



Apprenticeships and other training opportunities

Introduction to apprenticeships

- Apprenticeships combine work with structured training. They are available throughout London and the UK although certain work areas may be limited in some locations.
- When you apply for an apprenticeship, you'll need to have an interview and possibly take tests to see if you are the most suitable candidate for the position.
- Apprentices receive a salary and are treated just like any other member of staff.

Levels of apprenticeship

- There are two levels – apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship. They vary in length, depending on the level, the work area and the employer but are usually a minimum of 12 months.
- Entry requirements depend on the level of apprenticeship and the individual company/organisation. Normally, they range from no qualifications to 4 or 5 GCSEs at A to C grades (specific subjects may be required).
- Some employers offer both levels and expect you to start with an apprenticeship (the lower level) before progressing to the advanced apprenticeship (the higher level).

Training and qualifications

- Training can take place at work, at college or at a specialist training organisation.
- You will usually take National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs), which demonstrate to future employers that you can do a particular job. Often, you will also be able to take other qualifications connected to your work area, such as a BTEC National.
- Some people use the qualifications they gain as a way into higher education. What courses you will be able to do and which colleges/universities will be willing to accept you, could depend on the apprenticeship you undertake and the specific qualifications you gain. Occasionally, employers fund apprentices through higher education.

Pay and apprenticeships

- As an employed apprentice, your salary will be at least £95 a week. Some employers give you bonuses as you gain experience and qualifications.
- Apprenticeships in some work areas are likely to pay more than others. The work sectors that aren't known for high salaries (such as hairdressing and hospitality) are *more likely* to pay apprentices around the £95 rate.
- As with other staff, you'll need to pay tax on whatever you earn.

The role of employers

- More than 130,000 employers are involved in apprenticeships in England.
- Various organisations offer apprenticeships – from well-known companies to local councils. If you apply to a well-known place, be aware that competition can be very strong. The entry requirements can also be high.
- Some companies run their own specially designed apprenticeships which are aimed at people with A levels or equivalent qualifications.

Apprenticeships and future career prospects

- Some employers will offer you a permanent position at the end of the apprenticeship, provided one is available. Even if you cannot stay with the same company/organisation, the actual completion of an apprenticeship shows future employers that you have useful skills (such as staying power and a willingness to work hard).
- On an apprenticeship you will also develop many personal and work-related skills, which will put you in a strong position when applying for future roles. For instance, as an apprentice, you will develop 'functional skills'. These vary between apprenticeships but are likely to include work-related English, Maths and ICT skills.
- As well as improving your career prospects, taking an apprenticeship will probably increase your long term earning potential.

Finding an apprenticeship

- Large companies and organisations usually say on their websites if they offer apprenticeships but it is still worth contacting them direct.
- The apprenticeship site (www.apprenticeships.org.uk) allows you to search for positions according to what you want to do and your location. Also look at local and national newspapers as they occasionally carry adverts from employers looking for apprentices.
- Personal Advisers might be able to tell you about employers offering apprenticeships. The recruitment process can be long so get in touch with Connexions a few months before you are due to leave school/college.

Other training

- Most regions offer e2e (entry to employment), a short training programme which is adapted to your individual needs. The programme can include work placements and the chance to gain and improve work-related and personal skills – a useful preparation before looking for a full time job or an apprenticeship position. On e2e, you will receive the Education Maintenance Award (EMA) of £30 a week.
- Another option could be to take a 'programme led apprenticeship' (PLA). This involves beginning your studies (usually at college) for an apprenticeship qualification in a particular skill area and getting some relevant work experience, perhaps for one day a week or in short periods. Contact your local Connexions centre for more information.
- Ask employers about what training they offer when you have a job interview. Many companies provide training to new and more experienced staff. There may also be the chance to gain relevant qualifications.

Our equal opportunities policy: Successful Young People, Successful Communities

Central London Connexions will help young people from all backgrounds in London to succeed. Central London Connexions will make a real and lasting contribution to ensuring that the capital's diverse communities are successful in meeting the challenges of the 21st century. Central London Connexions will actively celebrate the cultures and diversity of young people through services and programmes that are attractive, relevant and reflect community interests, offering full and equal access to all young people and staff.

This information is available in alternative formats, call 020 7938 8080.

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