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Become an apprentice

1. How apprenticeships work

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice you'll:

- be an employee earning a wage and getting holiday pay (<https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice/pay-and-conditions>)
- work alongside experienced staff
- gain job-specific skills
- get time for training and study related to your role (at least 20% of your normal working hours)

Apprenticeships take 1 to 5 years to complete depending on their level.

Levels of apprenticeship

Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels.

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

Some apprenticeships may also give you an additional qualification, such as a diploma.

Who can start an apprenticeship

To start an apprenticeship, you'll need to be:

- 16 or over
- living in England
- not in full-time education

You can apply for an apprenticeship (<https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice/apply-for-an-apprenticeship>) while you're still at school but you'll need to be 16 or over by the end of the summer holidays to start the apprenticeship.

If you need more experience

If you feel you're not ready for an apprenticeship, a traineeship (<https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship>) is a course designed to prepare you for one.

Apprenticeships in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Different organisations deal with apprenticeships in:

- Scotland (<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/>)
- Wales (<https://gov.wales/apprenticeships-genius-decision>)
- Northern Ireland (<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/apprenticeships>)

2. What you'll get

As an apprentice, you'll get:

- paid and be entitled to the National Minimum Wage (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage>)
- time for training or study as part of your apprenticeship
- holiday pay and other employee rights (<https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/employee>)

Apprentice pay and the National Minimum Wage

There are different rates of pay for apprentices depending on your age and what year of your apprenticeship you're in.

Your employment contract should confirm your rate of pay.

Aged 16 to 18

The current National Minimum Wage rate (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>) for an apprentice is £4.30 per hour.

Aged 19 or over and in your first year

The current National Minimum Wage rate (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>) for an apprentice is £4.30 per hour.

Aged 19 or over and have completed your first year

You're entitled to the National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage rate (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>) for your age.

Check you're being paid the minimum wage (<https://www.gov.uk/am-i-getting-minimum-wage>) with the National Minimum Wage and Living Wage calculator.

Time apprentices are paid for

You must be paid for:

- your normal working hours
- training that's part of your apprenticeship (at least 20% of your normal working hours)
- study towards English and maths qualifications, if they're part of your apprenticeship

Your normal working hours should be in your employment contract (this might be your apprenticeship agreement).

There are rules about how many hours you can work in a week (<https://www.gov.uk/maximum-weekly-working-hours>) and being paid overtime (<https://www.gov.uk/overtime-your-rights>).

If you're studying for English and maths qualifications which are part of your apprenticeship, your employer should allow you time to study during your normal working hours.

Training

As an apprentice, at least 20% of your normal working hours must be spent on training.

Your training might happen every week, every month or in a separate block of time.

The training might take place:

- at your place of work
- somewhere else like at a college or training provider
- online

Your training provider will be able to tell you when and where your training will be.

Holidays

You'll get at least 20 days paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.

Use the holiday calculator (<https://www.gov.uk/calculate-your-holiday-entitlement>) to check holiday entitlement for apprentices.

If you've been in local authority care

If you're under 25 when you start your apprenticeship and have previously been in local authority care, you may be eligible for a bursary payment.

Ask your training provider for more information about what you'll get, if you're eligible and how to apply.

Help and advice

Your school, college or training provider may be able to give you advice about apprenticeships.

Contact Acas (<https://www.gov.uk/pay-and-work-rights>) for free and confidential advice on your rights at work.

Contact the Support Service for Apprentices (<https://www.remploy.co.uk/employers/mental-health-and-wellbeing/access-work-mental-health-support-service-apprentices>) for mental health support and advice.

3. Apply for an apprenticeship

There are 3 steps to applying for an apprenticeship.

1. Search for an apprenticeship (<https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>).
2. Sign in or create an account.
3. Complete and submit your application.

The National Careers Service (<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/Pages/Home.aspx>) has advice on writing applications and what to do at interviews.

If you're applying again because you were made redundant from your last apprenticeship, call the Apprenticeship helpline. You can also talk to your training provider.

If you're unsuccessful

You can ask for feedback if you do not get selected for an interview or for the apprenticeship.

You can complain if you think you were not successful because you were discriminated against, or your treatment in the interview or application process was unfair.

Apprenticeship helpline

nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

Telephone: 0800 015 0400

8am to 10pm, 7 days a week

Find out about call charges (<https://www.gov.uk/call-charges>)

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- Yes this page is useful
- No this page is not useful

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