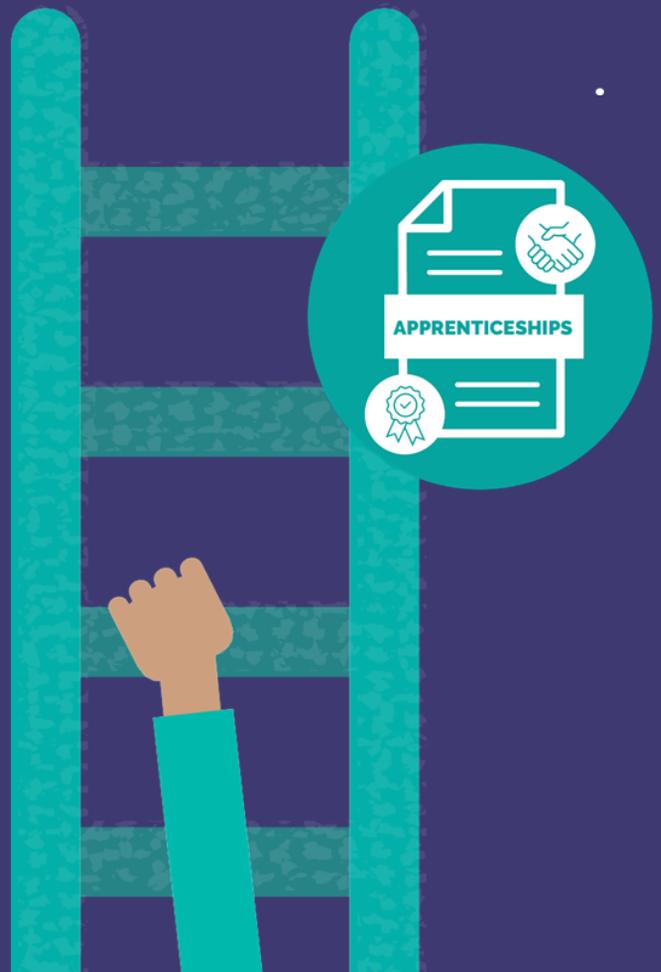


# TAKE YOUR PLACE

## HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS



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# TAKE YOUR PLACE PROGRAMME

Take Your Place is a programme aimed at helping young people aged 11–19 consider their study options after school or college. We work in Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire. Our partners include all of the universities and further education colleges in East Anglia.

Our work in schools and communities has included arranging trips to universities, colleges and employer sites. We also deliver events and workshops to inform and inspire students.

The aim of this booklet is to set out some of the key features of higher and degree apprenticeships, including what they are, the types of apprenticeships available, how they work, entry requirements and where and when to find them.

Traditionally, the pathways to be a scientist, legal assistant or nuclear engineer would have been academic and would require you to complete a taught degree at university, but the new higher and degree apprenticeships provide an alternative credible route into these and a number of other professions.

## Neaco partners:





Graduates earn an average of

**£11,500**

per year more than non-graduates

# PATHWAYS TO STUDY AFTER SCHOOL

## THE WORK-BASED PATHWAY

What is right for one young person isn't always the best option for another. To make sure you get the most from your experience, it's important to find the path that best suits you. That's why it's a good idea to start considering the options well in advance.

**Graduates can enter jobs at a higher level** and can go further in their chosen career. Increasingly, employers now ask that applicants are educated to degree level.



© UEA

**Qualifications at the same level are of a similar difficulty, but vary in content, learning style and assessment.**

## ACADEMIC PATHWAYS

Academic pathways are the most common route to university. Most students take this pathway, via A levels, to an undergraduate degree and sometimes a master's or PhD.

Foundation degrees suit students who are unsure about their final destination, those who wish to study as they work and those who want more work experience as they study.

## VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

Vocational pathways are focused on developing work-based skills while studying. Vocational qualifications can offer a pathway to a full-time degree course in the same way that A levels do.

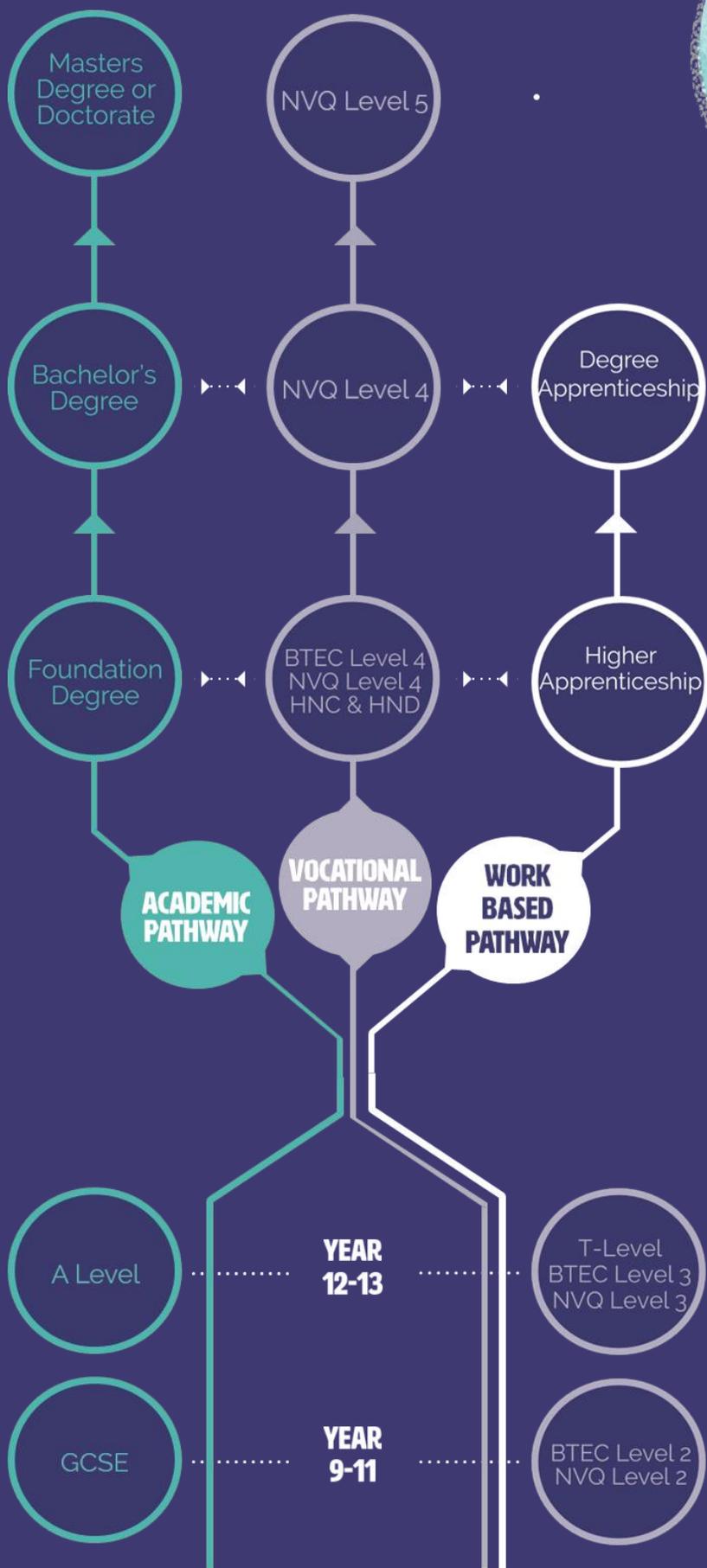
## WORK-BASED PATHWAYS

Higher level apprenticeships and degree apprenticeships suit students who want to be employed while studying. They are open to anyone over the age of 16 and can take anything from one to four years to complete. With both higher and degree apprenticeship routes, you can achieve a full degree qualification. You can also complete a level 7, Masters degree via the apprenticeship route.

See page opposite.

**PLOT A STUDY PATH**





You can find more information about the different pathways at [www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/pathways](http://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/pathways)



TAKE YOUR PLACE

# FEATURES OF HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

## Key facts about higher and degree apprenticeships

- They have all been developed by employers and involve a mix of 'on-the-job' and 'study-based' learning
- You will be employed, meaning you will have a contract of employment and be paid a salary for the work you do
- You will spend most of your time in paid employment at the workplace (80%)
- You will spend 20% of your time studying towards a higher-level qualification. This element of your learning will be provided by a university, college or private training provider
- You will **not** pay anything towards your tuition fees. The employer will pay for this using money they have already paid into an apprenticeship levy
- Higher and degree apprenticeship opportunities are limited and are therefore competitive
- You may have to move away for some opportunities

THE APPRENTICE

THE TRAINING PROVIDER

(the organisation that teaches the theory behind the job)

THE EMPLOYER

(the company helping to put the theory into practice in the workplace)

“The lecturers at my university are really good. They have real experience of the construction world, so they understand the work we are doing on-site. Since starting my higher apprenticeship, I've noticed an increase in my confidence and my ability”

Level 5 apprentice

“I am continuously developing invaluable skills within the workplace whilst also benefiting from educational support from my university”

Degree apprentice from Jaguar Land Rover



“It was too good an opportunity to turn down – the experience I wanted with a degree designed around transferable skills and knowledge”

Degree apprentice from IBM



© UEA

# 90%

of apprentices stay employed after completing their apprenticeship\*



For more information on how Higher and Degree apprenticeships compare to the traditional university route visit [www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources](http://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources)

# LEVELS OF APPRENTICESHIPS

## Employers take on apprentices in a variety of ways and will often:

- Advertise a role at Level 4, which would typically take 18 months to complete this may stand alone or lead to a Level 5. Again, this will be dependent on the employer
- Advertise a degree apprenticeship (Level 6), which will usually take four years to complete
- Upskill existing staff (there is no upper age limit for apprentices)
- Offer higher and degree apprenticeships as progression routes for those completing Level 3 apprenticeships

Name	Level	Equivalent educational level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A level
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or Master's degree



# ON-THE-JOB AND STUDY-BASED LEARNING

**As an apprentice you would be employed by an organisation and have a contract of employment, which will have entitlements that are dictated by law. This means that you will be paid a salary and have at least 20 days' paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.**

The study element of your learning will fit around your work commitments and take up to 20% of your working time. The learning is flexible and can be day release, distance or 'blended learning' (a mix of different methods) – your study pattern will usually be set out by your employer. All of the training costs are covered by the employer and the government, meaning that you would not pay any fees. Although not guaranteed a permanent role, many apprentices stay in employment at the end of the apprenticeship and progress within the organisation.



© UEA



“Apprenticeships enable you to learn, earn and gain work experience. It has been the best possible start to my career!”

Electoral services apprentice

# MYTH-BUSTING

Higher and degree apprenticeships were launched in 2015. Since their launch, we have seen some of the country's largest and most prestigious companies offer these new apprenticeships across a wide range of job roles.

We speak to lots of people in the course of our work and realise that many students can be misinformed when it comes to understanding the new higher and degree apprenticeships. Here are some popular myths.



**"I can't do a degree apprenticeship because my local university isn't offering the subject I want"**

Employers are free to use training providers country-wide. BT is an example of an employer who works with multiple training providers across the country, including University of Suffolk and University of Exeter. Focus your search on the employer and the apprenticeship. Your employer will arrange any required travel for the study element.



**"I will need to take out student loans to do a degree apprenticeship"**

You will be paid a wage and will **not** pay for any of your training or qualifications.

These are all paid for by your employer, who will also pay you a salary to support your living costs.

**"Apprenticeships are only for manual jobs"**

This is one of the most common myths. There are manual-type apprenticeships, in construction; however, you can also find apprenticeships in digital solutions, aerospace engineering, operation management and business management.



**"Only small businesses take on apprentices"**

In 2017, the government stipulated that any organisation with a salary bill of over £3m must pay an apprenticeship levy, which can then only be used for apprenticeships. This means that large, established employers like the **NHS, BT, Sky, BBC**, etc. recruit apprentices.



**"All apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on gov.uk"**

Although this would be ideal, it is not the case. You will find some useful websites in the section on 'finding an apprenticeship' later in this guide. Employers use a variety of methods to recruit employees and apprentices, so research widely.





## **“I have to choose between an apprenticeship and university”**

There is nothing to stop you applying for university and apprenticeships – in fact, it is a good idea to keep your options open and as broad as possible. See what offers you get and then choose the best opportunity.

## **“Apprentices aren’t paid a decent wage”**

Businesses are looking for the best talent and are often willing to pay more than you might think for their higher and degree apprentices. Your pay is likely to increase as you become more qualified. And, of course, you will receive all your training and qualifications without having to take out student loans.



## **“In order to have a good career, I have to go to university”**

Degree apprenticeships include a university degree. You’ll study the equivalent of one full day per week, and much of your learning will be with your employer. Higher-level qualifications are well-recognised by employers and, as an apprentice, you will of course also gain valuable industry experience.



## **“Apprenticeships are for people who didn’t do well at school”**

Apprenticeships are available at all levels from GCSE to Master’s degree!

Degree apprenticeships are likely to have similar entry requirements to traditional degrees. However, employers will be interviewing you for a job and might sometimes be more flexible on entry requirements because they value experience and skills as well as academic achievement.



## **“If I do an apprenticeship, I’ll just be making tea and coffee”**

Employers are hiring apprentices so they can train them to do a specific role. You might have to take your turn making the teas like most employees do, but you will be doing a real job with real responsibilities.



# DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As of September 2023, there were **107** apprenticeship standards approved for delivery at Level 6 and **62** approved at Level 7, with more being developed each year.

In 2022-23  
**41,430**  
people started a  
degree apprenticeship\*

## Some degree-level apprenticeships that are being delivered include:

- Architectural Assistant
- Building Control Surveyor
- Chartered Legal Executive
- Chartered Manager
- Civil Engineer
- Digital and Technology Solutions Professional
- Laboratory Scientist
- Marketing Executive
- Midwife
- Nuclear Scientist and Nuclear Engineer
- Nursing Associate
- Occupational Therapist
- Paramedic
- Police Constable
- Professional Economist
- Registered Nurse
- Sustainability Business Specialist



## Apprenticeship Standards

Groups of employers have developed the standards for all higher and degree apprenticeships. These standards set out the skills, knowledge and behaviours the apprentice will learn by the end of their apprenticeship. The standards are approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

You can find all the information on what standards are being delivered, developed and proposed (including levels) at the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education website  
[www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards](http://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards)



© UEA

Find out more about some of the largest apprenticeship sectors, and the sorts of apprenticeship job roles you can do in that area, by browsing our 'Sector Fact Sheets' on the [takeyourplace](http://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources) website;  
[www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources](http://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources)

You can also find more information about some of the largest apprenticeship employers by using the 'Vacancy snapshot' resource at [amazingapprenticeships.com](http://amazingapprenticeships.com)



Higher apprentices  
could earn

**£150k**

more, on average, over their lifetime compared to those with Level 3 vocational qualifications\*

\*UK Gov Education & Skills Funding Agency

# WHAT WILL AN APPRENTICE EARN?



All apprentices are entitled to the national minimum wage. These rates change every year and can be found on gov.uk

## NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE



Year	23 and over	21 to 22	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2023	£10.42	£10.18	£7.48	£5.28	£5.28

Although the minimum wage is set out as above by the government, salaries do vary considerably between employers, and many employers pay more than the minimum wage. At the time of printing these are some of annual salaries for degree (Level 6) apprenticeships:



**Morrisons, Retail Degree Apprenticeship**  
**£22,000 per year**



**Mott Macdonald Ltd, Civil Engineering Degree apprenticeship**  
**£20,700 per year**



**Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship, Suffolk Constabulary**  
**£26,682 in Year 1 increasing each year to £43,032 in Year 7**



*Scan to view minimum wage information online.*



"There are more apprenticeship types available than ever before across various industries, with hundreds of potential job outcomes available"

**AIM Apprenticeships**



© UEA

# ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

**Entry requirements vary for higher and degree apprenticeships. You'll usually need at least five A\*-C or 9-4 grade GCSEs, as well as A-Level, T-Level or BTEC (Level 3) qualifications in relevant subjects.**

Degree apprenticeships may have more specific entry requirements. These may include three A-Levels in a specified grade range or a higher apprenticeship qualification. It's likely you'll be required to have some work experience but not necessarily within the same sector as the apprenticeship. Employers will usually be interested in your wider skills and experiences, including extra-curricular activities and voluntary work.



**As well as the academic entry requirements, employers will often look for certain skills, qualities and attributes. Some of these include:**

- A willingness to work hard; apprentices will be studying and doing a full-time job
- The confidence and maturity to handle their responsibilities in the workplace
- Ability to learn independently
- Organised and able to manage their time

**Visit the LifeSkills website for more information on boosting your employability**



LifeSkills, a website that provides young people with support to get the skills and experiences they need to enter the world of work.

[www.barclayslifeskills.com](http://www.barclayslifeskills.com)

# CASE STUDIES



## **Suffolk County Council**

Miles Orlopp, Civil Engineering degree apprentice with Suffolk Highways

"I have a passion for engineering and was deciding what to do after I completed my A-Levels. I came across an advert for an apprenticeship in civil engineering with Suffolk Highways, where I would be able to achieve a degree and gain work experience within my desired subject.

I receive a lot of support from my fellow colleagues and mentors, when learning new topics at work and university, to help me understand what I am writing about and how I can relate this to work situations. One reason that I particularly enjoy my apprenticeship is being able to see a completed job that I have played a major part in organising at any stage of the project and seeing that job benefit the everyday life of the public.

I would highly recommend an apprenticeship to anyone who wants to gain experience in different areas of employment whilst having the opportunity to achieve the qualifications to help progress their career."

## **Flagship Group**

Matthew Levesley and Ellie Colk, Level 4 Senior Housing and Property Management apprentices

Matthew and Ellie started their housing policy and practice apprenticeship with Flagship Group. Matthew says: "The apprenticeship is fantastic. You get to work across a broad range of departments, such as HR, development, response and housing, so you quickly learn about all aspects of the business and meet loads of different colleagues."

Ellie says: "My apprenticeship means so much more than just having a job. It's allowed me to develop not only as a professional, but personally too."





## BT

### Blessan Samuel, Network Engineering Degree Apprentice

"I chose the BT apprenticeship as it gives me the opportunity to work at one of the biggest telecommunication companies and still get a full university degree with it. I'm doing the networks apprenticeship while doing the software degree. This has given me learning and working experience in two of the biggest fields."

The apprenticeship scheme suited me perfectly as it lets me put into practice what I learn at university and to make an impact while achieving a degree. BT has created many opportunities to work with industry leaders and experts in many different fields. The University of Suffolk has a lot of great facilities and services and has staff who put in the time to go over topics that I struggle with."

## Aviva

### Toni Kelly, Level 4 Digital Business Analyst apprentice

"I came to hear about Aviva's apprenticeship scheme through an event they held at my college. They got to see first-hand my passion and potential – which ultimately helped me get the apprenticeship. I was competing for one of only two positions, against candidates much older and much more experienced than me. But I didn't let my age or lack of experience get in my way. My apprenticeship means I am starting my career at 18. I am also doing real work, being challenged on a daily basis, gaining an industry recognised qualification and working for a global company!"



## EDF

### Poppy Able, Nuclear Engineering Degree Apprentice

"Young people are needed in today's engineering industry; we can see challenges in a new and different perspective, bringing innovative ideas to the table. We're robust, reliable, want an environment suitable for everyone. At EDF, we're aiming for a 40% female representative of the company, because there are still less than a third of people in STEM careers who are female. Engineering isn't just grubby hands and greasy overalls – it's divergent thinking, working in a team and having ingenuity."

And nuclear is needed in the UK's energy mix if we are looking to achieve Net Zero – I truly believe we won't be able to get there without nuclear playing a big part in the energy mix."

# FINDING AN APPRENTICESHIP

There are lots of different websites that employers use. You will find a list of some of these below. [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) is a popular site and it is a good idea to register on it to receive email alerts and updates.

It is also a good idea to look at companies in the industry you are interested in, so you understand what employers are expecting and get an idea of the apprenticeships that are available.

## WEBSITES

- Government website: [gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)
- Indeed: [uk.indeed.com](https://www.uk.indeed.com)
- UCAS: [ucas.com/apprenticeships](https://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships)
- Amazing Apprenticeships: [amazingapprenticeships.com](https://www.amazingapprenticeships.com)
- Not Going To Uni: [notgoingtouni.co.uk](https://www.notgoingtouni.co.uk)
- Rate My Apprenticeship: [ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk)
- Get My First Job: [getmyfirstjob.co.uk](https://www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk)
- All About School Leavers: [allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk/](https://www.allaboutschoolleavers.co.uk/)
- Careermap: [careermap.co.uk](https://www.careermap.co.uk)
- Jobs24: [jobs24.co.uk/jobs](https://www.jobs24.co.uk/jobs)
- Help You Choose: [helpyouchoose.org](https://www.helpyouchoose.org)
- LinkedIn Jobs: [uk.linkedin.com/jobs](https://www.uk.linkedin.com/jobs)
- Icanbea: [icanbea.org.uk](https://www.icanbea.org.uk)
- The Apprenticeship Guide: [apprenticeshipguide.co.uk](https://www.apprenticeshipguide.co.uk)
- NHS Jobs: [jobs.nhs.uk](https://www.jobs.nhs.uk)
- Army, Royal Navy & Royal Air Force: [jobs.army.mod.uk](https://www.jobs.army.mod.uk)  
[royalnavy.mod.uk/careers](https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers)  
[recruitment.raf.mod.uk](https://www.recruitment.raf.mod.uk)

## Social media

- Company 'X' profiles and Facebook pages
- University 'X' profiles and Facebook pages



# WHEN TO LOOK FOR APPRENTICESHIPS

Recruitment begins early; unlike university, there is no deadline for applications and recruitment can take place throughout the year. Larger companies will recruit as early as September (up to a year in advance), some vacancies are advertised around January and February, whilst others are advertised in spring and early summer.

Don't wait until the deadline to apply. Companies can stop applications once they have a suitable number of candidates, and this can often be well before the deadline!



Top tips for apprenticeship applications

## Keep your options open

Apprenticeships are very competitive, so make sure you keep your options open and consider applying to university too.

## Search thoroughly

When searching for an apprenticeship, be thorough – remember there are lots of different websites. Try leaving the keyword area blank. While this may mean scrolling through apprenticeships you're not interested in, this way you'll be sure to see all the options. For example, you might look for an IT apprenticeship and miss some great digital solution apprenticeships.

## Get advice

Ask for advice from your career adviser or tutors at school/college. They should be able to give you pointers about how to look for apprenticeships locally and they might receive alerts from organisations when new opportunities become available. Also ask for support with the application interview process.

## Reach out

Send a speculative covering letter and CV to relevant companies. You can research companies using Google, Yell and LinkedIn. Another great website to research businesses is **Amazing Apprenticeships**.

Put yourself in the best position by working hard and securing some work experience if possible. If you can't get relevant work experience, make sure you take advantage of other opportunities to develop your skills and confidence. Extra-curricular activities are valued by employers.



## Keep looking

REMEMBER! Higher and degree apprenticeships are being advertised throughout the year; there is no set time to apply. Keep checking and set up alerts on apprenticeship websites to be notified by text/email of new opportunities as soon as the vacancies go live!

# COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FORM



Ensure you fill in applications to the best of your ability. Remember, this is a competitive process. You're applying for a job, so make sure that you promote yourself in the best way



Read the job description thoroughly, making note of key points, such as entry requirements and 'essential' skills and qualities – consider how you can relate your experience to the role and include this in your supporting statement



When filling in applications, be specific and back up your statements with evidence and examples. Don't undersell yourself; be confident (but honest!) about your abilities



Employers aren't just looking for academic qualifications. What else have you done that might meet the criteria? DofE, NCS, sports clubs, volunteering, work experience, part-time work... This will strengthen your application



Ask a teacher or family member to read through your application. Does it make sense? Have you answered all of the questions fully? Have you presented yourself positively? Is it error-free?



Once you've applied, there could still be more steps to go through, including pre-interviews, phone or video interviews, site visits, online tests and assessment, all before you get to the face-to-face interview – ask your career adviser for support

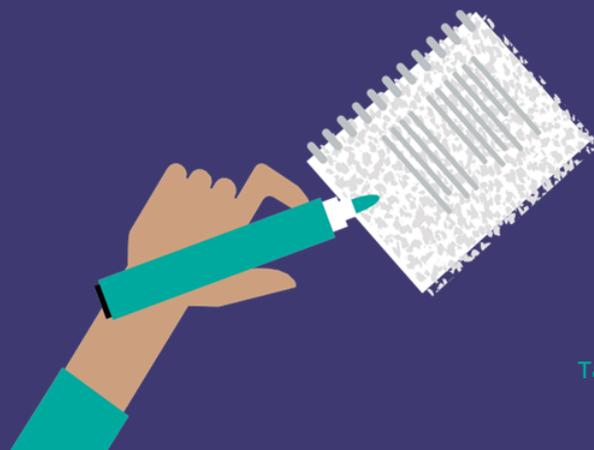
# THE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

Remember, you are being interviewed to be an employee as well as a student. You need to present yourself as a person who can contribute in the workplace.

Preparing in advance for your interview is the key to success! Take a look at our interview resources at [takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources](https://takeyourplace.ac.uk/resources)

## Checklist:

- I have found out as much as I can about the organisation.
- I understand the role and the skills and qualities required.
- I have examples to demonstrate the skills and qualities required.
- I have practised answering questions 'out loud' and in the mirror.
- My friend/parent/teacher has put me on the spot and asked me questions.
- I have prepared some questions to ask the interviewer(s).
- I have checked my travel arrangements/timings.
- I have decided what clean, smart clothes I will wear.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

## Is there an age limit for an apprentice?

Apprentices have to be over 18 to undertake a higher or degree apprenticeship, but there is no upper age limit and they are often made available to existing employees.

## What if I can't find a degree-level apprenticeship where I live?

Some organisations are upskilling their existing staff, so there can be limited opportunities. You may have to relocate for an apprenticeship. Contact the employer (and the university that the employer works with) to find out if you can move into student accommodation and if they are interested in candidates from further afield.

## Will I be classed as a student at university?

Technically you will not be a student, but an employee. However, you will have access to university resources and student benefits, including the National Union of Students (NUS) Apprentice Extra Card which will give you discounts for lots of brands. See more at [www.apprenticeextra.co.uk](http://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk). You will also get benefits of being an employee such as sick pay and annual leave entitlement.

## Is the degree attached to an apprenticeship the same as a traditional three-year degree?

Yes – your degree title might be slightly different from students who have studied the same subject in the traditional way, but the title will reflect the name of your apprenticeship. You will, however, receive the same qualification, e.g. BA or BSc, and graduate in the same time-frame as a full-time university student.

## How can I find out if there is an apprenticeship in my chosen career?

You can find all apprenticeship standards on the [gov.uk](http://gov.uk) website – search 'apprenticeship standards'.

## Am I tied-in to the organisation when I complete my apprenticeship?

Unless you take up an apprenticeship in the armed forces or the organisation has a valid reason to stipulate this at the outset, it would be highly unlikely for you to be tied-in to any organisation on completion of any apprenticeship.



# FURTHER INFORMATION

Currently, apprenticeship standards have been developed for over 800 job roles. Each standard sets out clearly the skills, knowledge and behaviours that the apprentice will acquire, along with the qualifications and professional recognition.

Growth in all new higher and degree apprenticeships is driven within key sectors where there are notable skills shortages. This data is published each year on the [gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) website.

Since April 2017, the government has stipulated that employers with a salary bill of over £3m would pay an apprenticeship levy, at a rate of 0.5% of their total annual pay bill. Employers who pay the levy are able to access/retrieve it to pay for the training and accreditation of their apprentices.

Employers partner with accredited training providers of their choice. Training providers can be located anywhere in the country.

## [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

This is the 'go to' site for apprenticeship information. You can search 'find an apprenticeship', register to receive updates and set up alerts for apprenticeship vacancies. Also search 'apprenticeship standards' to view all of the different levels of apprenticeships that are being delivered, developed or proposed.

## [www.icanbea.org.uk](http://www.icanbea.org.uk)

icanbea is a Careers website for Norfolk and Suffolk. It has some great resources including a career wizard quiz and a CV builder, as well as information on local industries and vacancies.

## [www.amazingapprenticeships.com](http://www.amazingapprenticeships.com)

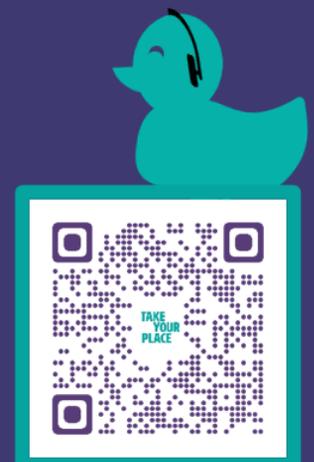
Amazing Apprenticeships has some excellent resources, one of which is 'vacancy snapshot'. This resource holds fact-files on multiple organisations, including apprenticeships on offer. This site is great for research.

## [www.ucas.com/apprenticeships-uk](http://www.ucas.com/apprenticeships-uk)

The UCAS hub is a resource to help you explore all of your further education options, this includes helping you to find out more about apprenticeships, and whether they could be a good route for you.



## TAKE YOUR APPRENTICESHIP PODCAST



**LISTEN NOW!**

# TAKE YOUR PLACE

neaco

[www.takeyourplace.ac.uk](http://www.takeyourplace.ac.uk)

[neaco@admin.cam.ac.uk](mailto:neaco@admin.cam.ac.uk)

