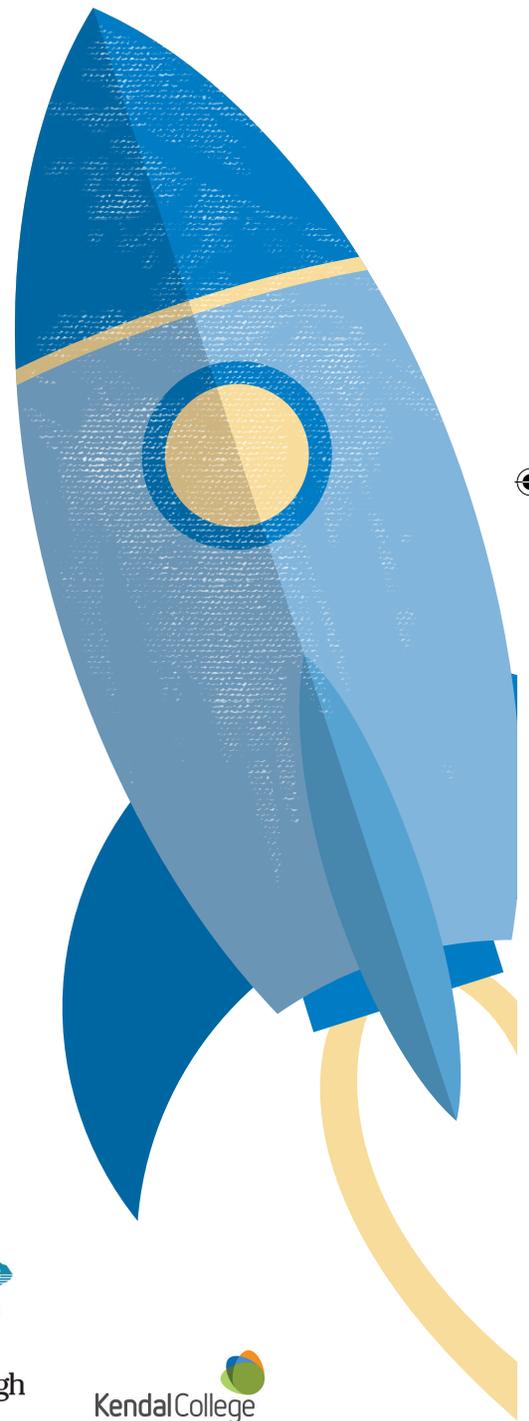


hello 
future.

A STUDENT'S

GUIDE to

Higher and Degree Apprenticeships



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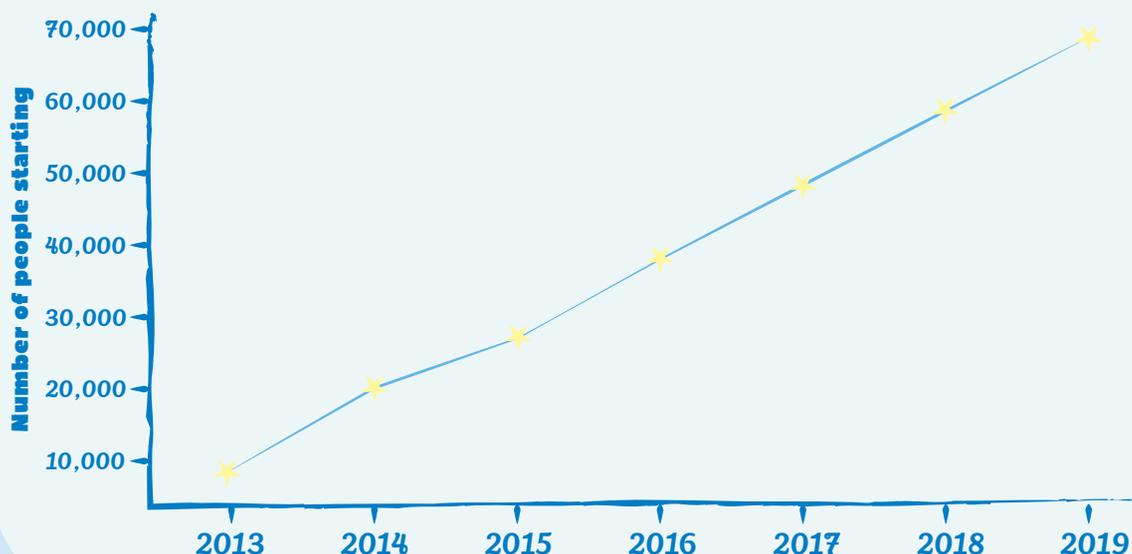
Welcome

This is an 'all you need to know' guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. There is also information at the back for you to discuss with your parents/carers as a great choice of post-18 employment and study. Look out for the websites to support your research and possible applications on the back page.

Have you thought seriously about a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship?

the number of people starting a government-funded degree apprenticeship

(Source: Apprenticeships Statistics: England)



WHAT ARE higher and degree apprenticeships?

Higher or Degree Apprenticeships are one career route: they might work best for you, so it is worth investigating!

Apprenticeships offer an alternative training route to gain a degree level qualification. They provide the opportunity for on the job training and the platform to explore the skilled professions within each sector.

The training costs are paid for by the Apprenticeship Levy, which is funded by the employer and the Government. Apprenticeships can provide great training and development opportunities that are specific to the area of work you are interested in, at the same time as earning a wage.

FACT:

*Over 159,000
Higher and Degree
Apprenticeships have
started from their
introduction in 2010*

(Source:
www.parliament.uk)

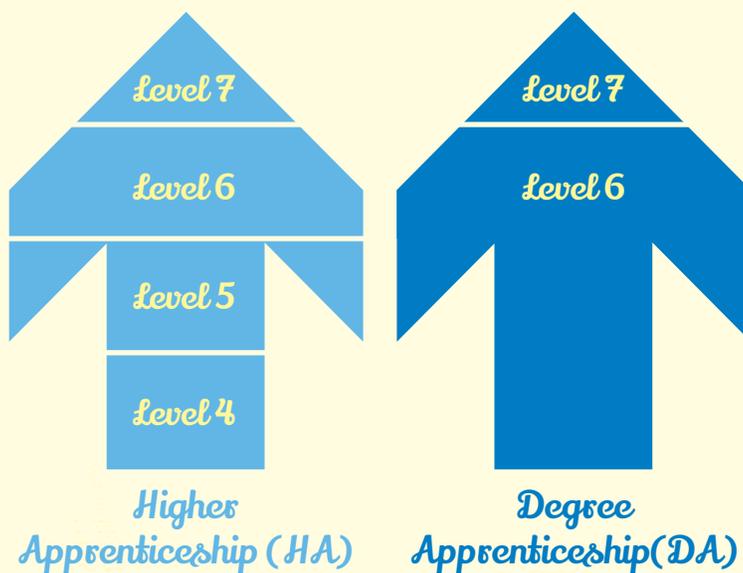
HIGHER (HA) and DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS (DA) are:

- Qualifications that combine an 80/20 of your time:
 - 80% paid work
 - 20% post-18 study at a university, Further Education College or other provider
- A qualification led by employers, who you would spend most of your time with
- Co-developed and written by employers (eg Sellafield, BAE Systems) and higher education institutions (eg a University), so they are very much career/work/profession-focused
- Routes into Higher Education without the need for a student loan
- Higher Education courses at Level 4-7 (Foundation Degree to Masters)
- Professional qualification and a degree (if you study a Degree Apprenticeship)

HOW DO apprenticeships work?

You will spend most of the week in work (a minimum of 30 hours) watching, learning and getting stuck in. You will be learning from colleagues across all levels of the business, typically working closely with someone more senior who will review your progress, support you and coach you in the workplace. You will also spend time attending college, university or a training provider undertaking training, development, online training or training at work. Some apprenticeships use a combination of options and your employer will have discussed with the higher education provider which method works best.

What Level is a Higher Apprenticeship and Degree Apprenticeship?



Higher and Degree Apprenticeships are open to anyone over the age of 18 and can take from 1 - 5 years to complete. The time it takes will be dependent on your employer's needs and the Awarding Body. With both the HA and DA routes you can achieve a full degree qualification.

Higher Apprenticeships (HA) are at levels 4, 5, 6 and 7

A Higher Apprenticeship has to last at least one year but to achieve a full degree this would normally take 3 years.

Level 4 and 5

Equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate, HNC, Higher Education Diploma, HND or a Foundation Degree.

Level 6

Equivalent to a Bachelor Degree

Level 7

Equivalent to a Masters Degree

Degree Apprenticeships (DA) are at levels 6 and 7 (Masters)

A Degree Apprenticeship has to last at least one year but is typically 1 and 3 years.

Degree Apprenticeships achieve a full Bachelor Degree as a core component of the apprenticeship.

You will be tested on your academic learning as well as your professional career skills by either:

- A fully integrated degree (academic and job skills) or
- A degree plus a separate test of your professional competence leading to a professional qualification.

WHAT'S INVOLVED in the apprenticeship qualification?

Each Higher and Degree Apprenticeship has been developed by a large number of employers and Universities to create a "Standard". These define the specific:

- Core (and specialist) skills required for specific job roles
- Core (and specialist) technical knowledge for specific job roles
- Core behavioural skills

These skills will be developed over your Higher or Degree Apprenticeship with support from your employer and training provider who will give you the opportunities to evidence these skills.

For each apprenticeship standard please refer to www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards



Assessment of Higher or Degree Apprenticeship

Undertaking your Higher or Degree Apprenticeship will entail a number of different aspects of assessment and checking of your progress with your employer and training provider. This can include:

- If you are undertaking a higher level qualification such as a HNC, Degree or professional qualification then the assessment requirements will have to be met. This may involve module assessments, examinations, practical work and presentations. This will be detailed by your training provider and in the Apprenticeship Standard Assessment Plan.
- On-going progress reviews with your employer and training provider to ensure that you are covering the core skills, knowledge and behaviours required. This is usually evidenced by real work and/or academic assessment requirements and pulled together in a Portfolio.
- All Apprentices doing standards have their skills, knowledge and behaviours evaluated at the end of their apprenticeship by taking an end-point assessment (EPA). This is known as synoptic assessment. Again this EPA depends on the Apprenticeship Assessment Plan but typically involves a review of a Portfolio, a presentation or interview with a panel from the sector, or a formal examination.



Digital and Technology Solutions Standard

Example Core (and specialist) skills required

- **Cyber Security:** can undertake a security risk assessment for a simple IT system and propose resolution advice. Can identify, analyse and evaluate security threats and hazards to planned and installed information systems or services (e.g. Cloud services),
- **Business Organisation:** can apply organisational theory, change management, marketing, strategic practice, human resource management and IT service management to technology solutions development. Develops well-reasoned investment proposals and provides business insights.
- **IT Project Management:** follows a systematic methodology for initiating, planning, executing, controlling and dosing technology solutions projects. Applies industry standard processes, methods, techniques and tools to execute projects. Is able to manage a project (typically less than six months, no inter-dependency with other projects and no strategic impact) including identifying and resolving deviations and the management of problems and escalation processes.
- **Computer and Network Infrastructure:** can plan, design and manage computer networks with an overall focus on the services and capabilities that network infrastructure solutions enable in an organisational context. Identifies network security risks and their resolution.

Example Technical Knowledge required

Knows and understands:

- How business exploits technology solutions for competitive advantage.
- The value of technology investments and how to formulate a business case for a new technology solution, including estimation of both costs and benefits.
- Contemporary techniques for design, developing, testing, correcting, deploying and documenting software systems from specifications, using agreed standards and tools.
- How teams work effectively to produce technology solutions.
- The role of data management systems in managing organisational data and information.

Example Behavioural Skills required

- Fluent in written communications and able to articulate complex issues.
- Makes concise, engaging and well-structured verbal presentations, arguments and explanations.
- Able to deal with different, competing interests within and outside the organisation with excellent negotiation skills.
- Have demonstrated that they have mastered basic business disciplines, ethics and courtesies, demonstrating timeliness and focus when faced with distractions and the ability to complete tasks to a deadline with high quality.



from
the

Electrical/Electronic Technical Support Engineers

Example Core (and specialist) skills required

During the Foundation stage, the apprentice must develop a solid grasp of the core engineering skills. These skills will not only prepare the apprentice for the workplace in demonstrating that they have the required manual dexterity to do their core role but these competencies are transferable and can be built upon over time. The skills required are:

- How to comply with statutory requirements and stringent organisational safety requirements
- Producing components using hand fitting techniques
- Producing Electrical or Electronic Drawings using a Computer Aided Design (CAD) system
- Preparing and using lathes, milling and other general or specialist machines and High Tech equipment
- Using computer software packages to assist with engineering activities
- Producing engineering project plans
- Maintaining and improving electrical equipment/systems

Example Technical Knowledge required

Academic Knowledge:

The apprentice will initially complete a Foundation Degree which would provide the foundation stage of the knowledge elements in the competence qualification. It will support the fundamental scientific and mathematical principles that equip apprentices with the understanding required to operate effectively and efficiently at high level within this sector. As a core the engineer needs to cover around 960 academic Guided Learning Hours, in order to have a solid grasp of;

- Mathematics and science for engineers
- Materials and manufacture
- 3D Computer Aided Design and Computer Aided Engineering
- How to undertake and apply business-led projects
- Understanding actuators and sensors

Example Behavioural Skills required

Occupational Behaviours:

Modern high value engineering organisations require their apprentices to have a set of occupational behaviours that will ensure success both in their current and future roles and in meeting the overall company objectives. These required behaviours include:

Safety mindset: This occupation sits within an industry with a high level of safety critical activities. There has to be strict compliance and a disciplined and responsible approach to manage, mitigate and avoid risk.

Strong work ethic: Positive attitude, motivated by engineering; dependable, ethical, responsible and reliable.

Logical approach: Able to structure a plan and develop activities following a logical thought process, but also able to quickly “think on feet” when working through them.

Problem solving orientation: Identifies issues quickly, enjoys solving complex problems and applies appropriate solutions. Has a strong desire to push to ensure the true root cause of any problem is found and a solution identified which prevents further recurrence.

Quality focus: Follows rules, procedures and principles in ensuring work completed is fit for purpose and pays attention to detail/ error checks throughout activities.

Personal responsibility and resilience: Motivated to succeed accountable and persistent to complete task.

from

Accounting Standard

Example Core (and specialist) skills required

Skills

What is required?

Analysis

Create and interpret Information, and show how that information can be used most effectively to add value to the organisation.

Communication

Effectively communicate relevant Information across the organisation and to appropriate stakeholders in both written and verbal formats.

Leadership

Proactively manage their own development and is committed to the job and their profession.

Planning and Prioritisation

Work to tight deadlines and respond to changing priorities. Effectively plan and prioritise time and co-ordinate the input of others in order to meet both deadlines and changing priorities.

Example Technical Knowledge required

Knowledge and understanding of the core elements of double entry bookkeeping and accounting standards enable accountants to create and report financial information to the users of accounts. A Professional Accounting Technician will understand and/ ,or validate the accounting standards for basic accounts preparation and/ or the drafting of financial statements. Depending on their role they will also have specialist knowledge in other aspects of accounting, for example management accounting and tax accounting.

Example Behavioural Skills required

Adaptability

Willing to both listen and learn and to accept changing priorities and working requirements and has the flexibility to maintain high standards in a changing environment.

Adding Value

Actively engage in the wider business, as appropriate, and look to provide information that positively contributes to influencing business decisions. Continually strive to improve own working processes and those of the organisation.

Ethics and Integrity

Honest and principled in all of their actions and interactions. They will respect others and meet the ethical requirements of their profession.

MYTHS... busted

Apprentices aren't academically-minded

WRONG

Higher and Degree Apprentices who apply to the employers and HE provider will still need to meet the same entry requirements and high standards for the degree. AND you will achieve the same academic degree qualification.

I can't afford it

WRONG

Unlike most ways of gaining formal training and practical experience, apprenticeships are paid for by the government and your employer. Therefore you don't take out a student loan for fees and living costs and gain a Degree at zero cost. So they're great if university isn't an option financially.

FACT: Apprenticeships are available in a wide range of sectors such as Digital, Engineering, Nuclear, Project Management, Nursing, Accountancy, Leadership and Management.

You can't do a Higher and Degree Apprenticeship at a Russell Group University

WRONG

Yes you can. The Russell Group consists of 24 member universities who are world-class, research-intensive universities.

The learning that apprentices receive will be too generic and not relevant to industry

WRONG

Research and innovation are at the heart of the Higher and Degree Apprenticeship courses. They have been developed by both employers and HE providers, so students receive the most up-to-date skills and knowledge relevant to each business sector.

I won't have a real job

WRONG

Most apprenticeships are full-time like a regular job. The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) states that the number of hours worked must be at least 30 hours per week, just seven-and-a-half hours less than the 37.5 hours worked on regular contracts. This can be reduced but only in exceptional circumstances. Apprenticeships must also last a minimum of 12 months and normally last between one and 5 years.

Degree Apprenticeships are best suited to large companies who can afford the training costs

WRONG

Being a small or medium-sized business is advantageous when it comes to getting funding for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships since they won't have to contribute to the Apprenticeship Levy but will be able to draw 90%-100% of the funding to help towards training costs for the apprentice from the Government. Look out for opportunities in small and medium-sized businesses, not just the multi-nationals.

FACT: Over the past three years, 122,000 people have started Higher of Degree Apprenticeships. The government has pledged to create 3 million apprenticeships across all levels by 2020.



JARGON... *explained*

What do these things mean anyway?

HE

HE refers to Higher Education, which is any qualification at Level 4 and above.

Standards

Over the past few years, employers from over 200 organisations have been working together to develop a range of new apprenticeship standards “approved by the Department of Education”. An Apprenticeship standard is a template for the way an apprenticeship is delivered:

- What an apprentice will do during their apprenticeship
- The skills and behaviours they will need to perform the role they are training for

Competitive Salary

many employers advertise roles with a “competitive salary”. This means the salary and benefits will be in line with similar roles for other organisations or that it depends on your current skills and experience. Benefits could include a pension, access to a car, leisure facilities or a relocation allowance if you have to move.

SFA

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) are responsible for giving colleges, training providers and employers the right funding to help adults, young people, the unemployed and people with low skill levels to get the skills they need for employment.

Sector

An industry or part of an industry, covering groups of related occupations. Examples of sectors/industries are Construction, Engineering, Health, Manufacturing, Accounting and Management.

NAS

the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is part of the Skills Funding Agency and is a government agency that coordinates apprenticeships in England, enabling people to enter the skilled trades and professions. www.apprenticeships.gov.uk

WHAT'S IN IT for me?

FACT:

87% of higher
(level 4 plus)
apprentices were
satisfied with their
apprenticeship.

Source: Apprenticeship
Evaluation 2017
leavers.

What could I earn?

If you are aged 16-18, or aged 19 or over and in your first year of your apprenticeship, you will earn at least the minimum wage for apprentices (£3.90 per hour from April 2019).

If you are 19 and over and have completed your first year, you will earn at least the minimum wage of £6.15 per hour. Refer to <https://acas.org.uk> for the most up to date minimum wage information.

Many companies pay more than this, particularly for higher-level apprenticeships:

- An aerospace engineering apprentice at BAE Systems UK can earn £23,550 per year
- A Higher degree accountancy apprenticeship can earn over £13,000 per year
- A software engineer apprentice can earn around £14,500 per year.

In fact, you could potentially earn upwards of £300 per week plus your employer and the government are paying your tuition fee, meaning no student loans for you!

In contrast, English students taking a full-time university degree pay a maximum of £9,250 per year in tuition fees.

Vocational STEM courses beat degrees on pay

People who completed higher-level vocational qualifications in Stem subjects earn more than graduates from similar courses at non-Russell Group universities, new research shows. Researchers from the London School of Economics, found that by the age of 30, those who had completed a higher-level vocational qualification (level 4 or 5) earned more on average than their contemporaries who went to a non-Russell Group university to study similar subjects.

“Higher vocational education offers an important alternative choice of tertiary education, often run by local colleges and resulting in lower debt for students compared to those incurred by degree holders (or, if within an apprenticeship, no debt at all because of employer funding). Our study shows that for young people interested in specific professional roles, higher vocational education could indeed offer useful, cheaper and ultimately more lucrative alternative to university.”

(Source: TES April 2019)

Apprenticeship Discounts

You will be classed as an employee, rather than a student, so you won't be entitled to student discounts, but the National Union of Students (NUS) has an Apprenticeship Extra Card. For £11 per year you can get discounts on lots of brands. See more at www.apprenticeextra.co.uk

If you are doing a higher or degree apprenticeship and have a college or university email address, you should be able to access other student discount schemes or support. You may also be eligible for discounts on public transport. HSBC has also extended their student bank account to apprentices meaning you could benefit from student overdraft and a credit card to help you budget your finances while training.

WHAT DO APPRENTICES SAY?



Laura Dent

Higher-Level Apprentice at Dodd & Co Accountants, Carlisle studying AAT at Carlisle College

“ I’m working full-time and earning money. I’m able to have a social life. I’m learning something new every week. I get the qualifications to back up my job – enabling me to progress in my career, and I’ve got no debt. Every week is different, there is no week the same, and the variety means you are always learning. We are taught by accredited AAT tutors at Carlisle College, so you know you are learning from the best people who understand the job role you are doing. I hope to become a Chartered Accountant in the future. ”



Emily Manson

Mechanical Design Higher-Level Apprentice at BAE Systems, Barrow studying HNC Mechanical Engineering at Furness College

“ We design the piping and ventilation systems, the things that go inside the boats. One day a week the company pays for us to come to Furness College to complete the HNC, part of the degree-level course. The course is based on what I am doing specifically – I study mechanical science and engineering maths – the subjects which are crucial to the job. The job and the course enables me to live close to home, work normal hours and get paid. We get hands-on knowledge and use brand new equipment, like the CAD machines, so you get to see things rather than imagining it. ”

After finishing their Higher or Degree Apprenticeship

46%
received a
pay rise

77%
of apprentices
stayed with the
same employer

36%
reported
getting a
promotion

Statistics from Gov.uk



Ryan Bowron

Mechanical Technician (Degree Apprenticeship) at Kimberly Clark, Barrow studying a Degree in Mechanical Engineering at Furness College

“ I am released from work to attend college once a week to study for my qualification as part of the Degree Apprenticeship. It can be difficult at first to balance the college work and shifts at work, but once you get used to it, it is fine. I get the work experience with hands on skills and get paid to come to college. The main benefit is the amount of theoretical knowledge that you gain and then can apply now and later on in your career. When you apply for a job you will have the advantage of having the wider work experience and the qualification. I understand the mechanical principles and apply it every day in my job. Interactions with work colleagues is at a more professional level and this gives you the confidence to talk to them in a variety of ways depending on the situation. The application process was by an initial handwritten application form so that the company can see you have taken care and attention. Then there was an aptitude test plus an interview and if successful a further aptitude test. It is worth working for and it has helped me in getting a permanent job at the end of the apprenticeship as I have the knowledge plus the work experience to back up the qualification. I like doing this mechanical technician job and have a more hands on experience. And it's a bonus to achieve the academic qualification as well. All the fees are paid by the employer via the Apprenticeship Levy. Basically I get paid to come to college rather than going to university. It is an option to explore as you get the hands-on skills, get yourself into the workplace as well as getting an Engineering Degree from Lancaster University. ”



Daniel Jackson

IT Higher-Level Degree Apprentice at Innovia Film, Wigton studying a foundation degree in Computing at Carlisle College

“ I can earn while I learn. I can get a higher level qualification whilst also getting experience in the job. This is helped by learning from others in the workplace. Working in a real job develops skills better, enabling real hands on the job experience and actual technical skills development. I applied directly to Innovia films via an application and interview process. Applying for the apprenticeship was really easy and during the process I decided that this was the route for me. My employer is looking for hard work, focused and committed to apprenticeship with a high standard of work. Best bits of the higher apprenticeship is that it puts into practice what I have learnt at college. I feel like I have grown as an individual. It has given me more confidence, dealing with people in the workplace from managers to people on the shop floor and better communication skills. Every day is different. ”

GOT WHAT IT TAKES

to be the next apprentice?

You've heard what an apprenticeship is, but how do you know if it's right for you?

It will be challenging.

An apprenticeship is not the easy option. You will be starting a challenging job and trying to prove yourself in the workplace, while getting to grips with studying a higher or degree qualification. You will be expected to achieve academically and at work, managing your time and adjusting to longer hours with fewer holidays than at school, college or university.

What grades do I need?

This will depend on what and who you apply to. Grades vary from programme to programme. Some apprenticeships are awarded purely based on how you perform at interview. Typically you will need five GCSE's including English and Maths (9 – 4 on the new grading system), and Level 3 qualifications, including A levels, NVQs, or a BTEC. Some employers will expect or require applicants to have studied subjects relevant to the apprenticeship.

What are employers looking for?

An Apprenticeship has been designed by employers, so you will be developing the right skills and knowledge to be a success in your chosen industry. They are looking for personal aptitude and enthusiasm rather than just your academic ability. In fact, some employers don't ask for specific subject grades at all. It helps if you have a particular interest in the area you want to work in and can demonstrate this from previous experience.

Anything that can demonstrate your interest and your readiness for work could help you stand out from the crowd, for example previous volunteering, relevant work experience or part-time work.

What skills and qualities will employers be looking for in potential candidates?

Some of the skills and behaviours employers are looking for are:

- *Teamwork*
- *Collaboration*
- *Interpersonal skills*
- *Enthusiasm*
- *Motivation*
- *Communication*
- *Analysis*
- *Creative solutions*
- *Attention to detail*
- *Logical thinking*
- *Initiative*

As well as being flexible and adaptable to suit changing business needs at work, you will need to be self-motivated during independent study and be prepared to put what you learn into practice.

FACT:

97% of apprentices said their ability to do the job had improved

92% of apprentices said their careers prospects had improved.

Source gov.uk

HOW and WHEN to apply?

With so many opportunities on offer there are several ways you can find the apprenticeship that's right for you.

Where to Apply?

For Apprenticeship opportunities local to you and further afield, go to "Find an Apprenticeship" on www.gov.uk. Once you register you can set up your email and text alerts to inform you about new apprenticeship roles.

You can also find a range of vacancies at www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk as well as over 12,000 reviews.

Head over to www.amazingapprenticeships.com and use the "Vacancy snapshot" which provides useful information on well-known employers which may help you with your application.

Useful other websites are www.ucas.com and www.thestudentroom.co.uk

Also check local employer recruitment websites and local press. Some employers will ask you to apply directly to them. If you want to work for a particular employer then look on their website for recruitment, vacancies or apprenticeship information. Also, it is good to check out local recruitment and career fairs.

The Recruitment Process -

What to expect

There can be a number of hurdles to leap before you even get a face-to-face interview:

- An application form or CV
- Online tests
- Perhaps a phone or online interview
- As assessment day

Smaller organisations may have a slightly more informal or personal process, perhaps involving an initial written application, followed by a face-to-face interview stage if you are shortlisted.

When to Apply?

There is no fixed deadline to apply. Vacancies appear throughout the year, so it is definitely worth registering for alerts at the www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship to catch the vacancies as they appear.

Don't wait until the deadline to make an application. Some companies close their recruitment as soon as they have enough candidates.

Autumn →

Larger employer's vacancies appear

January
February onwards →

Majority of vacancies appear

Smaller employers might start recruiting a month or two before the job starts, so if you are aiming to start work in August/September, you will need to start looking from March.

DO check start dates closely, to make sure you will have finished school or college. Start your research early – the sooner the better, so you have time to fill any gaps in your CV with the things the employers are typically looking for, including getting some relevant work experience.

Have a Plan B

So what happens if you don't get the apprenticeship you wanted? Its a competitive world out there and throughout your career there may be times where you have to make alternative plans, so its good to put together multiple options and different routes to achieve your goals.

This may mean researching another employer, a different course or training option. You may want to explore a different size company that may have a slightly different application process.

We have put together some helpful hints on the recruitment process, on page 16.

HELPFUL hints & RECRUITMENT PROCESS

in the

Clearly read

the job description, making note of key points such as entry requirements and "essential" qualities

Research the company

beforehand, so you understand its key areas and priorities

Include relevant experience and skills

Be specific and give examples to demonstrate what you have to offer

Back up

your statements with evidence

Use an appropriate email address

Regularly log onto

your account to track applications

Don't let emails end up in your junk folder

Do you have a Plan B?

Don't undersell yourself.

Be confident (but honest) about your abilities

What employability skills do you have?

Mention them if they are relevant to the role

Write about relevant volunteering, work experience and part-time work

Start your research early

Good Luck!

Speak to others about Apprenticeships

Although apprenticeships have been around for hundreds of years, there are still some misconceptions surrounding them. You may find your friends and family don't know a lot about them. In the past, apprenticeships were geared towards traditional vocational courses such as carpentry or engineering. Your family may be surprised at the range of sectors they now cover, including digital, finance, media, law to name a few.

There are several resources that you can share with friends and family who want to learn more about apprenticeships:

- Take the Quiz. A great way to help parents and friends learn more about apprenticeships and understand some of the common misconceptions around them is to share the myth-busting quiz with them at: <https://university.which.co.uk/advice/apprenticeships/things-you-didn-t-know-about-higher-and-degree-apprenticeships-but-should>
- Go to local recruitment or career fairs, open days at Colleges, Universities where you can talk to the higher and degree apprenticeships.
- Watch the videos on the Hello Future website to hear what local Higher and Degree Apprenticeships do and feel about their apprenticeship.

Hello Future is a partnership of universities, colleges and employers. We are committed to the young people of Cumbria and want to improve access to any kind of higher education (university/college or Higher/Degree Apprenticeships). We are here to help support you in making informed decisions about your career, the pathways to get there and making a successful transition to your next step.