

Apprenticeships – work, earn and learn at the same time

Apprenticeships start at different levels:

- Intermediate – Level 2 – start with GCSE's
- Advanced – Level 3 – equivalent to A level – start with good GCSE's
- Higher – Level 4+ - start after A level or other level 3 qualification

Apprenticeship frameworks:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-apprenticeships>

Higher frameworks:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-and-degree-apprenticeships>

With GCSE's you would normally start at Intermediate; with A levels you should aim to start at Higher, but you may need to start at a lower level to progress upwards.

Minimum salary is £3.50 per hour (April 2017) for those under 19, or those who are 19 in their first year of training. <https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide/pay-and-conditions>

Salaries vary according to industry:

- Healthcare, teaching-assistant, leisure – tend to be low, at minimum wage
- Business, engineering, finance can be up to £10 per hour

To find an apprenticeship:

www.apprenticeships.org.uk Use the vacancy search function – you can set alerts

There are numerous other websites, but I would also recommend www.notgoingtouni.com for the Higher Apprenticeships.

The estimate is that 70% jobs are never advertised so do not limit your search to websites alone, or you will miss opportunities.

For a successful apprenticeship, three individuals/organisations need to be involved, which gives you further clues for how to find unadvertised vacancies:

1. **You – the apprentice**
2. **Your employer**
3. **Your training provider**

To find those jobs that are not widely advertised you need to be pro-active!

You

- **Who do you know? Who do your contacts know?** It's estimated that everyone in the world is connected by no more than 5 people, so the chances are you already know of people who could help you, so start telling your friends and family what you are looking to do – they may be able to help, or may hear of vacancies.

Employers

- **Who would you like to work for? Do your research to find local employers**
 - **Look on employer websites** – do they have vacancies advertised? Many employers ONLY put an advert on their website – so make sure you look.
 - **Who do you know?** Do you have contacts who already work for potential employers? Ask them to put in a good word for you and see if you can visit to look around or do work experience.
 - **No vacancies? Make a speculative application** – phone potential organisations and ask to whom you should speak or write.

Training Providers

- **Find out who are the key providers** for your apprenticeship framework; it is often local colleges but not-exclusively so,
- **Apply** to the training providers, since they often know of employers who are looking for apprentices; many will expect you to find your own employer but will give advice.

Back-up Plan

You cannot assume you will find an apprenticeship in the timescale you need, so apply to a local college to start a course in a related subject. **You can continue looking** while at college and if you want to, stop the course and transfer to the apprenticeship – at least you will have gained useful, relevant skills in the short-term.