

# **Student Guide to Apprenticeship and Employment**



**Unlock Your Future: Build Skills, Gain Experience,  
and Start Your Career**

**2025 Edition**

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# What is an Apprenticeship?



An apprenticeship is a paid job where the employee learns and gains valuable experiences.

Alongside on-the-job training, apprentices spend at least 20% of their working hours working towards a nationally recognised qualification.

**Off-the-job training is delivered by subject experts and can include:**

- teaching theory (e.g. classroom lessons, lectures and online learning)
- practical training (e.g. shadowing, mentoring, industry visits)
- learning support and time to write assignments

**Is an apprenticeship right for me?**

An apprenticeship is ideal for anybody who's a practical learner and wants to combine learning and gaining a qualification with a paid job.

**Apprenticeships vs University**

**What are the main advantages of each route?**

**The benefits of apprenticeships**

- experience and skills development
- it's a paid job
- a nationally recognised qualification (with no tuition fees)
- make industry contacts
- direct entry into a specific career or industry
- fast-track your career with work-based learning

**The benefits of university**

- choose from thousands of degrees
- a more open-ended career in terms of future opportunities
- gain independence by living away from home
- acquire a range of soft skills transferable to any job role
- high earning potential for many graduate roles
- enjoy the full social experience of university
- have access to cutting-edge research facilities

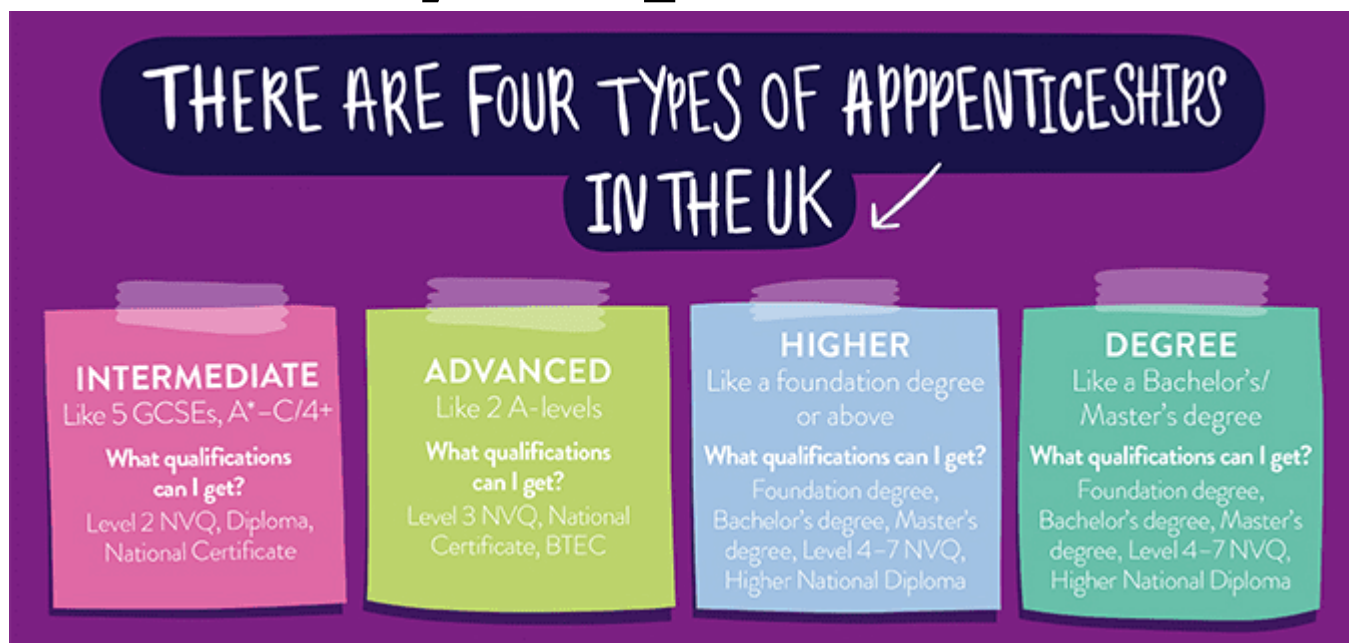
Looking for inspiration?  
See what amazing careers our alumni have gone on to..  
[Past Student Profiles](#)

You can also see what our alumni have got to say about apprenticeships here...  
[Alumni & Careers on YouTube](#)

Still not sure whether an apprenticeship or university is right for you?

**You can apply for both! Keep your options open!**

# Apprenticeship Levels and Entry Requirements



Be open minded about the level of apprenticeships you apply for-remember you are getting an industry specific qualification..

Consider intermediate and advanced apprenticeships rather than limiting yourself to higher and degree apprenticeships. Students have previously had success and moved up more quickly by starting at a lower level. Competition for degree level apprenticeships is very high and therefore the selection much more rigorous.

**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.

## Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship Example Entry Requirements:

### Requirements

#### Essential qualifications

GCSE in:

- 5 GCSE's including English and Mathematics (grade Grade C / 4 and Above)

A Level in:

- At least 2 subjects (grade 80 UCAS points and above)

## Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship Example Entry Requirements:

### Requirements

#### Essential qualifications

GCSE in:

- 5 GCSE's Including Maths and English (grade Grade C/4 and Above)

A Level in:

- in 3 Subjects (grade 104 UCAS points and above)

BTEC in:

- National Diploma (grade 112 UCAS points and above)

Let the company know about other relevant qualifications and industry experience you have. They can adjust the apprenticeship to reflect what you already know.

# Researching Apprenticeships

If you are considering apprenticeships, you will need to spend time researching your options...



## Apprenticeships by Subject

[PE and Sport](#)

[Languages](#)

[Science](#)

[Art and DT](#)

[Engineering](#)

[Geography](#)

[Technology](#)

[Music and Drama](#)

[Business](#)

[English](#) [History](#) [Maths](#)



## Apprenticeships by Industry Sector

[Agriculture, environmental and animal care](#)

[Business and administration](#)

[Energy](#)

[Construction](#)

[Creative, media and the arts](#)

[Customer service and retail](#)

[Digital and ICT](#)

[Engineering and electrical](#)

[Financial services](#)

[Health and wellbeing](#)

[Hospitality and travel](#)

[Manufacturing and logistics](#)

[Marine](#)

[Public services](#)

[Science](#)

[Hair and beauty](#)

[Sport and fitness](#)

[Vehicles and transport](#)



**unifrog**

Unifrog brings all the available information into one comprehensive, user-friendly platform that helps students make the best choices, and submit the strongest applications.

### Unifrog will help you to explore:

Careers sectors and job profiles

Help creating a CV and cover letters

Careers events

Live apprenticeship vacancies

Your skills and how to evidence them



[Unifrog](#)

# Researching Apprenticeships

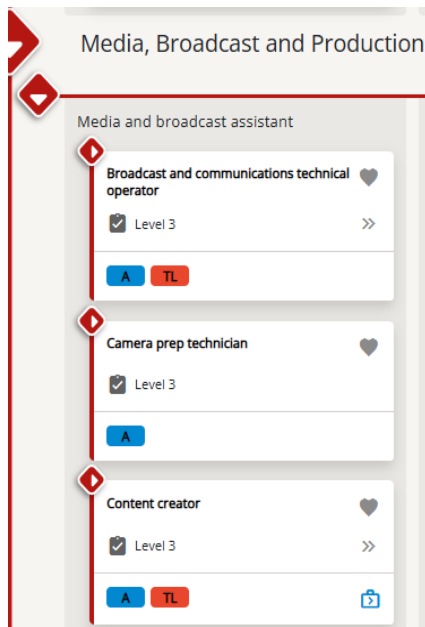
All Apprenticeships are based on occupations recognised by employers.

Use the **Institute for Apprenticeships Occupational Maps** to find out what apprenticeships exist in a specific sector.

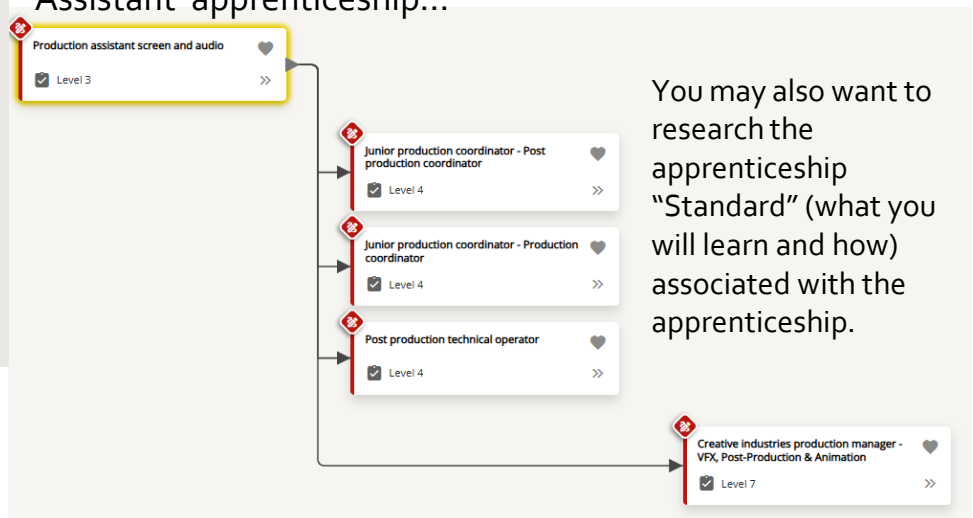


Use the filter bar to filter your search by qualification type and level. Make sure you choose “approved occupational standard”.

You can then see the range of occupational standards (apprenticeship content) available for the subject/level you have filtered. Here is an example for level 3 occupational standards for the creative and design sector, you would scroll down to see more...



If the tile has a >> click this to find out the progression route following the completion of the apprenticeship, this might be at the same level but a different subject or progression to the next level. Here is an example of the next step follow the completion of a level 3 Production Assistant apprenticeship...



You may also want to research the apprenticeship “Standard” (what you will learn and how) associated with the apprenticeship.

**Top Tip**—If you are particularly interested in a “Green Career” you can also filter the apprenticeships to indicate the impact that the occupation has, in terms of scale and influence, on helping the UK achieve net-carbon zero by 2050.

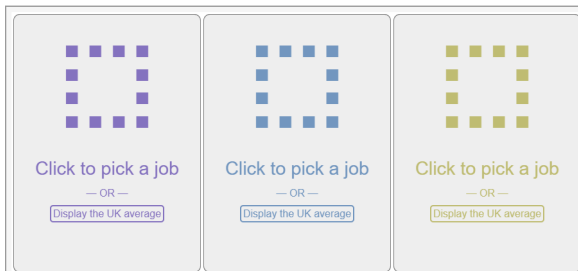
[Institute for Apprenticeships](https://www.institute-for-apprenticeships.org.uk)



# Researching Apprenticeships and Employment

There are a range of online resources available to help you explore possible career paths and opportunities.

## Careerpilot



Explore up to date Labour Market Information (LMI). 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.

[Careerpilot](#)



## ★ RATEMY APPRENTICESHIP

- Search and Apply for Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships and School & College Leaver Jobs
- Read Reviews on Apprenticeships and Employers
- Research Companies Offering Apprenticeships and Jobs
- Industry Guides
- Advice Hub

[RateMyApprenticeship](#)



Direct employment opportunities as well as apprenticeships can be found on platforms such as [Indeed](#) but be mindful that not all employment opportunities guarantee a structured training or progression path. However, employment enables you to earn some money, expand on your employability skills and give you time to think about the next step.

[Indeed](#)



[Careers Bulletin](#)

Read the college weekly Careers Bulletin for career insights, events and job and apprenticeship opportunities.



# What opportunities are available in my area?



## Surrey Labour Market Information

Woking, Waverley, Tandridge, Guildford, Elmbridge, Epsom and Ewell, Surrey Heath, Spelthorne, Runnymede, Reigate and Banstead, Mole Valley

### Employment

Average annual salary  
**£44,728**



- Employed
- Unemployed
- Self-employed

### Most jobs are in:

- Health
- Professional, scientific & technical
- Education
- Accommodation & food services
- Business admin & support services

### Recruitment

Jobs posted online in the last year  
**192,928**

### Skills in demand:

- Communication
- Management
- Customer service
- Teaching
- Attention to detail

### Employers recruiting the most:

### Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship starts in 23/24  
**5,410**



### Top 5 apprenticeships:

- 1 Business, admin & law
- 2 Health, public services & care
- 3 Retail and commercial
- 4 Engineering & manufacturing technologies
- 5 Information & communication technology

Produced by the Learning Resources and Insights team at Education Development Trust, January 2025

Sources: ONS, ASHE 2024, Resident analysts - full-time workers - median average salary [from Nomis on 14/1/2025] • Lightcast, Unique jobs postings online - Jan 2024-Dec 2024 - data accessed on 14/1/2025 • ONS, BRES: open access - Broad Industrial Groups - Surrey [from Nomis on 14/1/2025] • Explore education stats, Apprenticeship starts - Academic year 2023/24 - data accessed on 14/1/2025



Give us feedback

# What opportunities are available in my area?

## South East Labour Market Information

Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Surrey, East and West Sussex

### Spotlight on the area

#### Hampshire & Isle of Wight



#### Surrey



#### West Sussex



#### East Sussex

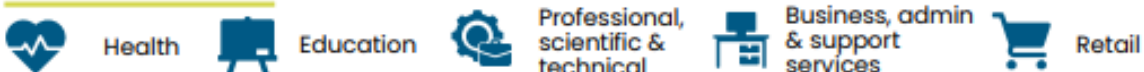


### Where people work

#### Top 5 apprenticeships:

- 1 Health, public services & care
- 2 Business, administration & law
- 3 Engineering & manufacturing
- 4 Retail & commercial enterprise
- 5 ICT

#### Most jobs are in:



#### Top 10 employers:



Produced by the Learning Resources and Insights team at Education Development Trust, September 2024

Sources: ONS, ASHE 2022, Workplace analysis - full-time workers - median annual pay - gross [from Nomis on 07/09/2024] - Lightcast, Unique jobs postings online - last 12 months - data accessed on 17/09/2024 - ONS, BRES - open access - Broad Industrial Groups - Hampshire LA, Surrey LA, West Sussex LA, East Sussex LA [from Nomis on 17/09/2024] - Gov.UK, Explore education stats, Apprenticeship starts - Academic year 2022/23 by local authority and SSA TL

\* No data for the Isle of Wight.

Notes: Hampshire and Isle of Wight includes North Hants, South Hants and East Hants • West Sussex includes Arun, Chichester, Crawley, Horsham, Mid-Sussex • Surrey includes Ipswich & Ewell, Guildford, Reigate and Banstead, Mole Valley, Spelthorne, Surrey Heath, Tandridge, Waverley and Runnymede • East Sussex includes Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother, Wealdon

Give us feedback



# Researching Companies and Networking

# Linked

LinkedIn is a valuable tool to help build your career, including networking and learning from industry experts.

Your profile can act as your “living CV” so it’s important to keep it up to date.

## Top Tips:

- Write a clear headline (under your name) to quickly convey your goals, like “Aspiring Graphic Designer” or “Interested in Marketing & Business.”
- Use a professional looking photo – avoid holiday pictures and opt for a well-lit headshot.
- Include a summary of your education, volunteering, and aspirations.
- List transferable skills like teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and leadership.
- Join Groups – Find industry-specific groups to expand your network, ask questions, and learn from others.
- Use LinkedIn's Job Search tools to explore jobs, internships, apprenticeships.
- Customize your LinkedIn URL (e.g., linkedin.com/in/johnsmith) for a more professional look.
- Take advantage of LinkedIn Learning – Access free (and paid) courses to enhance your employability and develop skills relevant to your career aspirations.

**Remember**, LinkedIn is a **public Social Media Platform** and therefore it is vital to keep your personal data safe, you can adjust privacy settings to allow employers to see education and experience but hide your personal contact details.



[LinkedIn](#)



[Reigate College Student Guide to Getting Started on LinkedIn](#)



# Finding Apprenticeships



Live opportunities can be found on the [Government Apprenticeship Search Page](#)



Either search using a keyword (engineer etc) of browse by sector interests

<b>What</b> Enter a job or company <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Search"/> <a href="#">Browse by your interests instead</a>	<b>Where</b> Enter a city or postcode <input type="text"/>
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Select the apprenticeship level you are looking for, or leave unchecked to view opportunities at all levels.

## Apprenticeship level

Hide

Select the level you want to apply for

- Level 2  
Equal to GCSE
- Level 3  
Equal to A level
- Level 4  
Equal to higher national certificate (HNC)
- Level 5  
Equal to higher national diploma (HND)
- Level 6  
Equal to degree
- Level 7  
Equal to master's degree

## Browse by your interests

Select all the job categories that interest you.

### Agriculture, environment and animal care

- Agriculture, environmental and animal care  
Farmer, horticulture, vet and similar

### Business, sales and legal

- Business and administration  
Administrator, project manager, human resources and similar
- Legal, finance and accounting  
Financial advisor, payroll assistant, solicitor and similar
- Sales and marketing  
Sales manager, digital marketer and similar

Choose a distance—how far you would be prepared to travel

## Where

Enter a city or postcode

RH2 0SD

Within

20 miles

# Finding Apprenticeships

## Example of Search Results

### [Digital Marketer Degree Apprentice - Pfizer](#)

Cogent Ssc Limited  
Tadworth, Surrey, KT20 7NS

**Distance** 2.9 miles

**Training course** Digital marketer (integrated degree) (level 6)

**Wage** £20,000 a year

Closes in 18 days (Sunday 2 March)

Posted 17 January

Click here to find out about the apprenticeship:

- Job role
- Employer
- Training provider
- Entry Requirements
- How to apply

**Important: If the employer receives enough applications, they may close the opportunity before the stated deadline date.**

**If you are interested in applying—don't delay!**

We would recommend that you look into the quality of the training provider (the organisation delivering the learning side of the apprenticeship)— this can be done by searching for their Ofsted Report here - [Find an Ofsted Inspection Report](#)



**If you need extra support or specific arrangements, and finding a Disability Aware employer is important to you...**

#### Disability Confident scheme

Companies that have committed to support people with disabilities and long-term health conditions

Only show Disability Confident companies

View companies that are a 'disability confident' employer.

**Disability Confident** is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to recruit and retain disabled people and those with health conditions.

Whether employers are part of the Disability Confident scheme or not, you can speak to their recruitment team to arrange for appropriate adjustments to the application and interview process if you require it.

Discover the support options for neurodiverse applicants and apprentices with UCAS

[Neurodiversity Support for Apprenticeships](#)



# Finding Apprenticeships and Employment

Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised all year round, although many higher level apprenticeships (level 6) tend to be advertised 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.

## What is the hidden job market?

Hidden recruitment, or the hidden job market, is a term used to describe positions and jobs that employers don't publicly recruit for. There are many reasons that companies do this, such as saving time and money needed to interview candidates and re-view applicants.



## How to use the hidden job market:

- Use your existing network—do you have any personal or professional connections that could help?
- Get involved with social media such as LinkedIn—using social media to effectively navigate unadvertised markets can be tricky, but if you can accurately identify the right staff in a company, such as recruiters, then you can reach out to them and enquire about internal job postings.
- Contact employers directly—You may also want to consider writing a [speculative application](#) to a prospective employer who you might be interested in working for. 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 in front of the right person, you might be just the candidate they're looking for.
- Get involved with a volunteering opportunity—this can help you discover new opportunities within an organisation or make useful connections with individuals in a company.
- Go to industry events. Look at for events on [Pathway CTM](#), [Uptree](#) and [Eventbrite](#) or on the companies website or social media pages.



How to write a  
speculative  
application



Pathway CTM



Uptree



Eventbrite

# Applying for Apprenticeships and Employment Opportunities

## Creating a CV



In most situations, a CV is the first contact you have with a prospective employer and it is your chance to make a good first impression. You use it **to show your prospective employer why they should hire you and what the benefits of having you on their team will be.** It is ultimately a marketing tool – your shop window!

Your CV should be 'tweaked' for each application—read the job description/person specification carefully and then 'tweak' your CV to make sure you have showcased all the skills they require.

## Resources to help you create your CV

### [Student Guide to CV Writing](#)



### [Prospects-How to Write a CV](#)



ATS stands for **Applicant Tracking System**, which is a type of software that allows employers to manage their applications more effectively. It works by scanning through each CV that is submitted for a vacancy, using keyword trackers to find the candidates that have the essential skills and experience needed to carry out the role. It then ranks them in order of suitability.

## Using AI

AI can be a useful tool for helping to create work related documents like a CV, but it is important to be aware of the drawbacks of using such software, as well as the positives.

While ChatGPT, and similar platforms, can be a useful tool for generating text, it's important to be aware of its limitations. ChatGPT is a language model trained on a vast amount of data, but it may not always produce perfect or contextually accurate content. It's crucial to review and perfect the output generated to ensure the final CV is professional and error-free.

### Considerations for AI:

Use AI as a template to get things started and help construct something from scratch. A Useful prompt might be "write a CV for this job description" or "how can I show my skills from working part-time at a café"

AI can be used to help refine the key elements of a job description and make it easier for you to understand what to focus on. Ask AI tools to help define keywords or buzzwords for specific roles.

If you have already written a CV, you could consider using AI to proof read it against a specific job description to see that it meets the requirements of the role.

### Things to avoid with AI:

Don't blanketly use the output from ChatGPT or similar platforms. It won't be as personalised, with your individual experience and recruiters can often tell when a CV has been AI generated, Don't rely on the format given, these may not be ATS friendly.

AI doesn't proofread for grammar and other writing rules for CV's. This must be carefully done by good old human eyes!

# Applying for Apprenticeships and Employment Opportunities

## What is a cover letter?

A cover letter is a formal letter submitted with your CV when completing an application for a job. As a cover letter is written specifically for the job you're applying for, it's an important opportunity for you to showcase your skills and experience that make you a great fit for the role. This is your chance to stand-out from the crowd!

As a cover letter provides an employer with their first impression of you, it's important to make sure it is high quality and error-free.

## Top Tips for great cover letters

- Tailor it to the job description—Before you apply thoroughly read through the job description to ensure you're the right fit for the role and highlight specific ways your experience makes you an excellent candidate.
- Stay concise—a few paragraphs is fine and definitely no longer than one page!
- Don't just copy your CV—Expand on what aspects of your skills, hobbies and background made you particularly interested in this role and how they make you an exceptional candidate.
- Finish with a call to action—Consider your cover letter to be a piece of persuasive text designed to demonstrate to recruiters that you are the best person for the role. Including a strong call to action can prompt the employer into arranging that sought after job interview with you, for example: *'I am excited to discuss with you how I can help Company ABC on its journey to achieving XYZ goals. I am available at your convenience for either a phone call or an in-person meeting to speak in more*

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

### Interview Preparation

The [Indeed Interview Checklist](#) some really great hints and tips.



### How the Careers team can help

You can request a mock interview with a member of the careers team by emailing [careers@reigate.ac.uk](mailto: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.

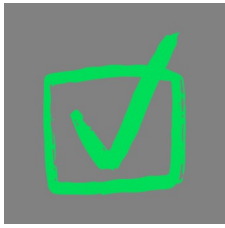


### Please contact us for help with:

- The application process
- CV writing
- Creating your cover letter
- Mock interview practice
- 1:1 careers guidance

Email [careers@reigate.ac.uk](mailto:careers@reigate.ac.uk) or come and see us in E102.

# Next Steps and Action Plan



**Get yourself application ready and set for success with our actions checklist:**



## **Understand Apprenticeships**

Learn what an apprenticeship is and how it compares to university

## **Research Different Levels**

Consider intermediate, advanced, and higher apprenticeships

## **Explore Apprenticeships**

Use resources like Occupational Maps or Unifrog to find apprenticeships

## **Check Labour Market Information (LMI)**

Research job growth and salaries in different industries

## **Research Companies**

Look into potential employers and their apprenticeship programs

## **Set Up a LinkedIn Profile**

Build a professional network and follow industry leaders

## **Attend Career Fairs & Webinars**

Engage with industry professionals and potential employers

## **Search for Apprenticeships**

Use online platforms

## **Write a Strong CV**

Make sure it's personalised to the application—check for any gaps

## **Tailor Your Cover Letter**

Highlight key skills and explain why you're a good fit

## **Practice Common Questions**

Prepare responses for typical interview questions

## **Check Employer Support**

If you need any adjustments during the interview process or at work