

A parent's guide to Apprenticeships

Introduction

As a parent you want your child to get the best possible start in their career. There are many options available to young people after they leave school, and in this guide we outline information and benefits about Apprenticeships as a key route into a successful career.

What is an Apprenticeship

An Apprenticeship is a real job with training which would allow your daughter or son to earn while they learn, whilst gaining a nationally recognised qualification. Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete and cover 1500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from engineering to accountancy, public relations to veterinary nursing. Apprenticeships are now available up to degree level and beyond.

Benefits of doing an Apprenticeship

- Earning a salary;
- Training in the skills employers want;
- Excellent progression opportunities, whether looking to study further or climb the ranks within the workplace;
- Increased future earning potential
 - apprentices enjoy marked salary increases when they complete their training, and those with an Advanced Apprenticeship earn around £117,000* more than those without, over the course of their career;
- Learning at a pace suited to the individual with the support of a mentor;
- Paid holiday.

Entry requirements

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

Apprenticeship levels

There are three levels of Apprenticeship your son or daughter could apply for depending on their current skills and qualifications:

- Intermediate Apprenticeship (level 2);
- Advanced Apprenticeship (level 3);
- Higher Apprenticeship (level 4 or above).

The core components for Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships are:

- A nationally recognised vocational qualification;
- Functional skills (e.g. literacy, numeracy and ICT);
- A technical certificate such as a BTEC or City & Guilds (relevant to the specific Apprenticeship);
- Other professional qualifications or requirements as specified by the particular job.

The core components for Higher Apprenticeships are as above but exclude the functional skills element.

Salaries

The minimum wage for apprentices is £2.73** per hour, but many employers pay more than this. The average gross weekly wage for an apprentice is £200***. This is dependant on the sector, region and Apprenticeship level e.g. some Higher Apprenticeships can pay as much as £300 – £500 per week.

More details on salaries and entry criteria in specific Apprenticeship occupations can be accessed by looking at the vacancies on apprenticeships.gov.uk.

* Returns to Intermediate and Low Level Qualifications (September 2011)

**As at October 2014

***Apprenticeship Pay Survey 2011

Raising the participating age (RPA)

The government has increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training.

If your child completed year 11 in the summer 2014 (or any later year) they will need to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday.

This does not necessarily mean staying in school; young people have a choice about how they continue in education or training post-16, which could be through:

- Full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider.
- Full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training.
- An Apprenticeship

Applying for an Apprenticeship

At any one time there are up to 25,000 Apprenticeship vacancies available on apprenticeships.gov.uk in a variety of careers and industries across England. Click on 'How to Apply' and Apply Now' to begin your search. You can search by keyword (job role, occupation type or Apprenticeship level) and/or 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. You can also download the 'Av Search' app for smartphone to see vacancies while on the move.

Our "How to apply" film has useful hints and tips on applying. To see this and other films on Apprenticeships visit YouTube and search for National Apprenticeship Service.