THINKING OF APPRENTICESHIPS

There is an ever increasing number of universities offering Degree and Higher apprenticeships. Subject/careers fields are varied and many more are being developed.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

You will hold a place at a university/college for study, and have a job in a skilled occupation with an apprentice’s contract of employment at a company. You will be treated like a normal employee by them and a student by the university or college.

Open to anyone 16 or over (after completing Year 11)

Minimum legal wage from April 2019 is £3.90/hour for under 19s; however many employers pay full wages regardless. There are companies offering as high as £30,000/year

Must work minimum of 30 hours a week

Holiday pay – 4 weeks plus bank holidays is the minimum

Apprenticeship training should be minimum of one year and a maximum of 4

You do not have to stay with the same employer all the way through your qualification; if a company is not working out you can look for another

3 million places by 2021.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Whilst there is not a standard entry requirement, you will usually find that they will expect three A Levels, the equivalent BTECs, or other qualifications such as the Advanced Apprenticeship. You should also hold a GCSE in maths and English at B/Grade 7/8.

Apprenticeships can be competitive and gaining work experience will set you apart from others.

NOTE: An Advanced Apprenticeship (even at Level 3) is worth two A Levels and may not be enough to allow you to advance to a Degree Apprenticeship. If you intend to take a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship, please look at the current entry criteria in your field of interest.

To learn more about Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, read our ‘A Student’s Guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships’.

WHERE TO LOOK AND OR APPLY

Trailblazer Groups – these are companies that have coordinated a ‘standard’ of quality in certain fields. These indicate a robust and well developed apprentice opportunity – the standards can also be useful as a job description of sorts.

www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-list-of-occupations-available

Institute of Apprenticeships

www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/

UCAS

Government apprenticeships site: www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipssearch

National Apprenticeship Service Helpdesk – 08000 150 600 (free from landlines and mobiles)

www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

Statistics from gov.uk

APPRENTICESHIPS HAVE EQUIVALENT EDUCATIONAL LEVELS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Apprenticeship</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Equivalent educational level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree</td>
<td>4 and 7</td>
<td>Bachelors or Masters Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher</td>
<td>4, 5, 6 and 7</td>
<td>Foundation Degree and above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 A Level passes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5 GCSE passes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?

‘I can’t afford it’. Unlike most ways of gaining formal training and practical experience, apprenticeships are paid for by the government and your employer, so they’re great if university isn’t an option financially.

‘It won’t help my job prospects’. The Office of National Statistics (ONS) shows that more than 25% of university graduates were paid less than the £11.10/hour average for those on apprenticeships last year. The figures show that 85% of people who complete an apprenticeship will stay in employment, and 64% of these stay with the same employer with which they did the course.

THE FACTS:

Core Principals:

It is a job in a skilled occupation
It requires substantial and sustained training, as well as at least 20% of your time studying
It develops transferable skills, plus English and maths, to progress careers
It leads to full competency and capability in an occupation
It trains you to the level required to apply for professional recognition where this exists e.g. AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians).
FINANCE FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeship potential earnings

Currently the minimum wage for an apprenticeship is £3.90/hour (if you are under 19 or 19 and over in your 1st year of an apprenticeship).

If you are 19 and over and have completed your 1st year, you must be paid at least the minimum wage of £6.15/hour – refer to www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=1902 for the most up to date minimum wage.

But your company is more than likely going to pay you something around £300/week. Don't forget they are paying your tuition fees for your degree (up to £9,250/year!)

Company benefits may include a pension, access to a car, leisure facilities or a relocation allowance if you have to move. Apprentices are entitled to the same rights as other employees: a contract of employment and at least 20 days paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.

Apprenticeship discounts

You’ll be classed as an employee, not a student, so you won’t be entitled to student discounts, but the National Union of Students (NUS) has just brought out an NUS Apprentice Extra Card. For £11/year you can get discounts on lots of brands. Apply at www.apprenticeextra.co.uk

You might be eligible for discounts on public transport, for example the Apprentice Oyster photo card in London gives apprentices 30% off certain journeys. Local offers will exist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Your potential earnings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oxford and Cambridge Degree</td>
<td>£45,850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russell Group Degree (Excl. Oxbridge)</td>
<td>£40,960</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Apprenticeship (Level 5)</td>
<td>£35,520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Apprenticeship (Level 4)</td>
<td>£34,220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Apprenticeship (Level 3)</td>
<td>£32,790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Apprenticeship (Level 3)</td>
<td>£23,210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced Apprenticeship (Level 3)</td>
<td>£23,170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Levels</td>
<td>£15,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Russell Group Degree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arial black medium 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Aim high and choose your employer carefully: you could be earning with these huge brand companies, although you may need to relocate:

- Aerospace Apprentice, BAE and Rolls Royce £21,971/year
- Accountancy Apprenticeship, KPMG £13,000/year
- Digital Marketing, Next Step £16,000/year

APPRENTICESHIP JARGON

What do these things mean anyway?

Competitive salary

Many employers advertise roles with a ‘competitive salary’. This means the salary and benefits will be in line with similar roles for other organisations or that it depends on your current skills and experience.

Standards

Over the last three years, employers from over 200 organisations have been working together to develop a range of new apprenticeship standards “approved by the Department for Education”. An apprenticeship standard is a template for the way an apprenticeship is delivered:

1. What an apprentice will do during their apprenticeship
2. The skills they will need to perform the role they are training for

Sector

An industry or part of an industry, covering groups of related occupations. Examples of sectors/industries are Construction, Engineering, Freight Logistics, Health, Manufacturing and Retail. There is only one issuing Authority for each occupational sector.

SFA

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) are responsible for giving colleges, training organisations and employers the right funding to help adults, young people, the unemployed and people with low skill levels to get the skills they need for employment.

NAS

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), part of the Skills Funding Agency, is a government agency that coordinates apprenticeships in England, enabling young people to enter the skilled trades. https://www.gov.uk/government/news/get-in-and-go-far-with-new-apprenticeships

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Over the past three years, 159,780 people have started a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship. The government has pledged to create 3 million apprenticeships across all levels by 2021.”
LIVING AWAY FROM HOME

Living away from home for the first time can be daunting for anyone, but you won’t be alone. In university accommodations, such as halls of residence or self catering flats, all other first year students will be in the same situation.

Students who are unable to move into these accommodations can look for house shares with other first years.

Moving out will help you develop a number of new skills and an untested level of independence. Do not panic; there are a number of things that you can learn to help yourself – why not see what you already know on our everyday skills list over the next page.

TOP TIPS FOR MOVING AWAY FROM HOME:

1. You don’t need to take the kitchen sink; think carefully about what you pack
2. Buy kitchen supplies/utensils cheaply or raid your family’s cupboards for their spares
3. Ask whoever drops you off to take you for a big grocery shop before they leave
4. Open the right student bank account (check out the competitive deals)
5. Don’t forget your chargers
6. Not enough plugs in your new room? Get an extension cable
7. Go out and meet people after you first arrive
8. Takeaways every night are costly; learn to cook 3 basic meals before you leave home
9. In the months before leaving ask your parents for the second item in any BOGOF deals and start yourself a moving away goodie box

A Post 16s guide to Higher Education

Cooking FOR YOURSELF

To make it easy you can ask a parent or carer to teach you how to cook your favourite meals. Alternatively, check out the following sites:

www.studentrecipes.com
www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/collection/student
www.studential.com

You could also invest in some useful cook books, such as The Student Cookbook or Jamie Oliver’s 5 Ingredients.
BUDGETING FOR THE TERM/YEAR

When it comes to budgeting there are students who struggle with learning how (but they get there in the end), students that don’t try until it’s too late (so they end up in a pickle) and students who think ahead of the game. Thinking ahead is always best when it comes to budgeting. Getting it right will mean enjoying the social side of university... and keeping your dignity intact.

Use our quick budget calculator to identify how much you should have as spending money per week.

HAVE SOME FUN LEARNING THE FOLLOWING SKILLS AND TICK THEM OFF AS YOU GO

Home and Personal Care Skills

| How to use basic kitchen appliances | Set an alarm and wake yourself up on time |
| Wash/dry clothes | How to properly clean the bathroom |
| Make a bed (with clean sheets) | Get rid of spiders and bugs (without help) |

Life Management and Organisation Skills

| Create a budget | Calculate a tip | Change the battery in a fire alarm |
| Use a credit card responsibly, avoiding debt | Back up information on your devices | How to deal with an estate agent |
| When/how to pay taxes | How to split a bill amongst friends |

Transportation Savvy

| Fill up a car with petrol | Add oil to an engine/water to radiator | Learn to navigate bus/train timetables |
| Change a tyre | Read a map | Bike maintenance |

Student-Specific Skills

| Shop smarter for books | Contact professors for help | Maintain a healthy balance between your academic and social lives |
| Keep track of assignments due | Discussing living guidelines with flatmates | |
| Maintain healthy study habits | Taking clear, readable notes | |

General Conscientiousness

| Awareness of your surroundings | Have personal medical information and keep up with appointments | How to say ‘no’ respectfully |
| Recognising a potentially dangerous situation | Be sexually responsible | Avoid drugs and alcohol |

Professional Skills

| Write a CV | Write thank you notes | Draft a cover letter |
| Network with people outside your course | Professionally formatting your emails without emoji’s | Join a club or society |

Budget calculator

Fill in the blanks:

Student loan amount £…………../3 = £…………… (this is one term’s worth of funds)

Now take that term amount and minus your rent for one term (plus any other bills you have to pay i.e. mobile)

£……………… minus

£………………

= £………………

And divide the remainder by the number of weeks in term (usually 12)

£………………/12

= £………………

This is what you should spend per week. Haven’t got much left? Consider a part time job at uni and talk with your parents/carers to see if they’re able to help.

THERE ARE PLENTY OF WAYS TO SAVE A FEW POUNDS.

CHECK OUT ALL THESE STUDENT DISCOUNT AND MONEY SAVING SITES:

Student Beans – www.studentbeans.com/uk
NUS for apprenticeships – www.apprenticeextra.co.uk
www.savethesstudent.org/save-money
DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Employers can do an internet search to see your digital footprint. What do your social media accounts say about you? Whether you realise it or not, you’re promoting yourself on them.

Are you prepared for employers to see you as you are? If not, consider spring cleaning your footprint or strengthen profiles where you can. For more information or support on how to clean up your footprint visit www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/online-mobile-safety/taking-care-your-digital-footprint

SKILLS, SKILLS, SKILLS

Companies and universities will look at your applications in an attempt to understand what skills you currently have.

Common ones that they’re looking for include:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Team work
- Writing
- IT
- Networking
- Organisation
- Leadership.

Think you’ve got some gaps? Here’s what you can do between now and writing your applications to improve the above skills:

- Work experience
- Volunteering
- Online blog
- YouTube channel (vlogging)
- Reading sources in your fields of interest that are not in the curriculum
- Join a sports/social club at school or locally for young people.

INTERVIEW TIPS

When having an interview, be that for university, a job or apprenticeship, there are a number of things that you should do as standard:

1. Research the organisation, academic field or university
   - News, trends, values, history, social media and opportunities for the organisation and its sector
2. Review your application just before any meeting or interview takes place
   - They may ask you questions based on the details of your CV or application
3. Contact referees (more so with a job interview than a university application)
   - Let them know that you’re being interviewed and that they may receive a call
4. Know the role, course or placements that you are going for
   - Go through the job description and identify skills, interests and experiences the interviewers are looking for
5. Anticipate questions they will ask you
   - Research the type of questions that an industry may ask you and practise your answers with a friend or relative
6. Prepare to ask questions
   - Those interviewing candidates will always expect to be asked questions. It demonstrates that you’re committed, interested and capable of thinking for yourself
7. Arrive early, never on time
   - You never know what kind of travel issues you might face. Planning to arrive early will give you leeway should you get stuck in traffic. If there are no traffic issues, then you’ll have time to relax and compose yourself (very important for an interview)
8. Dress appropriately
   - This will help you make a good first impression.
9. Don’t speak at 100 miles an hour
   - Speaking too fast will make it difficult for interviewers to follow you. Slow down – it will demonstrate that you can handle the pressure
10. Don’t be afraid to ask interviewers to repeat a question (don’t rewind I though)
    - You’ll do more damage for answering a question wrong than you ever would for asking interviewers to repeat it
11. Have a firm handshake
    - A handshake is a way to measure confidence. Practise with friends and relatives to gain a firm, but not dominant, handshake. Don’t be afraid to instigate one either
12. Eye contact (another body language which gives away confidence levels)
    - Keep eye contact with everyone on the panel (the group interviewing you are the panel but don’t stare at them either. It’s easy to focus on the friendliest person there but if you do this, you’re ignoring the rest.

Remember that while you may like the opportunity, a role is often the result of an employer needing to solve an internal problem or need. So when answering interview questions, ensure that you’re telling the interviewer how you will make their lives or the company’s easier.

Finally, when talking about your experiences it’s all about you and the problems that you have solved; try to say ‘I have...’ not ‘We have...’

What are video interviews? Video interviews are becoming a trend in today’s world of employment. This is more likely to happen with work experience or graduate opportunities in large companies. University of Northampton reports that in the last 12 months they have seen a huge increase in the number of students requesting video interview prep.

The most common video interview format that the University comes across involves interview questions coming up on the screen, giving the applicant a time limit to answer before moving on to the next question.

You could prepare for this by recording yourself answering questions and watching it back for any of the common mistakes we mentioned earlier or unconscious behaviours.

A Post 16s guide to Higher Education
WHAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION (HE)?

HE is the study of a course or subject at Level 4 and above. Anything levelled 1-3 (taken after your standard secondary education at 16+) would be considered Further Education (FE). HE courses can be applied for by adhering to the UCAS timeline outlined in this pullout resource.
Uni Connect is funded by the Office for Students. It is a national network of hubs across England which offer impartial advice, guidance and activities on the benefits and realities of higher education in college and university.

For further information please contact aspirehigher@northampton.ac.uk