

# Your Guide To Apprenticeships, Training & Employment

This guide is for any student who might be considering going on to an Apprenticeship, further training or employment after College. It sets out the different types of programmes available and provides additional advice on your rights and responsibilities. There are diagrams and links throughout, and a Useful Links section at the end which gives further information on many of the issues raised in the guide.

If you have particular questions after reading this guide, or would just like more information or advice, ask the Careers team or your Senior Tutor for assistance.



# Contents

**01.**  
Apprenticeships  
& Traineeships  
(pre-  
Apprenticeship)

**02.**  
Pre-  
Employment  
Training

**03.**  
Keeping your  
options Open -  
University / Gap  
Year

**04.**  
Employment  
Options

**05.**  
Useful Links

**06.**  
Further Advice



# Apprenticeships



## What Is An Apprenticeship?

Put simply, an Apprenticeship is a paid job combined with training towards one or more occupationally-related qualifications.

## How Does An Apprenticeship Work?

Apprentices should normally spend 80% of their working time doing their job whilst being mentored by their employer, and 20% studying and/or being assessed by the training provider.

## How Are Apprenticeships Put Together?

When you see an Apprenticeship advertised, it means that an employer and a training provider have got together to offer a job and training package based around a particular occupational standard. These will have been created by employer groups known as “Apprenticeship Trailblazers”.

**[Click here to see the current list of occupational standards for Apprenticeships.](#)** It’s not a vacancy list, but it does show the range of job roles that can be offered as an Apprenticeship. The Apprenticeship Standards list is subject to change, as standards are added, removed or amended from time to time.

## How Are Apprenticeships Funded?

Employers pay their Apprentices a wage – there is a set minimum, although often employers pay more, especially for Apprenticeships at higher levels. Apprentice training is funded through a combination of Government and employer contributions – there is no cost to the Apprentice.

## What Are The Entry Requirements?

The Government sets the basic requirements for eligibility, although providers and employers may add their own conditions, such as any prior qualifications you would need to have achieved.

Although there are no age limits on becoming an Apprentice, sometimes providers will set a limit for funding reasons, although this won't usually affect anyone under 24 years old. The basic entry requirements for an Apprenticeship are that you are aged 16 or over, formally settled in the UK, and not engaged in full-time education when you start the programme.

## What Levels Of Apprenticeship Should I Be Considering?

Apprenticeships are available at levels 2 (Intermediate), 3 (Advanced), 4-5 (Higher), 6 (Degree) and 7 (Postgraduate/Masters). See the table below for a visual guide (courtesy of [www.youthemployment.org.uk](http://www.youthemployment.org.uk))

Any eligible applicant can apply for an Apprenticeship at any level, and different occupations will offer different levels based on what is considered the right starting level for the job. So, depending on the job role you want to go for, and the availability of vacancies, you may need to consider studying at the same or a lower level than you have done before. You would still be learning new things no matter the level - and if you have studied at a higher level or the same level in the past, and some of that learning relates closely enough to the Apprenticeship, your study programme may be adapted to reflect this.



Name	Level	Equivalent Educational Level
Intermediate	2	5 GCSE passes at Grade A* - C or 9 - 4
Advanced	3	2 A level passes / Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation Degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or Master's Degree

## Can you tell me more about higher & degree apprenticeships?

If you have completed your 'A' level/Level 3 studies successfully, you would be potentially eligible for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, which involve studying for university awards and/or equivalent level professional qualifications alongside a job role. Unlike conventional university study, your course fees will be paid by the employer, and you will receive a wage which may be closer to a full employee salary, reflecting the complexity of the work you will be undertaking alongside the qualification.

## Does It Matter What Subject(s) I've Studied At College?

Not necessarily! Some higher and degree level Apprenticeships may have specific requirements, such as science or maths 'A' level or equivalent, while others will be less specific about the subjects you have studied. Employers may look at your GCSE grades as well, especially English and maths, as having done well at that level will underpin your learning, both on and off the job.

However, employers are often more concerned with how well they think you will adapt to the job, and how you will fit into the workplace and the organisation, and your future potential. The training provider and/or awarding body will set out any requirements to enrol you on their qualifications. For higher and degree Apprenticeships you may see adverts which ask for grades and/or for particular UCAS points, although this isn't because you have to apply by going through UCAS, it's simply a way of expressing the grade equivalents required. Normally you would apply via the employer or occasionally directly to the university or training provider. UCAS does however advertise some higher and degree apprenticeships – see the Useful Links section of this document.



## How Can I Find Apprenticeship Vacancies?

There are lots of different ways to find Apprenticeship vacancies. In theory, all vacancies should be available on the Government's Apprenticeship website, although they can be tricky to find if you don't know the exact job role given on the advert. There are additional sites that advertise particularly the higher and degree level roles, and you can search by type of role, location or level.

Employers will also carry their own advertisements and sometimes colleges, universities and training providers advertise on behalf of employers, although they may not always tell you in the advert who the employer is. You can also often sign up with training providers to be kept informed of vacancies or potentially be matched up with an employer.

You should think broadly when looking for vacancies to apply for. There might not be something on offer in the exact job role(s) you are considering, but there may be something similar, or in the same industry or profession. Consider a wide range of employers too, as they may have vacancies in job roles that might not be immediately obvious – for example, accounting firms often also recruit in technical roles, and engineering and IT firms may also offer business related jobs.

Training providers and universities typically work with employers across a wide geographical area which may be regional or even national, and although they often specialise in particular types of role this can also be quite broad, so don't be too fixated on where they are based when considering them as a source of a possible opportunity. You may also need to consider whether you could travel or relocate for the right opportunity, just as you would if you were going to university full time.

## How Can I Search Effectively? What Words Should I Use?

Employers large and small, national (or even international) and local, can offer Apprenticeships, so make use of search engines to find advertisements and organisations, and try job sites like Indeed.

Social networking (both real and virtual) are worth considering too – family, friends and other contacts may know of employers looking for Apprentices, and both Facebook and LinkedIn have job sections which include Apprenticeship advertisements.

You might need to be creative when searching for vacancies! Confusingly, employers may also use the terms Trainee or Traineeship, although rather than a pre-Apprenticeship programme as described above, they will actually be offering a job with a qualification, or will have their own internal training programme attached.

One thing to watch out for a little, especially with very small businesses, is that they might advertise for an "Apprentice" when they may be using the term informally, so they are really looking for a person to help them out and potentially grow with the business, although any training on offer may not then lead to a qualification, and this may also affect the work you do and the terms of your employment. This isn't necessarily a problem as such, but it's something to watch out for if you are particularly keen to continue with your formal education alongside working for a living. If in doubt, ask the employer what training or qualifications are on offer, and whether they are working with a training provider.



## What About The “School Leaver Programmes” That I Have Heard About?

Some employers call their programmes different names, such as School Leaver or Entry Level Programmes, although these are generally higher or degree level Apprenticeships aimed at those who have completed ‘A’ Level/Level 3 study. To learn about the differences and similarities [click here](#).

Below are links to a range of training providers who work with employers to offer Apprenticeships, along with some of the occupations they specialise in. You can view vacancies and sign up for updates, or to be considered for roles. This is not an exhaustive list of training providers, and further education colleges also work with employers to offer Apprenticeships. During National Apprenticeships Week, which happens in February or March each year, College will work closely with training providers and employers to bring opportunities to students. **For more information contact [careers@asfc.ac.uk](mailto:careers@asfc.ac.uk)**

### Training Provider Links And Information

**360 Apprenticeships** – business, customer service, digital marketing, IT

**Alliance Learning** - business, childcare, engineering, management, Manufacturing

**Apprentice Academy** – accounting, business, supply chain, Management

**Avado (incorporating Arch)** – advertising, data analyst, digital marketing, HR, IT & Software

**Baltic** – IT, software support and digital marketing

**Damar** – accounting, admin, business Support, law

**Estio** - IT & software, digital marketing

**Growth Company** – multiple sectors and industries

**Interserve** – multiple sectors and industries

**Juice Academy** - Social media

**Juniper Training** – business, supply chain, customer service, early years

**Kaplan** – accountancy, banking, finance, insurance

**Mantra** – Business, Logistics, Motor Vehicle

**NLTG** – Business, logistics, manufacturing, retail

**OTC** – Engineering and business

**QA** - IT, software, digital marketing [www.qa.com](http://www.qa.com)

**SETA** – Engineering and Business

**STETGA** – Engineering



**Further Education Colleges** – sometimes employers work with colleges some distance from their premises, for example if there isn't a local College offering the occupational standard they need. However, they will generally work with one fairly local to them if they can. **The Greater Manchester colleges are listed here** – all of them have an Apprenticeships page on their website.

**Universities** are usually, although not always, the training provider for higher and degree Apprenticeships. Remember that universities will work with employers nationwide. This means that you might have a local job but will need to travel for block study periods. It also means that nearby universities may not be offering a degree Apprenticeship with local employers! Not all universities will advertise vacancies for employers, but you can see which Apprenticeships they offer and sometimes which employers they work with. For example, **you can view vacancies and register for vacancy updates**, but not all vacancies will be local - and some

### Where else to look?

Many large employers typically offer higher and degree Apprenticeships each year. These include accounting firms such as BDO, Crowe, Deloitte, EY, Grant Thornton, KPMG, Mazars, PWC, RSM and UHY Hacker Young, construction companies like Balfour Beatty, BAM, Kier and Wates, engineering and aerospace including Airbus, MBDA and Network Rail, and IT and tech companies including Amazon, Cisco, Fujitsu, IBM and Virgin Media.

Keep an open mind when looking for potential employers, as roles can vary across the organisation – for example Network Rail recently advertised for Apprentices in accounting as well as engineering.

The public sector is also a major source of vacancies for **Apprenticeships and jobs**, including the civil service and councils. You can also see council and related services in Greater Manchester and beyond, as well as fire and rescue and county-wide services **here**.

Police officers are now recruited as **graduates or degree apprentices here**.

degree apprenticeships will only be available if you are already working for a linked employer. The University of Salford doesn't advertise vacancies or take student details but you can get an idea of the programmes it offers and some of the employers they work with and read some **Degree Apprentices' stories**.

The website below has a national list of Universities working with employers on Degree Apprenticeships, along with the courses they offer. You can also find vacancies, as well as some interview tips and a few myths debunked **here**.



The NHS has **roles in laboratories, pharmacies and in allied healthcare professions**. Nurses and paramedics are also increasingly being recruited through the Apprenticeship route.

Professional associations and awarding bodies are also useful places to look – you can sometimes also join these for free as a student which will give you access to other resources and support. These include the APM for project management, CILEX for law, CITB for construction, the Engineering Council, and many more. The weekly Newsflash email (also available on the College website and archived in Canvas) will feature vacancies which College staff have found or been made aware of during the previous week. Personal and social networking can also be useful sources of information – try Facebook and LinkedIn, as well as your family and friends. Last, but not least, ask in College for advice on where to find vacancies.



## When Should I Apply For An Apprenticeship?

As soon as you think you will, or might, want to seek out an Apprenticeship, you should start to seek advertisements. Even if you aren't ready to apply straight away, it will give you an idea of what might be available when you are ready, and tell you the timescales for advertising and recruiting for any roles or employers you are interested in.

Intermediate and advanced Apprenticeships tend to be advertised all year round, as their programmes may be shorter, and have more flexible start dates. Higher and degree Apprenticeships usually start once a year in September (and occasionally at other times such as January) but the

## What Do I Need To Think About When Applying?

Despite a resurgence in popularity in recent years, and lots of Government initiatives to develop and support them, Apprenticeships are highly competitive and sought after, especially at times of economic uncertainty.

At every stage of the recruitment process you will need to ensure you stand out to the employer - whether you apply directly to them or go through a training provider. If you are asked to fill in an application form, it needs to be completed very thoroughly and accurately, to demonstrate that you meet the person specification and give the very best impression of you as an applicant.

If you are asked for a CV, this needs to be high quality and tailored to the role in question, and if you are asked to do a covering letter, this needs to compliment, but not replicate, what you have written in your CV or

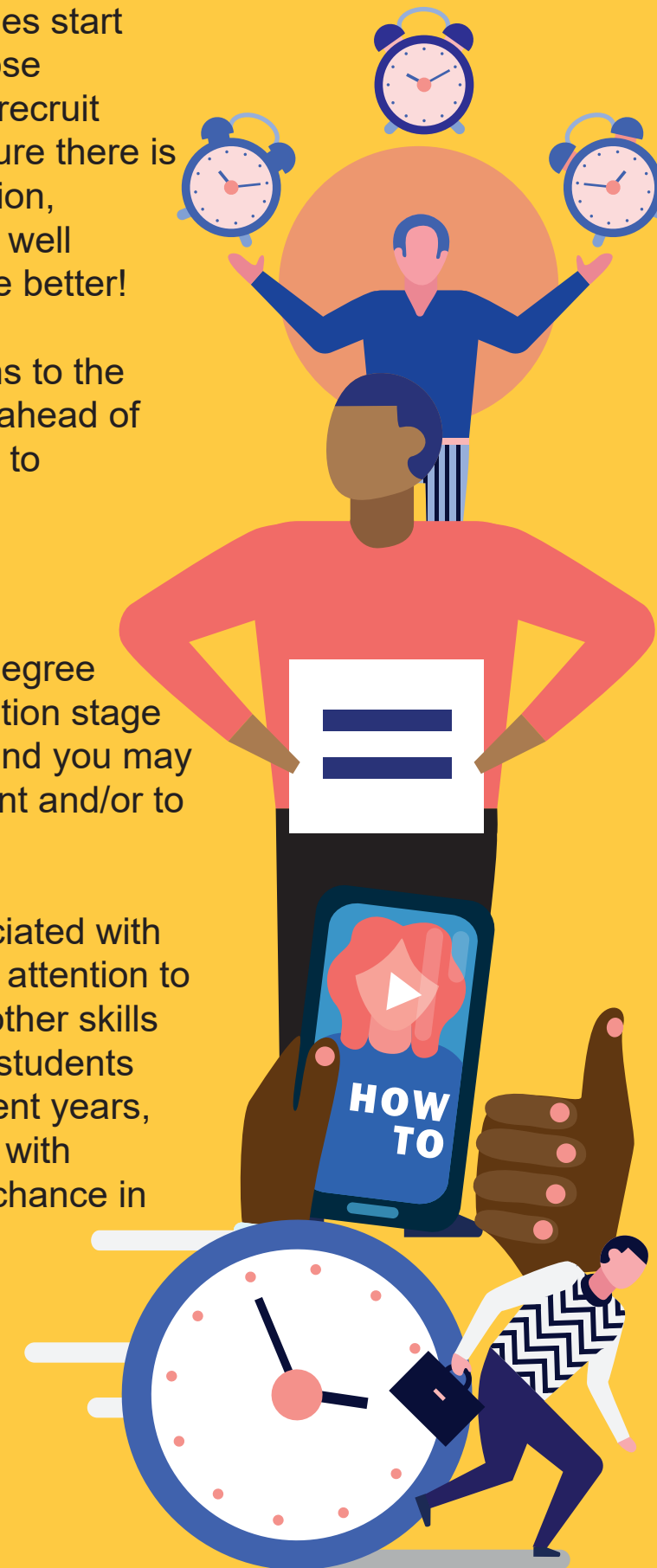
lead-in time can vary greatly. For example, some big companies start recruiting almost a year before the planned start date, and close applications by the preceding February. This is because they recruit nationally in quite large numbers every year, and have to ensure there is time to get all of the recruitment processes, including application, interviews, assessments and vetting of candidates completed well ahead of time. So once again, the sooner you start looking the better!

Beware of closing dates generally, and don't leave applications to the last minute - employers will sometimes close advertisements ahead of the official closing date if they have enough good applications to consider.

application form. For all Apprenticeships, but for higher and degree Apprenticeships in particular, if you get past the initial application stage you are likely to be asked to attend one or more interviews, and you may also be required to undergo an individual or group assessment and/or to create and deliver a presentation.

These are all tests of your potential to work at the level associated with the Apprenticeship, and to show professionalism, team spirit, attention to detail, tact and diplomacy, problem-solving skills and many other skills and qualities needed in the workplace. The College has had students succeed in securing Apprenticeships from Level 3 to 7 in recent years, but it takes hard work and dedication! Please ask for support with preparing for any of these activities to give yourself the best chance in this increasingly competitive part of the labour market.

**Email [careers@asfc.ac.uk](mailto:careers@asfc.ac.uk) for assistance with this.**



## What Happens If I Secure An Apprenticeship –

### What Are My Rights And Responsibilities As An Apprentice?

Apprentices are employees, and as such share many of the rights of other workers, although there are differences, such as having their own minimum wage, minimum number of working hours, minimum length of programme and minimum proportion of time spent working and studying. Employers are required to provide Apprentices with a job that will give the Apprentice a genuine opportunity to develop their skills, and to link these to the qualification(s) they are undertaking. Apprentices should also be offered a formal agreement that sets out the expectations from you, the training provider and employer in terms of your learning and development, such as any mentoring or assessment arrangements. More information on these issues can be found in the Useful Links section.

### What If I Have Additional Needs Such As A Learning Disability, Caring Responsibilities Or I Am A Care Leaver?

There is further support available for Apprentices who have additional needs, such as extra support to achieve the English and maths requirements, extra financial awards, or adaptations to working hours. Employers will also be required to make reasonable adjustments to support Apprentices with disabilities, just as they are for other employees. For anyone aged 16-24 (or 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan) who needs preparation to start an Apprenticeship, Government-sponsored Traineeships are available as a short pre-entry programme. **For more information on Traineeships click here.**



# OPTIONS

## 2. Pre-Employment Training

*What if I want to train for a particular job, but can't find, or don't want to apply for, an apprenticeship?*

There are pre-employment training programmes on offer from colleges, training providers and the like, and although some of these are of good quality, you may be charged a fee, and there will not necessarily be any guarantee of employment afterwards.

You should exercise caution, and seek advice from College if you are looking at pre-employment training programmes.

## 3. Keeping your options open - university/gap year

*What if I think I might want to go to university?*

You can apply to university alongside your quest for an Apprenticeship, job or training programme, if you want to keep your options open. Support is also available from College if you decide to apply for University as either a late or deferred applicant, or want to perhaps take a gap year while you finalise your decision.

## 4. Employment options

*What if I just want to get a job?*

In College, we aim to help you progress in your long term career, and this will often best be served by undertaking further learning, whether through going on to university or gaining an Apprenticeship or other job with inbuilt formal training.

However, it might be that for a variety of reasons you wish to focus on gaining good full-time employment on leaving College without pursuing further qualifications, at least in the short term. It is possible to find good quality employment that reflects the learning you have done at College, and very often there will be job-related training offered by the employer even if it doesn't lead to a formal qualification. Employers are also required to give you statutory training (legally required) or mandatory training (compulsory within the organisation) which will give you useful skills, many of which will be transferable if you decide to move on to other opportunities.

There are lots of websites where jobs are advertised, including Universal Job Match, Indeed, Monster, Jobsite and many more. Networking (online and offline) can also be an excellent way to find employment – LinkedIn and Facebook have job search functions and never rule out family, friends, or other contacts. The Student Newsflash may also carry entry-level job advertisements from time to time.

If you have had a part time job while at College, perhaps your employer can offer you full time work, maybe giving you a more responsible role into the bargain - or could suggest other employers who may be taking on employees. Please also ask in College for advice and help with finding employment or links to other agencies who can help you with this.



# Further Information



## 5. Useful Links

**National Apprenticeship Service Guide to Apprenticeships** - including how they work, and your rights as an Apprentice

**Apprenticeships official website** - this gives you an overview of the programme and links to more information, as well as the “Find an Apprenticeship” search service.

**The links below will also enable you to find out more and search for opportunities:**

<https://www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk/>

<https://centreforapprenticeships.co.uk>

<https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk/discover/search.aspx>

<https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk/>

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/apprenticeships>

<https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/>

<https://targetcareers.co.uk/search/jobs>

**UCAS - degree apprenticeship info and vacancies**

**Higher and degree apprenticeship vacancy listing** (from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

---

## 6. Further advice

**Where can i get more information and advice?**

Contact College Careers on [careers@asfc.ac.uk](mailto:careers@asfc.ac.uk) - or speak to your Senior Tutor.