why you chose this apprenticeship, what you enjoy most about your current studies.

DAY OF THE INTERVIEW

WHAT TO WEAR

You don't necessarily need to wear a suit, but smart trousers or a skirt and a shirt or blouse will show you're taking it seriously.

GET THERE EARLY

Especially if you're using public transport. Look to arrive between 10 and 15 mins before your interview time, and make sure you have their phone number handy so you can let them know if you're delayed. Remember, being on time and reliable could be the first thing they learn about you.

GOOD BODY LANGUAGE

Try not to slouch, yawn or fold your arms. Stay calm and alert, sit up straight and make eye contact. Whoever is interviewing you will know you're nervous and not necessarily used to being asked interview questions.

DON'T WORRY IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND

Ask them to repeat or rephrase the question. If you're still unsure make a good guess, or relate it to something you know better.

ASK THEM QUESTIONS TOO

This is your apprenticeship too, so make sure you show enthusiasm and prepare a few questions to ask your new potential employer.

If you're the successful candidate, you'll be offered the apprenticeship by the employer.

For more information on [preparing for an interview](#) there's a detailed guide on the National Careers Service website.

WHAT ARE MY FUTURE PROSPECTS ONCE I'VE SUCCESSFULLY FINISHED MY APPRENTICESHIP?

Once you've successfully finished, you have plenty of choices. You could apply for another apprenticeship or find a career that uses your new skills.

Some of the top reasons for becoming an apprentice:

- earn while you learn and get paid a competitive salary
- your training is free
- choose from hundreds of different apprentice jobs in thousands of organisations
- get high quality training paid for by your employer and the government
- a great way to get back into the workplace after a career break, or to re-train in a new areas
- get a boost to your future earnings potential
- develop the skills you need for a range of exciting jobs or careers, no matter your age or background

HOW MUCH CAN YOU EARN?

Your salary will depend upon the industry, location and type of apprenticeship you choose.

The minimum wage for an apprentice is £7.55 per hour if you're in your first year or under 19 - but many employers pay far more than this.

If you're aged 21 and over (or in their second year or beyond and 19+) you will earn £12.21, however these figures change each April.

WHAT WILL MY APPRENTICESHIP COST ME?

When you become an apprentice, you'll need to cover the cost of your day-to-day expenses, such as lunch and travel.