

# A parent's guide to apprenticeships

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## 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.

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## 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 1,500 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.

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## 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 completing a higher apprenticeship could see increased earnings of an estimated £150,000 over their lifetime;\*
- Learning at a pace suited to the individual with the support of a mentor;
- Paid holiday.

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## 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.

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## Apprenticeship levels

There are various 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 and degree apprenticeships (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 and degree apprenticeships are as above but exclude the functional skills element.

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## Salaries

The minimum wage for apprentices is £3.30\*\* per hour, but many employers pay more than this. 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 'Find an apprenticeship'.

\*University education - Is this the best route into employment?  
AAT and CEBR Feb 2013  
\*\*As at October 2015

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## School leaving age

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

If your child was born on or after 1 September 1997 they must stay in some form of 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 or traineeship.

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## Applying for an apprenticeship

At any one time there are up to 27,000 apprenticeship vacancies available on the 'Find an apprenticeship' site in a variety of careers and industries across England. Visit **gov.uk** and search 'Find an apprenticeship'. You can search by keyword (job role, occupation type or apprenticeship level) and 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.

Our "How to apply" film has useful hints and tips on applying. To see this and other films on apprenticeships visit YouTube and search apprenticeships/NAS.

If they are not quite ready for an apprenticeship or job, they could try a traineeship with a local employer to gain valuable work experience and the opportunity to improve their English and maths, if needed. Visit **gov.uk** and search 'traineeships' for more information or to apply for traineeship opportunities.