

What are the different types of apprenticeships?



You're probably hearing a lot about apprenticeships at the moment, and we know how confusing the different names, levels and qualifications can be. We've created this guide to help you understand the four different types of apprenticeships available to you.

Although there are big differences, all apprenticeships have certain things in common. If you do an apprenticeship, you will:

- **Earn a wage** of at least £3.90 an hour, and often much more.
- Train for your job, gaining practical skills for work.
- Work towards skills-based and knowledge-based qualifications, such as BTECs and NVQs.
- Apply for your apprenticeship through the employer, not a college or university.

'In all 4 types of apprenticeships, you'll gain skills and qualifications in a paid role'

Now we've covered the basics, it's time to take an overview of the different types of apprenticeship:

Intermediate apprenticeships



An **intermediate apprenticeship**, often known as an entry-level apprenticeship, is a great way to gain the basic skills you need to do a job. They usually last between one and two years and give you a work-based qualification, such as an NVQ level 2, and a knowledge-based qualification like a BTEC. Once complete, they are equivalent to five 4-9-grade GCSEs.

You'll need to be 16 or over to do an intermediate apprenticeship, and have "functional skills" - in other words, 4+ GCSEs in English and maths. Don't worry if you don't have these GCSEs, as you can pick up equivalent functional skills qualifications on many intermediate apprenticeship courses.

There are intermediate apprenticeships in more than 1,200 jobs, and in 2017-18, more than over 161,000 young people started an intermediate apprenticeship. The chances are there's something for you whatever you want to do, whether it's in **medicine and healthcare**, **sport and fitness**, **IT and the internet** or **art and design**.

Advanced apprenticeships



Advanced apprenticeships are one step up from intermediate apprenticeships, and help you gain deeper skills and understanding in your chosen career. They last around two years - sometimes longer - and give you similar qualifications to an intermediate apprenticeship, but at a higher level. You can expect to gain an NVQ level 3 or similar, a BTEC or similar, and come out with the equivalent of two A-level passes.

Again, you'll usually need five *GCSE* passes at grade 4+, including maths and English, and it will help if you have **GCSEs in subjects related to your apprenticeship**. You can also begin an advanced apprenticeship if you have a related intermediate apprenticeship.

Roles are available in areas as diverse as mechanical engineering, nursery nursing, childcare, **digital marketing** and catering.

Higher apprenticeships



A **higher apprenticeship** gives you the chance to gain higher-education qualifications as well as skills qualifications like NVQs. You could end up with higher national diploma - equivalent to the second year of a three-year **university degree** - a foundation degree, or even a full-blown undergraduate degree, as well as an NVQ level 4 or equivalent.

You'll need five *GCSEs* at 4 or higher and something known as a QCF level 3 qualification - in plain English, this means the equivalent of two A-level passes, which could be an advanced apprenticeship or Scottish highers. Most higher apprentices are at least 18 due to the qualifications needed to begin the course.

Higher apprenticeships are rewarding, giving you advanced skills and qualifications, and good job prospects. They are also demanding. You'll spend some of your time at college or **university** studying the higher-education part of your qualification, and have to study in the evening and at the weekends.

The government is prioritising them in order to create more high-skilled workers, so more and more opportunities are becoming available in advanced fields such as **engineering**, aviation, IT and **law**.

Degree apprenticeships



Degree apprenticeships are similar to higher apprenticeships, but guarantee you a full undergraduate degree if you successfully complete the course. Some courses even end in a master's degree.

As well as five GCSEs at Grade 4, you'll need QCF level 3 - that's the equivalent of two A-level passes to you and me. On top of a degree, you'll gain pick up skills-based qualifications equivalent to an NVQ level 4 along the way.

This is a demanding apprenticeship which requires you to work towards your degree at university and study in the evening and the weekend, as well as training for your job at work. However, the rewards can be great.

You will not have to pay a penny towards your degree, as your employer will cover your tuition fees.

Degree apprenticeships are available in areas as varied as digital and technology, law, engineering, construction, and finance.