

What is an apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a real job, with real training, meaning you can earn while you learn and gain the necessary skills and professional competencies in your chosen career.

Apprenticeships are available to anyone over the age of 16 living in England, there are different entry requirements depending on the sector and job.

Apprenticeships can last from a minimum of one year up to five years. How long the apprenticeship lasts will depend on age, previous skills and experience, as well as the specific framework / standard your child chooses to follow.

There is a minimum wage for apprentices, which is guaranteed, but many employers pay more than depending on the sector, region and apprenticeship level. Apprentices are expected to work at least 30 hours a week, and will get at least 20 paid holiday days a year in addition to bank holidays. Costs of training and qualifications are fully covered meaning there is no tuition fees for degree-level qualifications.

Apprenticeships include training via an official training provider. This could take place off-site, in your work place or online.

Apprentices are also entitled to an NUS card through the National Union of Students. This gets you the same discounts as any university or college student from a large number of shops and websites. Some areas also have other benefits for apprentices or those seeking an apprenticeship, such as travel discount cards and help towards travel costs for interviews.

What levels are there?

There are various levels of apprenticeship to apply for depending on current skills and qualifications. Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels:

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes
Advanced	3	2 A level passes
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

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

Where can you do an apprenticeship?

More than 240,000 workplaces employ an apprentice including the likes of Rolls-Royce, BBC, ASOS, ITV, Barclays, Airbus, IBM and Google, as well as thousands of small and medium-sized businesses. Apprenticeships are not limited to just London and big cities either. You can find apprenticeship vacancies in every region, town and city in England (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have their own apprenticeship services).

What are the benefits of studying an apprenticeship?

- Earn as you learn: no student loan!
- Receive relevant training and learn job-specific skills
- Alternative to university: higher and degree apprenticeships provide a different route to a degree from traditional university study
- Better career prospects: you'll improve your career prospects, becoming more employable because you have experience of work.
- Higher earnings: higher apprentices could earn up to £150,000 more on average over their lifetime compared to those with Level 3 vocational qualifications.
- Job satisfaction: 89% of apprentices say they are satisfied with their apprenticeship.
- Paid holiday: get at least 20 paid holiday days a year, plus bank holidays.

Higher and degree apprenticeships

With higher and degree apprenticeships, there is now a real alternative to university study. With the growth of higher and degree apprenticeships, young people can gain a qualification, learn professional skills, progress their career plus earn a wage.

How are they structured?

Higher and degree apprenticeships are available at levels 4 - 7. They combine work with study and may include a work-based, academic or combined qualification or a professional qualification relevant to the industry. Levels 4 and 5 are equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma or a foundation degree, level 6 is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and level 7 is equivalent to a Master's degree.

Typically, higher apprentices study part-time at college, university or with a training provider. Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete.

Further information can be found on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)

How do you apply for an apprenticeship?

At any one time there are up to 28,000 apprenticeship vacancies available online in a variety of careers and industries across England. Visit [Find an apprenticeship](#).

You can search by keyword (job role, occupation type or apprenticeship level) and by location.

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

Some large employers may advertise on their own websites.

Our [YouTube](#) channel has useful hints and tips on applying plus other videos on apprenticeships.

Other useful sources of information can be found on the [Amazing Apprenticeships](#) websites

If your son/daughter is not quite ready for an apprenticeship or job, they could try a traineeship with a local employer to gain valuable work experience and the opportunity to improve their English and maths, if needed. Visit [Find a traineeship](#) for more information or to apply for traineeship opportunities.

For more information on apprenticeships visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)