

**your route
to success >>**

Student Guide to Apprenticeship and Employment

your direct route to a great career



2022-23 edition

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Introduction

What is an apprenticeship? Apprenticeships are a job with both on-the-job and off-the-job learning, and qualifications attached to them, meaning apprentices will benefit from a salary alongside gaining industry recognised qualifications and workplace experience. 20% of the apprentice's paid time must be spent 'off-the-job' undertaking further learning and skills development.

Apprenticeships are available at different levels ranging from intermediate to degree (including master's level). Although it might be tempting to focus on degree level vacancies, you should also consider Intermediate and Advanced Apprenticeships even if you have already gained A Levels.

Entry requirements will vary between different apprenticeship employers, and so it is important that you become confident in how to research the different job adverts and how to locate where the employer will state that certain skills or qualifications are essential or desirable.

What are the benefits of an apprenticeship? There are many benefits to apprenticeships, which will be personal to you as an individual. Being able to work and learn at the same time whilst applying the new knowledge and skills immediately in the workplace can be extremely appealing.

One benefit is that the employer will pick up the cost of your training whilst you receive a salary for the job you are doing and learning about. Therefore, you come away with a qualification plus x number of years' experience.

Apprenticeships offer a variety of different delivery models. Generally, 20% of your learning will be classroom based, and 80% in the workplace.

How does this compare with applying for full-time university?

In the same way that students will approach their research of Higher Education programmes, if you are considering apprenticeships, you will also need to spend time researching your options and the different models of learning available with each employer.

You will need to explore a range of different locations and employment settings, considering if you want to relocate or want to stay and work closer to home.

With apprenticeships the employer will set a deadline to receive applications, but this should not be the target as some employers will close early if they receive a large response. You will need to focus on completing and submitting their application well within the stated deadline.

Be mindful that an application to UCAS required just one application/personal statement whereas you will need to complete numerous tailored applications for apprenticeships.

Another difference is that you may need to continue to research opportunities throughout the year, having already completed applications to other apprenticeships.

This is unlike the UCAS process where research into courses is completed early on in the application process and once you sent your UCAS application this is the end of the research period.

Is an Apprenticeship right for me?

An apprenticeship is an excellent way to get started in a career.

If you have a particular career in mind, you will benefit from researching the apprenticeships available and determining if it is possible to reach your career goal through an apprenticeship.

Consider your favourite subjects/interests as a starting point.

Consider where, geographically, you want to be. You may want to use this point in your life to leave home. It is important to consider the cost of travelling as well as the total door to door commuting time and what impact this might have on your health and wellbeing and performance at work.

Use college alumni, careers events and careers interviews to help you identify a suitable apprenticeship. Hearing from past students and being able to speak with employers in person is a valuable resource. Our weekly Careers Bulletin highlights events, employer talks and opportunities. Also consider the benefit of part time job/work experience to help identify careers that you might be interested in.

Apprentices will still be able to have a social life, but it will be a different experience to the traditional university lifestyle.

All apprentices are encouraged to meet other apprentices and will quickly build their own social network – so you will need to carefully consider how to manage your work/study/social life balance.

You are not narrowing down your choices by selecting a particular job role or industry to work in. You will quickly find that many of the skills that you develop are transferable to a multitude of different job roles and industries.

How does this compare with applying for full-time university?

Take a wide approach to searching for apprenticeships to begin with and then hone down on your choices. This is a similar approach to the UCAS process of considering a course type, then area to study etc.

Undertake a wide search regarding apprenticeships that are available.

Think about employers and apprenticeship programmes that you haven't heard of as you might discover something brilliant.

Consider intermediate and advanced apprenticeships rather than limiting yourself to higher and degree apprenticeships. Be proactive and organised – record your research findings using a variety of sources of information, do this regularly.

Levels and Entry requirements

Apprenticeships are available from Intermediate level through to Degree level, including level 7 (master's). You need to consider all levels and types of apprenticeships, as many companies require students to have a base knowledge and skill before they can progress to a higher or degree apprenticeship.

The range of apprenticeships is vast and may contain many different job roles that you may not have heard of before. So, research is very important, explore both the familiar and the unfamiliar job titles and companies as well as the detail behind the job title.

You should also remain open minded when considering the size of the employer you want to apply to; there are thousands of opportunities with smaller companies that you may not have heard of rather than only considering large well-known companies with strong brands.

Intermediate (Level 2)

Equivalent to five GCSE passes.

Applicants need to be over 16 years old, and show they have the ability to complete the programme.

Advanced (Level 3)

Equivalent to two A level passes.

Entry requirements vary by industry, some require apprentices who have three or more GCSEs, but other employers don't specify any formal qualifications. Some may ask for previous experience in the industry. Check apprenticeship vacancies to see if there are any specific subjects and/or grades you need to have.

Higher (Level 4 and above)

Level 4 is equivalent to an HNC, a foundation degree, or the first year of an undergraduate degree. Levels 5 and above – equivalent to a full degree.

Entry requirements can include at least five GCSEs grades A – C (9 – 4 on the new grading system), and Level 3 qualifications, including A levels, NVQ/SVQ Level 3, or a BTEC National. Some will expect or require applicants to have subjects related to the apprenticeship. Check apprenticeship vacancies to see if there are any specific subjects and/or grades you need to have.

Degree (Levels 5 to 7) – these are new and enable apprentices to achieve a full bachelor's or master's degree as part of their apprenticeship. Levels 5 and 6 – equivalent to a full degree. Level 7 – equivalent to a masters degree.

Entry requirements can include at least five GCSEs grades A – C (9 – 4 on the new grading system), and Level 3 qualifications, including A levels, NVQ/SVQ Level 3, or a BTEC National. Some employers have specific entry requirements. For example, recent IT degree apprenticeship adverts have required an A level (or equivalent) grade range of ABB to CCC. Many employers will expect or require applicants to have qualifications in subjects related to the apprenticeship. Check apprenticeship vacancies to see if there are any specific subjects and/or grades you need to have.

Example Apprenticeships

Sector	Summary information – by Sector
Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care	Making a living off the land - and helping to protect it Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
Arts, Media and Publishing	Take centre stage as you light up your career in the arts Media and Publishing
Business, Administration and *Law	Keeping businesses secure, productive and at the forefront of the economy Financial Services - banking, investment, insurance, pensions and more
Construction, Planning and the Built Environment	Construction
Education and Training	Apprenticeships in Education and Training
*Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	Sustainable Energy Energy and Electrical Manufactory - Processing - Logistics Vehicles and Transport Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
*Health, Public Services and Care	Healthcare - Provide care and make a positive change to the most vulnerable Marine - Life at Sea Public Services - Make a difference in your community Childcare Learning and Development
Information and Communication Technology	Digital and IT - Get connected and help keep everyone protected and updated Information and Communication Technology
Leisure, Travel and Tourism	Hospitality and Travel Sport and Fitness
*Retail and Commercial Enterprise	Customer Service - Helping customers make the right choices Retail and Commercial Enterprise
Science and R&D	Science Research and Development - Innovate and test the boundaries of science
Apprenticeships by Level	The Apprenticeship Guide by Level

The table below shows the number of Higher Apprenticeships which were taken up by 19 to 24 year-olds in the London and South East in 2021-22, and in which industry sector.

**To access the figures please hover over the coloured squares.



*According to the latest data from GOV.UK on Apprenticeships in academic year 2021-22 Business, Administration and Law is now the most popular sector subject area, accounting for 26.1% of starts (53,200) in the first two quarters of the 2021/22 academic year. This is closely followed by Health, Public Services and Care -related subjects, which accounted for 25.3% of starts (51,600) in the first two quarters of the 2021/22 academic year.

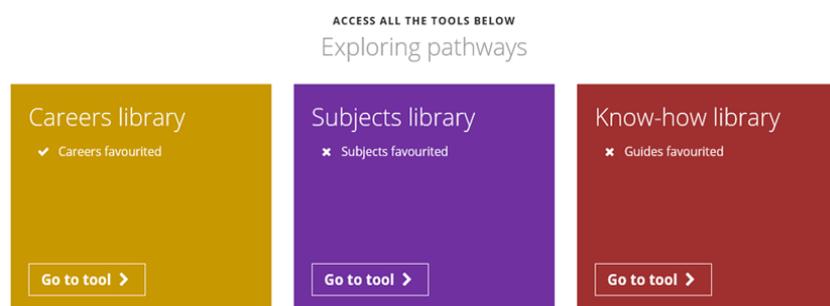
Level 6 and above, starts at Level 6 and 7 increased by 21.1% to 27,600 in 2021/22. This represents 13.5% of all starts reported for 2021/22. There were 22,800 Level 6 and 7 starts in the same period last year (14.1% of starts in the same period).

How to find the perfect Apprenticeship/Job

There are a range of online resources available to help you explore possible career paths before you decide on your final choices. See page 11 for a selection of useful links.

 is a database which provides information on all types of destination. It brings into one place every apprenticeship, university course and college course in the UK, as well as career opportunities, such as MOOCs and School Leaver Programmes.

You might like to start exploring the [Unifrog Careers Library](#) as a starting point



 is another useful platform where you can explore up to date Labour Market Information (LMI) through "[Careerometer](#)" which can be found in the work experience tab – this provides information on the types of job opportunities in your local area, the sector they are in and whether it is an area that is likely to grow. This can be a really useful tool to compare different jobs before making your final decision on the career path for you. You can look at salaries, working hours etc.



 provides a central place to explore all aspects of university life, choosing a university, finding a course, the application process, finance and much more..... [TheUniGuide](#)

 one search. all jobs. Direct employment opportunities as well as apprenticeships can be found on platforms such as [indeed](#) but be mindful that employment does not guarantee a structured training or progression path, but they are a legitimate option if you are unsure about what you would like to do. It enables you to earn some money, expand on your employability skills and give you time to think about the next step. You can also keep an eye out in local papers for opportunities.

Making a successful job application

Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised all year round, although large companies tend to advertise October-January with a start date the following September. This will mean that you will need to look at apprenticeships alongside completing any university applications. Most apprenticeships will require you to complete an initial application form but a CV is useful when making speculative enquires about employment or apprenticeships.

PROSPECTS

A CV is a tool that helps you get your foot in the door when applying for jobs. To find out how to write a good CV and get tips and advice on what to include in your own personal marketing document you might like to visit [Prospects - how to write a CV](#) for useful hints and tips.



The Careers Team has put together a [student guide to CV writing](#) on the college portal which provides a really good starting point if you have not written a CV before.

You may also want to consider writing a [speculative application](#) to a prospective employer who you might be interested in working for.

“Many jobs in fields such as design, environmental work, media, and charity work aren’t advertised. Speculative applications can be effective when done right, as a lot of these positions go to those who show some initiative. If you get your name and CV/resume in front of the right person, you might be just the candidate they’re looking for. Alternatively, if the company doesn’t have any permanent roles for you at that time, they might be able to offer some valuable work experience or forward your details onto someone else.”

Cover Letters

Cover letters are often expected as part of the selection process and written well demonstrate how you meet the criteria for the job. They are usually aligned to a person specification or job description. This guide provides some useful information on [how to write a winning cover letter](#).

Interviews - your CV or application form has got you an interview – so, what next?

Interview Preparation - [the indeed interview checklist](#) has some really great hints and tips.

***How we can help** – You can request a mock interview with a member of the careers team by emailing careers@reigate.ac.uk. Please include the name of the organisation, a link to the company website, a job description, the date of the interview and if possible, a copy of your CV and Application Form.

If you have been invited to take part in a telephone or video interview, quiet rooms are available in college and can be booked in advance.

Please do contact us for help with the application process, CV writing or how to write a covering letter.

The Careers Team is available to support you with you next step choices through weekly workshops and events such as National Apprenticeship Week, the Careers Fair, the weekly Careers Bulletin and the National Apprenticeship Show trip to Sandown racecourse.

A selection of Reigate College apprenticeship alumni



(a range of additional videos are available to students only through [planet estream](#))

Byron Sutherland (2017-2019) studied Mathematics, Physics and Economics
Rolls Royce – Degree apprenticeship in Mechanical Engineering with Electronics
[Click here to listen to the interview with Byron](#)

Honey Meakings (2017-2019) studied A Level Sociology, BTEC Business, Health & Social Care
PR & Communications apprentice for the Ministry of Defence (MOD)
[Click here to listen to the interview with Honey](#)

Louise Johnston (2017-2019) studied Art & Design (3D Design), Foundation Technical Level (Engineering) and BTEC
Applied Science Schneider Electric – Technical degree apprentice
[Click here to read a blog featuring Louise at Schneider Electric](#)
[Click here to listen to the interview with Louise](#)

Elliott West (2015-2016) studied BTEC Business Studies, IT and AS Level Media Studies
Construction Manager at Mace (completed apprenticeship)
[Click here to listen to the interview with Elliott](#)

Tia Stephenson-Oliver (2017-2019) studied BTEC Business, Law and Travel & Tourism
Learning & Development apprentice working for Law firm Watson, Farley & Williams
[Click here to listen to the interview with Tia](#)

Shaan Aucharagram (2017-2019) studied Mathematics, Media Studies and BTEC Computing
Santander - Data Science Degree apprentice
[Click here to listen to the interview with Shaan](#)

Charlotte Berry (2015-2017) studied A Level English Literature, Economics, BTEC Fashion, Media Studies (AS level)
Completed a level 4 apprenticeship with the Fashion Retail Academy working in Merchandising for Arcadia, now
working as an online product marketing assistant at Harvey Nichols
[Click here to listen to the interview with Charlotte](#)

Jade Francis (2017-2019) studied Art & Design (Fine Art) Psychology and Classical Civilization
Sky - Broadcast technician apprentice
[Click here to listen to the interview with Jade](#)

Lucy Goodger (2017-2019) Economic, Psychology & Geography
Hannah Morey (2018-2020) Geography, Biology & Psychology
Nestlé - Chartered Degree Management Apprenticeship Scheme
[Click here to listen to the interview Lucy & Hannah at Nestle](#)

[Investment 20/20 interview with current apprentices and trainee](#)

This interview includes apprentices at **Schroder's** and **Fidelity** and a trainee at **Willis Towers Watson**. **This interview includes alumni Hannah Newing (2017-2019)** studied BTEC Business, Law and Travel & Tourism. Hannah is a trainee at Willis Towers Watson

Thales are a local employer who offer **STEM and Business apprenticeships**.

[Thales - interview with 3 apprentices Mia, Scarlet \(alumni\) and Will](#)

This interview includes alumni Scarlet Meakings (2015-2017) studied English Literature, Psychology and French and is currently a HR apprentice at Thales

FAQs for Parents and Guardians

<p>My son/daughter does not have a job – can you help?</p>	<p>Students can arrange for a careers interview at the college to explore their interests. We can also support with how to search for opportunities include experiences of the workplace. The weekly Careers Bulletin is emailed to students and is placed on the college portal which is also a useful resource for a variety of opportunities.</p>
<p>What will my son/daughter get paid?</p>	<p>Legally, an employer must pay an apprentice the National Minimum Wage for apprentices of £4.15 per hour (April 2020). Whilst this is lower than the normal National Minimum Wage, but it recognises that some people will be going into their first job with no experience at all. Most employers will pay significantly more than the National Minimum Wage.</p>
<p>What does an Apprenticeship cost?</p>	<p>An apprenticeship is funded by the employer, however you should consider travel costs and additional resources to support your training as these may not be covered by your employer.</p>
<p>Why is an Apprenticeship a good choice for my son/daughter?</p>	<p>You earn a salary whilst you study and will receive a recognised qualification once you complete the programme. You will not require a student loans, you will not be required to pay tuition fees.</p>
<p>What if my son/daughter does not complete the apprenticeship, would they need to reimburse any of the costs to the employer?</p>	<p>This would depend on the details of your individual contract with your employer so be sure to check this.</p>
<p>What if my son/daughter does not have a specific career in mind?</p>	<p>We would advice that they make an appointment for a confidential careers interview through the college portal booking system, or alternatively via email to careers@reigate.ac.uk</p>
<p>Can my son/daughter get help with their CV and Interview techniques?</p>	<p>The careers team can support with CV writing and interview techniques. Please make an appointment by emailing us at careers@reigate.ac.uk</p>

Links to useful resources

	<p>Alternatives to University Apprenticeships, internships and Gap Years UCAS Guide to Apprenticeships UCAS Guide - which industries are offering apprenticeships? UCAS - Higher and Degree Apprenticeships</p>
	<p>Find an Apprenticeship Which Apprenticeship is Right for You?</p>
	<p>Apprenticeships - levels, salary, entry requirements</p>
	<p>Careers choices at 18</p>
	<p>Guide to jobs, work experience and Apprenticeships</p>
	<p>Networking Opportunities Sign up to LinkedIn</p>
	<p>Glassdoor blog - how social media can sabotage your job search!</p>
	<p>Businesses offering Apprenticeships</p>
	<p>Apprenticeships, Jobs, Reviews and Careers Advice for School and College Leavers</p>
	<p>How to Explain Gaps on your CV</p>
	<p>How to Explain a Gap on your CV in a Positive Way to Employers</p>
	<p>How to Fill a Coronavirus Shaped Gap on your CV</p>
	<p>Reigate College Weekly Careers Bulletin</p>



The **Careers Team** are here to support you with your next step plans. We offer 1:1 confidential Careers Interviews, as well as help with CV writing, completing applications, where to find information of jobs, apprenticeships and further study, interview advice and practice, help with finding experience of the workplace and much, much more. If you want to make an appointment with us, please email careers@reigate.ac.uk