



Individuals Factsheet: Achieve More with Apprenticeships

Introduction to Apprenticeships

Unlike academic courses at university or college, an Apprenticeship allows you to achieve nationally recognised qualifications at your place of work. As an apprentice you will receive on the job training and support to develop the skills you need to succeed in your chosen industry.

The biggest benefit of an Apprenticeship is that you can earn while you learn. You don't have to wait until you are qualified to embark on your new career – instead, your employer will give you the help and support you need to move up the career ladder whilst gaining nationally recognised qualifications.

Each Apprenticeship comprises of Key (Transferable) Skills, a Technical Certificate and a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ):

- **National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ's)** are work-related qualifications based on national occupational standards that develop the practical skills and knowledge needed in a specific job. They are split into units and each unit is assessed. Assessment will be through the observation of practical work and the creation of a portfolio of evidence.

- **Key skills** are a range of essential skills required in everyday life and in the workplace. These core skills are transferable throughout many job sectors and include: Communication, Information Technology, and Application of Numbers.

- **Technical certificates** are aimed at developing your skills and knowledge in a particular aspect of your job.

Apprenticeship Levels

There are three levels of Apprenticeship available:

Intermediate Level

At this level, you will work towards a Level 2 Qualification (i.e. Level Two in Business Administration) combined with learning Functional Skills (Key Skills) and, in most cases, a relevant knowledge-based qualification (Technical Cert).

Advanced Level

At this level, you will work towards a Level 3 Qualification (i.e. Level Three in Business Administration) combined with learning Functional Skills (Key Skills) and, in most cases, a relevant knowledge-based qualification (Technical Cert).

Higher Apprenticeships

At this level, you will work towards a Level 4 Qualification (i.e. Level Four in Business Administration) combined with learning Functional Skills (Key Skills) and, in some cases, a knowledge-based qualification such as a Foundation Degree.

What does an Apprenticeship involve?

Your Skills Training UK assessor will visit you in the workplace to observe your work, and give you guidance and support during the course of your training which can last between one and four years. Depending on the job sector you are employed within, you may also need to visit a Skills Training UK learning centre one day a week or as part of a block release.

Your employer is responsible for giving you an induction, providing on the job training and support and for paying your wages.

How do I find an Apprenticeship programme?

Skills Training UK runs an Apprenticeship Vacancies service whereby we help to match up employers and prospective apprentices. If you are not sure who you want to work for or what job area to focus on, our advisors can help you decide.

You can also visit www.apprenticeships.org to use the Apprenticeship Vacancy Matching Service, administered by the National Apprenticeship Service.

If you are already employed or have a good idea of the type of company you would like to work for, you can also approach them directly to ask if they offer Apprenticeships and direct them to Skills Training UK on 0208 903 4713 for further information.

How much will I earn?

All apprentices are entitled to a National Minimum Wage (NMW) of £2.60 per hour (rising to £2.65 per hour 1st October 2012) but many people receive considerably more. Research has shown that the average apprentice earns around £170 per week. Just like a normal employee, you will be paid for both time spent training and time spent 'on the job', as well as receive holiday entitlement from your employer. Once you reach 19 years of age and have completed the first year of your Apprenticeship, you will then be paid at least the minimum wage for non-apprentices of the same age.

For more information about the range of Apprenticeship programmes offered by Skills Training UK call 0208 903 4713 to talk through your options or make an appointment to come and see us.

You can also email any questions you may have to achieve@skillstraininguk.com or tweet us at @SkillsTrain_UK.