

How to Find an Apply for an Apprenticeship

What is an apprenticeship?

It is a real job where you get paid, train for a recognised qualification and gain valuable work experience in a specific area. 20% of your time is spent in off-the-job training which could be in house (either onsite or at a dedicated company training centre) at college or at an apprenticeship training provider. You will not have normal school/college holidays but will be entitled to a minimum of 20 days holiday plus bank holidays each year.



Anyone over the age of 16 can start an apprenticeship. If you are aged 16-18 or 19 and over and in the first year of your apprenticeship, you will be paid at least £4.15 per hour.

What are the different apprenticeship levels?

Intermediate	Level 2	Equivalent to GCSEs (Grade 4-9)
Advanced	Level 3	Equivalent to A levels
Higher	4,5,6 and 7	Foundation Degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or Master's degree

What are the entry requirements?

Entry requirements vary depending on the company, role and level of apprenticeship. It is common for employers to require a minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade 4 or above for the Advanced level. You will need a level 3 qualification (A levels, BTEC, CACHE, NVQ etc.) to start a Higher or Degree apprenticeship. Some companies require specific grades and subjects.



What if I'm not ready or don't know what area I want to work in?



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An apprenticeship is a job so it is important that you have an idea of the type of role you want before committing to an apprenticeship. If you are not ready to commit, you may want to consider a Traineeship as a first step. This is a programme for 16-24 year olds, offering a structured work placement with an employer lasting between 6 weeks and 6 months. The placement is unpaid but you could receive money towards travel costs. Traineeships are available locally through Cou nty Training and SBC Training.

How long is an apprenticeship?

The minimum length of an apprenticeship is 12 months. Usually an Intermediate apprenticeship takes 12-18 months to complete and an Advanced apprenticeship will take between 15-18 months. Higher apprenticeships take between 3-5 years and Degree apprenticeships can take up to 6 years.

How do I find an apprenticeship?

You will need to be proactive to find an apprenticeship and there are a number of things you can do simultaneously.



- Create an account on findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk where you can search and apply for apprenticeships in any area.
- Talk to friends and family and ask if they might know someone they can ask about apprenticeships at their company.
- Prepare a CV and cover letter, research companies that you may be interested in working for and send a speculative application. If you have a part-time or voluntary job and would be keen to work there, ask if there are any opportunities.
- Register with local apprenticeship training providers such as County Training, SBC Training or Juniper Training
- Some larger companies advertise vacancies on their own website e.g. Bentley, Barclays, NHS.

How do I apply?



If you have found a role on a website, research the company and read the job description thoroughly. Make sure you can travel to the business as well as to the training provider if it is in another location. There may be a list of required personal qualities, skills and qualifications. If you feel you match those, continue with the application, if you don't, perhaps the role isn't for you. If you don't have the required qualifications (or predicted grades), it is still worth applying and explaining that you are keen to work.

- Tailor your application to the role. Think about what the job involves and what relevant skills and experience you already possess.
- Think about how your application can stand out from others
- Sell yourself - Only add positive details, what you can do and have done. Imagine you are the recruiter, how would your application sound? Believe in yourself.
- Take your time. This is the only chance you have to impress the employer and get invited in for an interview. It's worth making the effort.
- Proof read the application and ask at least one other person to proofread it for you. Mistakes give the impression that you're not taking the application seriously which in turn, gives the impression that you won't take the apprenticeship seriously.
- Don't lie. You will be found out.

What next?



Often employers will look applicants up on social media. Before submitting an application, clean up your social media to make sure there are no offensive or embarrassing photos or comments that may give a negative impression.

Once you have submitted an application or sent a CV, there is no harm in following it up if you haven't heard anything for over a week. This will show you are interested and keen. Make sure you are polite and professional in all correspondence.