

NEW 2020/21



The Complete Guide to

# HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

**Which?**

 Apprenticeships

# Higher and degree apprenticeships: the basics

If you thought apprenticeships were just for 16 year-olds leaving school, it's time to take another look

Apprenticeships offer a valid alternative to university, with the qualifications to match. If you choose a degree apprenticeship, you still get to graduate with your cap and gown, along with several years of work experience under your belt.

First and foremost, though, an apprenticeship is a job with substantial training and the development of transferable skills.

It's a way to earn and learn, gaining a real qualification, long-term career path and the possibility for higher earnings.

And, best of all, no university debts: you'll have been earning for the length of your apprenticeship and there are no tuition fees.

## What is an apprenticeship, exactly?

An apprenticeship is a combined package of work and study. As an apprentice, you'll be employed by a company and paid a wage for the work that you do. Apprentices are entitled to the same rights as other employees: a contract of employment and at least 20 days paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays. Apprenticeships are available across the UK, but this guide focuses on England.

## How does it work?

You'll spend most of the week at work (usually 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 and coach you.

You'll also spend time attending college, a university or training provider, training at work or online. Some apprenticeships use a combination of options; your employer will decide which method works best.

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education is an independent public body which works to ensure apprenticeships are the best they can be. It develops apprenticeship standards with employers that meet the needs of the companies and learners alike.

## What grades do I need?

Entry requirements vary from programme to programme, and depend on the sector and prior skills. If you have achieved A-levels you may still be expected to start at intermediate or advanced level as some sectors, such as engineering, require you to build up your occupational skills. See examples of entry requirements:

- Unilever requires five GCSEs at grade 4-9 including English and maths and two A-levels
- Deloitte requires GCSEs in maths and English Language, grade 4 or above (previously grade C or higher) as well as 104 Ucas points (previously 260 pre 2017 Ucas system).

## What could I learn?

If you're aged 16–18, or aged 19 or over and in the first year of your apprenticeship, you'll

earn at least the minimum wage for apprentices (£3.90 per hour from April 2019).

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 accountancy apprentice 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 pay your tuition fees, meaning no university loans for you!

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

Many employers advertise roles with a 'competitive salary'. This could mean 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.

## Apprenticeship discounts and perks

You'll 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 Apprentice Extra Card. For £11 per year you can get discounts on lots of brands. See more at [apprenticeextra.co.uk](http://apprenticeextra.co.uk).

If you're doing a degree apprenticeship and have a 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.

Many local schemes are available, like the Apprentice Oyster photo card in London, which gives apprentices 30% off certain journeys.

HSBC has also extended their student bank account to apprentices meaning you could benefit from a student overdraft and a credit card to help you budget your finances while training.

87 per cent of higher (Level 4 plus) apprentices were satisfied with their apprenticeship.\*







In 2017/18, there were 59,080 starts on higher and Degree apprenticeships\*

## 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?

An apprenticeship is not the easy option. You'll be starting a challenging job and trying to prove yourself in the workplace, while getting to grips with studying for a degree. You will be expected to achieve academically and at work, managing your time and adjusting to longer hours with fewer holidays than at school or university. You might have to travel or relocate to find the right opportunity for you.

### What are employers looking for?

An apprenticeship is actually designed by employers, meaning you'll be developing the right skills and knowledge to be a success in your chosen industry. They're looking for

personal aptitude and enthusiasm rather than just your academic ability; in fact, some employers don't ask for specific 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.

### Which level is the right level?

There are various levels of apprenticeship you could apply for (see table, right). Courses take between one and six years to complete depending on the level.

### Which higher level apprenticeships are available?

There are hundreds of different apprenticeships on offer. From accounting to aerospace engineering, new apprenticeships are being developed all the time with more highly skilled apprenticeships popping up each year.

Big companies like Rolls Royce, GlaxoSmithKline, Goldman Sachs and the BBC offer degree apprenticeships, but you'll also find smaller companies offering them, too.

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

### Sought-after skills and qualities

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

| Name         | Level         | Equivalent educational level                                   |
|--------------|---------------|--|
| Intermediate | 2             | 5 GCSE passes (grade 9-4)                                      |
| Advanced     | 3             | 2 A-level passes/ Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate |
| Higher       | 4, 5, 6 and 7 | Foundation, Bachelor's or Master's degree                      |
| Degree       | 6 and 7       | Bachelor's or master's degree                                  |

\* Statistics from GOV.UK



# 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?

"I was Weightmans' first ever apprentice and the impact I have made including the connections within the business has seen the firm invest even further within their apprenticeship scheme. It's an exciting time for apprentices within the legal sector - attitudes are changing and becoming more accepting of apprenticeships as a route into law."

**Jordan Coulton, Degree Apprentice, Paralegal, Weightmans LLP**

"University had always been the expected route for me and something which my school had pushed. When I just missed my university offers with AABB grades I was devastated and considered entirely rethinking pursuing the technology route. Since joining Capgemini as an apprentice, I've gained so much. I've achieved a university degree but also worked on my professional skills, been able to travel, and really developed in confidence."

**James Gee, Higher Apprentice, Software Engineering, Capgemini**

"I think the experience gained by working at Nestlé, and the amount I now know about the confectionery industry gives me a huge advantage for future career options. I am so thankful that I have got a degree, but not only that, I also have three years of invaluable hands-on experience."

**Katie Lloyd, Degree Apprentice, Confectionery, Nestlé**

"Degree apprenticeships mean you can gain both practical skills and academic knowledge whilst earning a salary. You don't have to choose between working or studying for a degree - you can do both at the same time."

**Dr Sam Hardy, Head of Degree Apprenticeships, University of Warwick**

"At 35, most people are surprised to hear that I am an apprentice. There is a huge misconception that apprenticeships are just for young people. They are for anyone of working age, at any stage in their career. I love the hands-on approach to learning, and the option to earn at the same time was hugely attractive to me. I am now in my third year of my apprenticeship. This summer, I'll be graduating from Northampton University with a degree apprenticeship in engineering, an exciting career ahead of me, and no debt!"

**Darren Stawarz, Degree Apprentice, Manufacturing Engineering, Gemini Rail Services**



# What's on offer: apprenticeships

## At a glance: higher and degree apprenticeship sectors

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care       | Engineering and Manufacturing            |
| Arts, Media and Publishing                       | Health, Public Services and Care         |
| Business and Administration and Law              | Information and Communication Technology |
| Catering and Hospitality                         | Legal, Finance and Accounting            |
| Construction, Planning and the Built Environment | Protective Services                      |
| Creative and Design                              | Retail and Commercial Enterprise         |
| Digital  | Sales, Marketing and Procurement         |
| Education and Childcare                          | Science and Mathematics                  |
|  | Transport and Logistics                  |

## In detail: subjects and professions

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Academic Professional                                    | Construction Site Engineering Technician             |
| Accountancy / Taxation Professional                      | Control/Technical Support Engineer                   |
| Actuarial Technician                                     | Conveyancing   |
| Advanced Clinical Practitioner                           | Creative and Digital Media                           |
| Advanced Dairy Technologist                              | Cyber Intrusion Analyst                              |
| Aerospace Engineer                                       | Cyber Security Technical Professional                |
| Aerospace Software Development Engineer                  | Data Analyst/Scientist                               |
| Agriculture  | Dental Practice Manager                              |
| Aircraft Maintenance Certifying Engineer                 | Dental Technician                                    |
| Animal Trainer   | Digital and Technology Solution Specialist           |
| Architect and Architectural Assistant                    | Digital Learning Design                              |
| Assistant Technical Director (Visual Effects)            | Electrical Engineering                               |
| Associate Ambulance Practitioner                         | Facilities Management                                |
| Aviation Operations Manager                              | Fashion and Textiles Product Technologist            |
| Banking and Finance                                      | Financial Services Professional                      |
| Bespoke Tailor and Cutter                                | Food Industry Technical Professional/ Engineer       |
| Brewer   | Geospatial Mapping and Science                       |
| Broadcast and Media Systems Engineer                     | High Speed Rail & Infrastructure Technician          |
| Broadcasting Technology                                  | Hospitality Manager                                  |
| Building Services Engineering                            | Housing and Property Management                      |
| Business and Professional Administration                 | Human Resources                                      |
| Business Analyst   | Improvement Practitioner/Specialist                  |
| Business To Business Sales Professional                  | Insurance  |
| Care Leadership and Management                           | Intelligence Operations                              |
| Chartered Manager/Surveyor                               | Internal Audit Practitioner                          |
| Children, Young People and Families Manager/Practitioner | Investment Operations Specialist                     |
| Civil Engineer   | IT, Software, Web & Telecoms Professionals           |
| Clinical Trials Specialist                               | Junior 2D Artist (Visual Effects)                    |
| Commercial Procurement and Supply                        | Laboratory Scientist                                 |
| Community Energy Specialist                              | Learning and Development Consultant/Business Partner |
| Construction Management                                  | Legal Services                                       |

Nearly 200+ apprenticeships in development

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Mammography Associate                                | Professional Services                          |
| Management   | Project Management                             |
| Manufacturing Engineer                               | Propulsion Technician                          |
| Marine Pilot   | Prosthetist / Orthotist                        |
| Marketing  | Public Sector Commercial Professional          |
| Midwife  | Rail and Rail Systems Engineering              |
| Mineral Products Technology                          | Recruitment                                    |
| Network Engineer                                     | Registered Nurse                               |
| Non-Destructive Testing Engineer                     | Regulatory Affairs Specialist                  |
| Nuclear Technician, Scientist or Engineer            | Regulatory Compliance Officer                  |
| Nursing Associate                                    | Rehabilitation Worker (Visual Impairment)      |
| Occupational Therapist                               | Retail   |
| Operating Department Practitioner/Manager            | Revenues and Welfare Benefits Practitioner     |
| Ordnance Munitions and Explosives (OME) Professional | Risk and Safety Management                     |
| Packaging Professional                               | Road Transport Engineering Manager             |
| Paramedic  | Sales Executive                                |
| Paraplanner  | School Business Professional                   |
| Passenger Transport Operations Manager               | Science Industry Process/Plant Engineer        |
| Physiotherapist                                      | Senior Compliance / Risk Specialist            |
| Podiatrist   | Senior Metrology Technician                    |
| Police Community Support Officer                     | Social Media and Digital Marketing             |
| Police Constable                                     | Social Worker                                  |
| Policy Officer                                       | Software Developer/Tester                      |
| Port Marine Operations Officer                       | Solicitor                                      |
| Postgraduate Engineer                                | Supply Chain Leadership Professional           |
| Power Engineer                                       | Sustainable Resource Operations and Management |
| Process Automation Engineer                          | Teacher  |
| Product Design and Development                       | Technician Scientist                           |
| Professional Economist                               | The Water Industry                             |
|  | Unified Communications Trouble Shooter         |

Please note that this information is correct as of publication. For an up-to-date list please visit [gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)





# What's on offer: unis

## Universities

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Ada, the National College for Digital Skills         | University of Bedfordshire                 |
| Anglia Ruskin University                             | University of Bradford                     |
| Aston University                                     | University of Cambridge                    |
| Bath Spa University                                  | University of Central Lancashire           |
| Birkbeck College                                     | University of Chester                      |
| Birmingham City University                           | University of Chichester                   |
| Bournemouth University                               | University College Birmingham              |
| BPP University                                       | University of Cumbria                      |
| Brunel University London                             | University of Derby                        |
| Buckinghamshire New University                       | University of Durham                       |
| Canterbury Christ Church University                  | University of East Anglia                  |
| City, University Of London                           | University of East London                  |
| Coventry University                                  | University of Essex                        |
| Cranfield University                                 | University of Exeter                       |
| De Montfort University                               | University of Gloucestershire              |
| Edge Hill University                                 | University of Greenwich                    |
| Harper Adams University                              | University of Hertfordshire                |
| Imperial College Of Science, Technology And Medicine | University of Huddersfield                 |
| Kingston University                                  | University of Hull                         |
| Leeds Beckett University                             | University of Keele                        |
| Leeds Trinity University                             | University of Kent                         |
| Liverpool John Moores University                     | University of Lancaster                    |
| London Business School                               | University of Leeds                        |
| London Metropolitan University                       | University of Lincoln                      |
| London South Bank University                         | University of Newcastle Upon Tyne          |
| Loughborough University                              | University of Northampton                  |
| Manchester Metropolitan University                   | University of Northumbria at Newcastle     |
| Middlesex University                                 | University of Nottingham                   |
| Nottingham Trent University                          | University of Plymouth                     |
| The Open University                                  | University of Portsmouth                   |
| Oxford Brookes University                            | University of Reading                      |
| Plymouth College Of Art                              | University of Salford                      |
| Queen Mary University Of London                      | University of Sheffield                    |
| Ravensbourne Limited                                 | University of Southampton                  |
| Sheffield Hallam University                          | University of Suffolk                      |
| Southampton Solent University                        | University of Sunderland                   |
| Staffordshire University                             | University of Warwick                      |
| Teesside University                                  | University of West London                  |
| The Royal Agricultural University                    | University of the West Of England, Bristol |
| University of Bath                                   | University of Wolverhampton                |
| University of Bedfordshire                           | University of Winchester                   |
| University of Birmingham                             | University of Worcester                    |
| University of Bolton                                 | Writtle College                            |
|  | York St John University                    |

\* Statistics from GOV.UK

# What's on offer: employers

## Examples of employers' offering apprenticeships

|   |   |                          |
|---|---|--------------------------|
| Accenture                                 | Fujitsu                                 | Royal Air Force          |
| AECOM                                     | GCHQ                                    | Royal Navy               |
| Airbus                                    | GE                                      | Sainsbury's              |
| Arcadis                                   | Grant Thornton                          | Santander                |
| Army                                      | GSK                                     | Sellafield               |
| Atkins                                    | IBM                                     | Severn Trent             |
| Babcock International Marine & Technology | J.P. Morgan                             | Siemens                  |
| BAE Systems                               | Jaguar Land Rover                       | Skanska UK Plc           |
| Balfour Beatty                            | JCB                                     | Sky                      |
| Barclays                                  | KPMG LLP                                | Staffordshire University |
| BBC                                       | Laing O'Rourke                          | Tesco                    |
| BDO                                       | Lloyds Banking Group                    | Thales                   |
| Boots                                     | Mace                                    | Transport for London     |
| BT  | Marks & Spencer                         | Troup Bywaters + Anders  |
| Cappgemini                                | McCann Worldgroup                       | TUI                      |
| CGI                                       | National College for High Speed Railway | Unilever                 |
| Cisco                                     | Nestlé                                  | Virgin Media             |
| Civil Service Fast Track                  | Network Rail                            | Vodafone                 |
| Deloitte                                  | OMG                                     | Wates                    |
| Dentsu Aegis                              | PwC                                     | Wessex Water             |
| Dyson                                     | QA                                      | Willis Towers Watson     |
| EDF Energy                                | Renishaw                                | WSP                      |
| EY  | Rolls-Royce                             |                          |

Please note that this information is correct as of publication. For an up-to-date list please visit [gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

\* Please note that this information is correct as of publication. To view current live employer vacancies please visit [gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)



In 2017/18 there were 10,880 apprenticeship starts at levels 6 and 7, of which 59.1 per cent (6,420) were starts on degree apprenticeships.

Higher and degree apprenticeships are offered by other training providers that are not listed. Use 'Find apprenticeship training' on GOV.UK to easily search for details on training providers and the apprenticeships they offer.



# A week in the life

There's no such thing as a typical week, or even day, in the life of an apprentice

From travelling to an office in another city, meeting with clients to visiting a construction site: who knows what you might be doing next. Employers expect a lot, but no-one expects you to know how to do the job already. That's what the apprenticeship is for, after all. The organisation you work for should help you to adjust to your new working life with induction programmes or personal development activities to help you get started. Later on, you'll meet buddies or mentors who you can turn to for support.

**“ During my week, I am involved in multiple stages of the software development process from technically designing how functionality works through to writing the code to implement features on a number of exciting mobile projects. Each day is different for me and I am constantly learning about new technologies and techniques which I can immediately put into practice in my role. I also attend university for a day each week to study topics relevant to my job and enable me to gain an undergraduate degree in Digital and Technology Solutions.”**

**Jamie Edge, Degree Apprentice, Digital and Technology Solutions, Barclays**

**“ A typical day could see me sketching up ideas on paper or Computer Aided Design (CAD) software, transferring them to engineer drawings, completing stress analysis calculations, writing user instructions or conducting a risk assessment on the design - essentially, anything that goes into the design of that machine.”**

**Adam Sharp, Advanced Level Mechanical Design Apprentice and National Advanced Apprentice of the Year 2017, Sellafield**

**“ We're getting a high level of academic performance from apprentices on our programme as the relevance of the material is immediate.”**

**Alan Nabney, Deputy Dean, School of Engineering and Applied Science, Aston University**

**“The CapGemini programme starts with a seven-week block of residential practical training attended by apprentices working for various different employers. Apprentices get to network, make friends and learn from each other. For those based in the same towns or cities, some even move into shared accommodation afterwards. After this, the programme is delivered online by Aston University through recorded lectures, online tutorials and case studies. Online seminars and tutorials might take place in the evening. Each week, apprentices are expected to do at least five hours learning and an additional five hours self-study, on top of their full-time job.”**

**Digital and Technology Solutions Degree Apprenticeship, CapGemini**



# Your long-term career prospects

What kind of difference could an apprenticeship make to your life in the long-run?

Although no-one knows exactly what the future holds, the prospects for higher and degree apprentices look bright. One of the reasons businesses take on apprentices at this level is that they need a highly-skilled workforce. This is a good thing for the company but also for you. Exactly what happens after an apprenticeship will depend on your employer and your contract. Many higher and degree apprenticeship programmes are designed to develop the leaders and managers of the future. The experiences you gain as an apprentice can provide a springboard towards promotions and higher level opportunities.

After several years working with managers and peers, experiencing various aspects of the business and developing the essential skills and knowledge, you should have

\* Statistics from AAT and CEBR - Is a university degree the best route into employment?

\*\* Compared to those with Level 3 vocations. Statistics from Adult further education: outcome-based success measures.

become a very valuable employee. It's not unusual for an ex-apprentice to work their way up to the boardroom. Former apprentices are particularly well represented in senior management teams in construction, engineering and energy; 30% of the senior UK managers at Rolls Royce started out at the company as apprentices. Remember to make sure you keep track of the key skills and experience you've gained for your growing CV.

**"My apprenticeship has, quite frankly, changed my life. My confidence has grown from being a very shy person to being able to present in front of both client directors and in local schools to help promote apprenticeships."**

**Joshua White, Business Analyst, IBM**

**"The apprenticeship at RBS has enabled me to explore numerous different roles within the bank and has allowed me to pick something I enjoy. The apprenticeship has taught me how to interact with colleagues, vendors and most important, our customers. I have really enjoyed my time on the scheme and believe it has put me in really good stead for the future."**

**Ciaran Pugh, Business Management and Administration Degree Apprentice, RBS**

Higher apprentices could earn £150,000 more on average over their lifetime.\*

Over 90% of apprentices go into work or further training.\*\*



**"I'm very ambitious about my future. I started at university in September, studying a BEng in Computer Aided Engineering. Without my apprenticeship, I wouldn't be the confident, mature, challenge-driven individual I am today: greatest decision of my life."**

**Jade Aspinall, Manufacturing Engineer, MBDA UK**

**"Apprenticeships allow employers to reach candidates from a range of backgrounds, utilising their skills whilst offering them the chance to earn whilst they learn. The business benefits too, with each apprentice contributing £18,000 of net productivity gain over the course of their programme. This productivity boost not only benefits the apprentices and Barclays, but spills over into the whole economy and will help narrow the skills gap between the UK and its competitors abroad."**

**Claire Findlay, Head of Apprenticeships, Barclays**

**"The degree apprenticeship has been designed by employers to teach students the cutting-edge technical skills that they need to stay ahead in an ever-changing market. This means that the sky really is the limit for those who graduate from a degree apprenticeship and businesses are benefiting from the skills that they bring from day one."**

**Sasha Morgan Manley, Managing Director, Morgan Manley Ltd**

**"My apprenticeship has already opened up a huge amount of career options. By the end of my apprenticeship I will have a university degree as well as five years of industrial experience, making me very employable compared to a graduate who has taken a university route."**

**Harja Bibi, Degree Apprentice, Laboratory Scientists, GSK**

**"Cappgemini's degree apprenticeship scheme is an empowering journey - it has provided me with a platform to develop my career in an ever-evolving industry at the heart of society. Since I started in 2012, I've been exposed to cutting edge technologies, companies across a range of sectors and, more importantly, privileged to work alongside some amazing people from whom I learn every single day."**

**Peter Flood, Digital and Technology Solutions Degree Apprentice, Cappgemini**



'Find an apprenticeship' has between 12,000 and 20,000 vacancies listed at any one time.\*

a great application when the right opportunity arises. Remember this is a competitive process: you're applying for a job, so make sure you sell yourself as best you can.

### The recruitment process

There can be a number of hurdles to leap before you even get to a face-to-face interview: an application form, online tests, perhaps a phone or online interview, before heading to an assessment day.

You might find that smaller organisations have a slightly more informal or personal process, perhaps involving an initial written application, followed by face-to-face interview stages if you're shortlisted. Good luck!

If you have a specific query you can also contact the National Apprenticeship Helpdesk on 0800 015 0400 or email [nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk](mailto:nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk).

## How to apply and next steps

Raring to go? Here's how to make an application - and be successful

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 GOV.UK. Once you register you can set up email and text alerts to inform you about new apprenticeship roles.

You can also find a range of vacancies at [ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](http://ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk), as well as over 21,000 reviews. It's worth checking directly on employer recruitment sites too.

Head over to [amazingapprenticeships.com](http://amazingapprenticeships.com) to use 'Vacancy snapshot' which provides

useful information on well-known employers which may help you with your application.

### When to apply

Unlike university applications, there is no fixed deadline when it comes to applying for apprenticeships. Vacancies appear throughout the year.

Don't wait until the deadline to apply, some companies close their recruitment as soon as they have sufficient candidates.

As a general rule, vacancies with larger companies start appearing in the autumn, but the majority pop up from January or February onwards. Smaller businesses might start recruiting a month or two before the job

starts, so if you hope to start work in August or September, you might start looking from Easter onwards.

Do check start dates closely, to make sure you'll 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 employers are typically looking for (see page four), including getting some relevant work experience.

### Stay focused

It's really quite normal to have some doubts and nerves about the process, especially around spring-time, when your friends have their university offers and you might still be waiting to find the right vacancy to apply to. Don't panic! Keep calm and focus on making

### APPLICATION TIPS

- 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 experiences 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 and voicemail message on your phone
- Regularly log on to your account to track your applications
- Don't let emails end up in your junk folder
- Don't undersell yourself. Be confident (but honest!) about your abilities



# Choosing between university and an apprenticeship

Are you finding it difficult to decide about your future?

## You can apply for both at the same time!

Don't panic, if you're undecided between going to university or applying for an apprenticeship, it's worth knowing that you don't have to decide right away.

There's nothing stopping you from applying to university through Ucas while keeping your eye out for interesting apprenticeship vacancies. Try not to think about it as university or an apprenticeship. A degree or higher apprenticeship can lead to a degree-level qualification.

Just remember, apprenticeship schemes don't follow the same application and deadline patterns as applying to uni - the deadline for your apprenticeship application will be down to individual employers, and you'll apply for them direct (see page 16).

You're not restricted to one apprenticeship application either. If you've seen more than one you're interested in - go for it.

Decision time will arrive eventually though, so research the options available to make the right choice for you.

# Speaking to others about apprenticeships: parents and friends

Advice on how to answer tricky questions on 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 apprenticeships. In the past, apprenticeships were geared towards traditional vocational courses such as plumbing or carpentry, there wasn't the same breadth of roles available to undertake that there is today. Your family may be surprised at the range of sectors they now cover, including digital, finance and media to name a few.

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

## Apprenticeships guide for parents

Share this guide with parents to help them understand the value of degree or higher apprenticeships. If your parents don't have a lot of time on their hands, download the Amazing Apprenticeships Parents' Pack for them, which is available in a number of different languages.



I often get asked my advice for those choosing between university and an apprenticeship. But what works for one person doesn't work for another. I think you need to consider the end goal you're trying to get to. Sometimes a degree is a pre-requisite for a job, but if you want to work in an industry where they offer apprenticeships why would you wait four years or more to secure a position when you can study at the same time?

Ross Aynsley, Apprentice, Royal Bank of Scotland

Doing an apprenticeship wasn't something I expected to be undertaking a few years ago. I would recommend anyone getting their exam results next summer to figure out what interests them and then consider an apprenticeship as a route to working in that industry.

James Gee, Apprentice, Capgemini

"He's worked at Weightmans LLP for five years and is now on his way to becoming a qualified lawyer. He was the first in our family to go to university, but after a few weeks realised that it wasn't for him. He said, 'Dad, mark my words, I'll make it as a lawyer without going to uni.' This is the best thing that has happened... If your child wishes to pursue this route, we say go for it! Do whatever makes them happy. They are learning and earning."

Rose and Andy Coulton, parents of Jordan Coulton, Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year 2018

## **Which?**

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