

Apprenticeships and Traineeships

It's important to be aware of the full range of options before making a decision. This article outlines two of the options available to your son or daughter at the age of 16 - **apprenticeships** and **traineeships**. It will address the most frequent questions and signpost you to further information.

Apprenticeships

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a real job with training which allows apprentices to earn while they learn, whilst gaining a nationally recognised qualification. All apprenticeships include elements of on the job and off the job training leading to industry-recognised standards or qualifications. Apprenticeships are available across a diverse range of industries varying from administration to engineering through to retail, manufacturing and IT.

Once the apprenticeship has finished there may be the opportunity to gain employment or promotion with the employer your son or daughter has completed the apprenticeship with, or to go on to higher education in a college or university. This will be dependent on the employer and/or level of apprenticeship.

Getting qualified while on the job may also mean your son or daughter:

- works better and more effectively;
- is set up to move into new and better jobs;
- gets better pay;
- gets to experience new and different challenges;
- gains recognition for their existing skills and knowledge - it may also help them gain a qualification faster;
- learns at their own pace and gets support when they need it;
- has better job security;
- gains skills and knowledge which can be used across a range of jobs and industries.

Who is eligible?

Anyone in England can apply for an apprenticeship if they are:

- 16 or over
- eligible to work in England

- not in full-time education.

How long do they last?

Apprenticeships take one to five years to complete depending on their level.

Apprenticeship levels in England

There are various levels of apprenticeship to apply for, depending on the applicant's current skills and qualifications. Apprenticeships have equivalent educational levels:

- Intermediate - Level 2 - equivalent to 5 GCSE passes at grades A*-C or 9-4
- Advanced - Level 3 - equivalent to 2 A level passes
- Higher - Levels 4,5,6 and 7 - equivalent to a foundation degree or above
- Degree - Levels 6 and 7 - equivalent to a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

How much do apprentices get paid?

The minimum wage for apprentices aged 16-18 is rising from £3.40 to £3.50 per hour from April 2017. The same applies to apprentices aged 19 and over and in the first year of their apprenticeship, after that apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage:

www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

Pay is dependent on the sector, region and apprenticeship level, for example some higher apprenticeships can pay as much as £300-£500 per week.

How can I find out about actual vacancies?

You can search and apply for current apprenticeship vacancies in England at

www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch

Where can I find out more?

You can find a handy overview of apprenticeships, including how to become an apprentice, what you can expect, levels of apprenticeships, pay and training, how to make an application and more at www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships.

Inspiring the Future is a free service across England with volunteers from a range of sectors and professions who go into state secondary schools and colleges to talk about their jobs and careers, with over 5000 who are well placed to speak about apprenticeships:

www.inspiringthefuture.org

Traineeships

What is a traineeship?

A traineeship is an education and training programme with work experience that gets young people ready for work or an apprenticeship.

Who are they aimed at?

Traineeships are designed to help young people who are motivated to get an apprenticeship or job but don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience that employers are looking for.

The core target group for traineeships are young people who:

- are not currently in employment and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it;
- are aged between 16 to 24 and qualified below Level 3; and
- providers and employers believe have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

What do they involve?

Traineeships include three core elements:

- a focused period of work preparation training, covering areas like job search, CV writing, interview preparation and interpersonal skills
- English and maths (if needed), as these are seen as crucial employability skills
- a high-quality work placement to give the young person meaningful work experience and develop workplace skills

How long do they last?

Traineeships can last between six weeks and six months.

Do trainees get paid?

Employers are not required to pay trainees for taking part in a traineeship but may support them with expenses such as transport and meals.

Where young people qualify, they'll be able to access existing programmes of financial support, including the 16-19 Bursary Fund, and Discretionary Learner Support funding for people aged 19 years and over.

Applicants who are receiving benefits will need to contact Jobcentre Plus to check if the traineeship will affect their claim.

How can I find out about traineeship opportunities?

You can search and apply for a traineeship in England at

www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/traineeshipsearch

You can also contact your local college or training provider to see if they are offering opportunities.

Where can I find out more?

www.getingofar.gov.uk/traineeships

www.gov.uk/government/collections/traineeships-programme

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