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Become an apprentice

1. Overview

Apprenticeships combine practical training in a job with study.

As an apprentice you'll:

- work alongside experienced staff
- gain job-specific skills
- earn a wage and get holiday pay (<https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide/pay-and-conditions>)
- get time for study related to your role (usually one day a week)

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

Levels of apprenticeship

Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels.

Name	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 apply

You can apply for an apprenticeship while you're still at school. To start one, you'll need to be:

- 16 or over by the end of the summer holidays
- living in England
- not in full-time education

How to apply

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 unsuccessful

You can ask for feedback if you don't get selected for an interview or for the apprenticeship.

You can complain if you think you weren't 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>)

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 and Wales

Different organisations deal with apprenticeships in Scotland (<https://www.apprenticeships.scot/>) and apprenticeships in Wales (<http://business.wales.gov.uk/growing-business/welsh-government-support-1/skills-support-0#tabs-6>).

2. Pay and conditions

You'll be paid during your apprenticeship.

You're entitled to the National Minimum Wage (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage>).

The current minimum wage rate (<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>) for an apprentice is £3.70 per hour.

This rate applies to apprentices under 19 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year.

You must be paid at least the minimum wage rate for your age if you're an apprentice aged 19 or over and have completed your first year.

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

Hours apprentices are paid for

You must be paid for:

- your normal working hours

- training that's part of your apprenticeship (usually one day per week)

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.

Help and advice

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