

# Apprenticeships

## What are they?

National Apprenticeship Service

### How to Apply or Get More Information – Visit: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

This gives access to:

- **Apprenticeship vacancies on-line** (accessed through the 'Search for vacancies' link) – search for an Apprenticeship and register.
- **Information, advice and guidance** on Apprenticeships.
- Information on the full range of **Apprenticeships** available.
- **Case studies** from apprentices and employers.
- Information on the customer-facing **National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)** which offers support and help to candidates, employers and training providers.



### What are they?

Apprenticeships are work-based learning programmes that enable the apprentice to earn a wage whilst gaining on the job experience and skills that lead to nationally recognised qualifications.

Apprenticeships are offered at three levels:

- Apprenticeship (NVQ Level 2) – on completion this is equivalent to 5 A\* – C GCSEs.
- Advanced Apprenticeship (NVQ Level 3) – on completion this is equivalent to 2 A-Levels.
- Higher Apprenticeships – on completion this is equivalent to a foundation degree.

### Key Features

#### Nationally Recognised Qualifications

An Apprenticeship is made up of a group of qualifications, called a framework, devised by employers. It includes an NVQ (Competency element), a qualification such as a BTEC or City and Guilds (Technical element) and qualifications in key skills such as problem solving or information technology (Key Skills element). These nationally recognised qualifications give the apprentice transferable skills and the modular style of delivery enables the apprentice to achieve milestones throughout the Apprenticeship.

There is currently a wide choice of over **190 frameworks** across **80 sectors** ranging from Accounting to Youth Work.



Apprenticeships have no set duration as the time taken will depend on the ability of the apprentice and the employer's requirements.



### Waged Employment whilst Learning

Apprentices **earn while they learn** and develop through gaining real hands on experience.

The minimum pay is £95 per week however the most recent survey showed that on average **an apprentice can earn £170 per week** with some Apprentices earning £210 per week.<sup>1</sup>

Salaries vary and can be dependant on sector, age of apprentice and Apprenticeship level.

As an employee, the apprentice receives the same benefits as other employees.



<sup>1</sup> Apprenticeship Pay: 2007 Survey of Earnings by Sector.

On average an Apprenticeship will take one year to complete, an Advanced Apprenticeship two years and a Higher Apprenticeship between three and four years to complete. This though can vary between sectors.

'Doing an Apprenticeship requires commitment, drive and an ability to use initiative. Candidates must be over 16, not in full-time education or a graduate, and live in England. There are no set qualification entry requirements; each Apprenticeship is different and will require a different set of skills and abilities.

Also as all apprentices are employed in real jobs, candidates will therefore need to be work ready. Further information can be found in the individual Apprenticeship fact sheets.

The government directly funds the organisation delivering the training (a college or training provider). Therefore for 16-18 year olds there is no cost.

### On the Job Training

Most of the apprentice's time will be in employment as most **training takes place on the job**.

For the rest of the time the apprentice studies for technical and key skills qualifications.

This can be at a local college or a specialist training provider. Sometimes it can be delivered at the workplace in a training environment.

Off-the-job training can be completed on day release or over a number of days in a block; the amount of time is dependant on the type of Apprenticeship.



Apprentices have a mentor to support them at work and throughout their time on the Apprenticeship. A mentor ensures the apprentice is given training that offers the skills needed for the job, satisfies national standards and fits the apprentice's personal requirements.

### Career Prospects

An Apprenticeship is a **recognised route to Higher Education** with some Apprenticeships already attracting UCAS points.

Employers recognise and value Apprenticeships as they show the apprentice has been trained in the skills they need.

57% of Employers report that a high proportion of apprentices move into **management positions** within their company.<sup>2</sup>

Apprentices can **earn £100,000 more** over their working life than other employees.<sup>3</sup>



<sup>2</sup> Populus research conducted on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council, February 2008.  
<sup>3</sup> Source: 'A cost-benefit analysis of Apprenticeships and other vocational qualifications'. University of Sheffield, February 2007.