

A blue-tinted photograph of three students (two women and one man) sitting at a desk, looking at a tablet and a laptop. The woman on the left is smiling and looking at the tablet. The man in the middle is looking at the tablet. The woman on the right is holding the tablet and looking at it.

Apprenticeships: An Essential Guide

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What is an apprenticeship?

Essentially, an apprenticeship is a job with training. When you become an apprentice, you get a job (or continue the job you already have) and usually spend around 80% of your working time in this day-to-day role. The remaining 20% of the time will be spent studying, often in college.

In 2015/16, 786 learners aged 16+ began their apprenticeships with Leicester College.

You Get Paid

As an apprentice, you're doing a job, so you receive a wage. Apprentices are entitled to the apprenticeship rate of the National minimum Wage in the first year of their apprenticeship. From April 2017, this is £3.50 an hour for all apprentices – but remember that this number is a minimum, and many employers will offer more. If you are aged 19 or over and have already completed the first year of your apprenticeship, you will be entitled to the ordinary minimum wage (starting at £5.60 an hour).

Timescales: 12 to 48 Months

The length of your apprenticeship will depend on the level and your area of employment. Apprenticeships leading to higher-level qualifications usually take longer.

Study Format:

All apprenticeships involve the majority of your time being within your workplace. However, all apprenticeships support your training and development. How you do this might vary depending on your employer and type of apprenticeships.

Here are some of the more common types of study format:

- day release to College
- block release at College
- study time away from your day-to-day role within your workplace.



What is an apprenticeship?

The Qualifications You'll Receive

A completed apprenticeship at level 2 is broadly equivalent to five good passes at GCSE. An apprenticeship at level 3 is the equivalent of two A levels, and an apprenticeship at level 4 or 5 is equivalent to a university qualification. Apprenticeships will usually give you an industry-relevant qualification to help you in your career – for example, an apprenticeship in hairdressing gives you the Level 2 Diploma for Hair Professionals, which will allow you to work as a senior hairdresser or barber.

Apprenticeship Standards

From May 2017, apprenticeships will be formed around what are known as standards. The standards are different for every apprenticeship and are based around the requirements of the job you're doing. The standards usually include requirements for

professional knowledge, behaviour and skills. For example, if you are undertaking an apprenticeship in dental nursing, you will need to prove your knowledge of a variety of health and medical issues. You'll also need to demonstrate your clinical skills, and show appropriate behaviour when it comes to patient care.

Some apprenticeships are still formed around an older system known as "frameworks". You may follow either, depending on which apprenticeship career area you're employed in. Both are equally valid and will give you a high standard of training and a professional qualification at the end.

Professional Qualifications

Apprenticeships include professional qualifications which allow you to continue working in your chosen career once the apprenticeship has finished. In the dental nursing apprenticeship,

when you have successfully completed your apprenticeship standard you will achieve a qualification from the General Dental Council which will allow you to register as a qualified dental nurse.

Maths and English

If you haven't already achieved a GCSE grade 4/C in maths and English, this will form part of your apprenticeship. We are highly experienced in getting people of all ages through their maths and English GCSEs – last summer 1,698 candidates took these exams with us. In some cases, you will study functional skills level 2 English and maths instead – this is the same level as GCSE.

What types of apprenticeship are available?

The government has already approved (or is in the process of approving) standards for apprenticeships in 350 areas.

We advertise local apprenticeships which are available at leicestercollege.ac.uk/apprenticeship-vacancies - you apply online. And it's not just trade jobs such as plumbing, welding, or bricklaying (although you can definitely do apprenticeships in these areas). We've got some really interesting apprenticeships available - real job titles we've advertised in the last year have included Apprentice Chocolate Maker, Game Master Apprentice, and Social Media Apprentice.

If you do a higher-level apprenticeship, you will study at university level. Some programmes lead to degree-level qualifications.

Apprenticeships are available in many sectors, here are just a few :

Administrator
Barber
Bricklayer
Carpenter
Childcare
Client Services
Commis Chef
Customer Service
Dental Nurse
Digital Marketing
Electrician
Engineering Machine Operator
Engineer

Fabrication and Welding
Front of House
Hairdresser
Health and Social Care
HR Administrator
IT Technician
Mechanic
Pharmacy
Plumber
Print
Retail Assistant
Sales Advisor
Social Media



Why choose an apprenticeship?



Around 70% of apprentices continue working for their employer when their apprenticeship ends.

1) Continued Education

An apprenticeship fulfils the government's requirement for education post 16, so you can start at the end of year eleven. It's possible to progress through levels of apprenticeships or even begin with a higher-level apprenticeship (subject to qualifications and experience) which will give you degree-level qualifications.

2) You are in demand

Employers are always looking for motivated people to contribute to their business. Whether you're a school leaver or you're more experienced, your skills are needed.

3) You are paid

All apprenticeships are paid employment. You are entitled to a minimum rate, but some employers pay more.

4) Holidays and other benefits

Your employer has to treat you like any other employee, and that includes benefits such as annual leave (holiday) and any other benefits they offer, such as childcare vouchers or a cycle to work scheme.

5) You will get time off to study.

You will be allowed time off from your day-to-day job to meet with your mentor and assessor, to study, and to go to College if that's required as part of your apprenticeship.

6) Professional qualifications.

Your apprenticeship sets the foundations for a worthwhile and long-term career. Apprenticeships involve professional qualifications which will allow you to continue in your sector after your apprenticeship finishes.

7) Your choice of career.

You don't have to go to university to get ahead in your chosen career, and with an apprenticeship you'll be paid from the start. The apprenticeships on offer with us cover many different types of job roles and careers, and new ones are advertised all the time.

What are the entry criteria for an apprenticeship?

Educational entry requirements vary by level of apprenticeship and the needs of the employer.

When you apply, we will review your skills and match you to the right level of apprenticeship. Some employers will state on their advert what qualifications and experience they expect you to have. Ideally, you will already have your English and maths GCSEs at grade 4/C already, but if you don't, we offer courses to get you up to the required standard while doing your apprenticeship.

Not Sure You're Ready for an Apprenticeship?

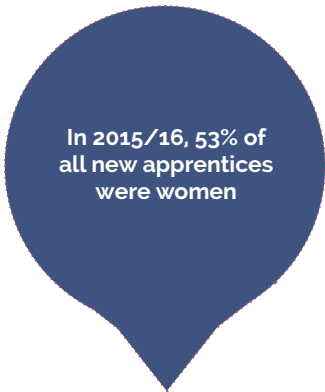
If you're not sure about committing to an apprenticeship, or you want to gain some experience first, a traineeship could be for you.

A traineeship is a pre-apprenticeship course. You can take one if you're 16 to 24 years old, and, as with an apprenticeship, you'll combine work with College-based study. Unlike an apprenticeship, you don't get paid. However, you will be given lots of extra support for your English and maths skills, and your time commitment is less – a traineeship lasts from nine weeks to six months.

Apprentices are entitled to NUS Extra cards, which offer discounts on everything from drinks to clothes and travel.



How to find an apprenticeship



**In 2015/16, 53% of
all new apprentices
were women**

Finding an apprenticeship works more like looking for a job than applying for a college course. Employers decide they want to recruit an apprentice, and they advertise the position – and the good news is that you're highly in demand from employers, and there are plenty of apprenticeship vacancies available both in Leicester and nationally.

As with any other job, you will need to write an application and attend an interview. You'll need to create a good impression and convince your future employer that you're hard working, reliable, and willing to learn.

The Apprenticeship Job Search

The first place to look for your apprenticeship is on our website. Search "Leicester College apprenticeship vacancies" or go directly to leicestercollege.ac.uk/apprenticeship-vacancies/ where you'll find all of our apprenticeship jobs listed. We update this page every day, so it's worth checking back regularly if you don't find what you're looking for right away.

We will help you find an apprenticeship that's right for you – you can call 0116 229 5526 or email apprenticeships@leicestercollege.ac.uk to discuss a vacancy you've seen online, or you can also speak to our careers advisers for more general advice about your options.

You can also search the government's apprenticeship service website, that lists even more apprenticeship roles available to you. Visit gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

The Direct Approach

A good way to impress a potential employer with your confidence and initiative is to approach them directly.

If you already have a job and you're interested in earning a professional qualification to help you progress, you can speak to your current employer about the possibility of an apprenticeship with them. Alternatively, you might want to print copies of your CV and hand them into local businesses enquiring if they're looking for an apprentice. You can also contact companies via their social media accounts.

Progression Opportunities

An apprenticeship offers you excellent opportunities to progress with your education and with your career.

You might often hear people talking about 'traditional apprenticeships' or 'a good old apprenticeship' which would have taken four years or more to complete.

Today's apprenticeships still hold this extended period of learning skills for a lasting career at their core. However, to monitor progression and to enable an apprentice to gain valuable qualifications, apprenticeships are now classed by level – intermediate, advanced and higher.

Higher apprenticeships open up a unique progression route from advanced apprentices. Where historically training might have ceased upon completion of an advanced apprenticeship, it can now continue and allow you as an apprentice the same development opportunities as your peers in full-time education.

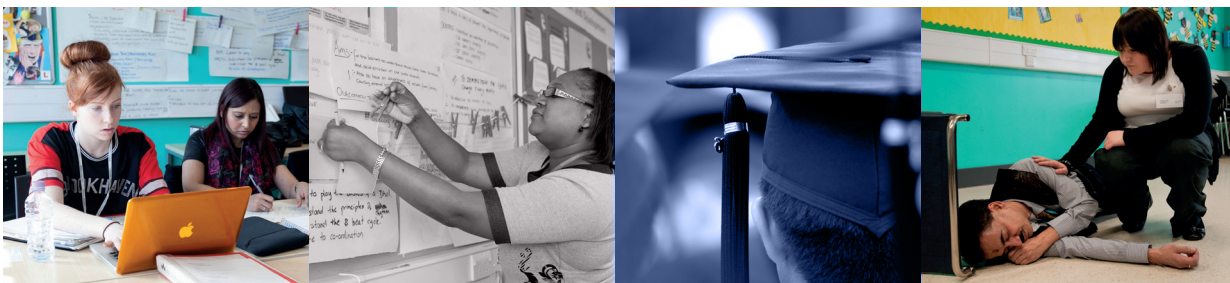
Here's an Overview of the Progression Routes for Apprentices:

Whichever level of apprenticeship you complete, you will have opportunities to continue working full time in your chosen sector – either with your apprenticeship employer, or by finding related work elsewhere.

If you want to continue gaining professional qualifications while you work, further apprenticeship opportunities are available. In theory, you can progress to an advanced apprenticeship and then to a higher level apprenticeship, which will give you university-level qualifications.

Apprenticeships are jobs in themselves, and they also lead you into permanent positions in your chosen industry. Apprentices frequently (about 70% of the time) stay with their employer after completing their apprenticeship. Those who leave generally find work elsewhere, or even set up their own business.

**260,900 people
successfully completed
their apprenticeship in
England in 2014/15**



What support is available to an apprentice?



In 2015/16, 44% of new apprentices were aged 25 or over; 30% were aged 19-24; and 26% were under 19

Workplace: Mentor

Within your workplace you should have a member of staff that is responsible for overseeing your apprenticeship, this might be a line manager or mentor. They will support you with your apprenticeship.

College: Trainer Assessor

You will have regular visits from a member of our staff. They will be your trainer assessor, and it's their job to help set up an individual learning programme with you, and review how well you're getting on in your apprenticeship. They can also help you if you need advice relating to the apprenticeship. Each apprenticeship is different, but generally you can expect to see your trainer assessor every four to six weeks.

College-based Induction

At the beginning of your course you will have a College induction. This will introduce to you the College, and the support services available to you.

Student Union

As an apprentice with us you are entitled to join our Student Union, and have an NUS Card. We have one of the largest and most active Student Unions within the further education sector, they are a brilliant group of learners who organise a huge volume of activities.

College Services:

We take our duty towards all learners very seriously, and that includes apprentices. We work hard to uphold British values on all our campuses and comply with government guidelines regarding Prevent and the safeguarding of young people.

As an apprentice, you'll be able to benefit from our great facilities which include careers advisers; libraries; counselling and the welfare team; learning support; social spaces; our gyms; nurseries; and the Learner Engagement and Enrichment Team (LEET).

Tips for Writing a Good CV

Keep it simple

The easier a CV is to read, the better. An advertised apprenticeship vacancy will often attract a large number of replies, keep to the point – don't tell the employer your life story.

Keep it Short

Ideally your CV should be no longer than two sides of A4 paper.

Keep it Clear

Your CV needs to be easy to read. The flow and structure should encourage an employer to read more.

A CV should always be word processed, and well laid out with wide margins, clear section headings, and the information should be organised logically and flow easily.

Keep it Relevant:

Show the employer that you are interested in their specific vacancy by keeping your CV relevant to the job you are applying for.

Get a Second Opinion

Try and get someone with experience of work to look over your CV for you – this is especially important if you're a younger apprentice. A parent, carer, teacher, tutor, careers adviser or older family member could be a good person to ask.

The government is on track to meet its target of 3 million new apprentices each year by 2020.



Example Learner CV

Your profile should summarise the skills you've gained from both academic and work experience

Amy Davies
14 Any Road
Leicester, LE1 3WA
Tel: 0116 224 0200 Mob: 07782 567 856
mdav73@email.co.uk

Personal Profile

An enthusiastic and friendly individual with experience within the beauty industry specialising in skin care, cosmetics and perfumes. Maintains good working relationships with colleagues and provides an excellent standard of customer service at all times. A quick learner, who can communicate effectively with others.

Key Skills and Abilities

- Good interpersonal skills which enable me to build a positive rapport with people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Enjoy teamwork and understand the importance and benefits of working effectively with others.
- Willing to learn; I always welcome new training opportunities to update my skills.

Education

Sept 2014 - Present **Leicester College, Leicester:** Beauty Therapy Level 2
Technical units include manicure, pedicure, lash and brow treatments, waxing, facial treatments and make-up, associated anatomy and physiology, health and safety and team work.

Sept 2013 - June 2014 **Leicester College, Leicester:** Beauty Therapy NVQ 1
This course included: Health and Safety, reception, assisting with treatments, manicures and facial treatments. Lessons cover basic anatomy and physiology related to the beauty treatment you are studying. I also included Key Skills tests in communication, IT and numeracy.

Sept 2008 - June 2013
GCSE -

Guthlaxton Community College Leicester

English Literature F
History D
Biology D
Maths D

English Language C
Home Economics C
Spanish B
Physics C

You can include details of any modules, projects or placements covered in your course that are relevant to the job you are applying for.

Beauty Therapy Experience

2013 - Present **Leicester College Salon**

Working alongside my studies I worked with fee paying clients in the College's salon. My duties included:

- reception work which included booking appointments
- checking and ordering supplies
- facials - cleansing, massaging and toning the skin
- eyebrow shaping and eyelash colouring
- manicures, pedicures and other nail treatments like extensions and nail art
- removal of unwanted facial and body hair

Including any work-experience gained from unpaid work shows that you are competent and able to conduct yourself in a professional work setting. You have gained skills, abilities and experience that can be easily transferred to paid work.

Work Experience

March 2014 - Present **Boots, Gallowtree Gate, Leicester (Part-Time)**

Sales Assistant: Responsible for working within the fashion and skin care departments within a busy retail environment. My role involved advising clients about products, demonstration of products, operating the till and cash/credit handling.

Sept 2013 - March 2014 **Fenwick's Leicester, (Part-Time)**

Sales Assistant: Demonstrated skin care, cosmetics and perfumes to customers, provided in depth advice about products and operated the till when I sold products to customers.

Additional Information

Confident using a range of IT packages including Word, Excel, PowerPoint, internet and email. Fluent in Spanish and hold a provisional driving licence.

Hobbies and Interests

In my spare time I enjoy swimming, reading and surfing the web and creating online blogs.

Hobbies and interests are important as they can complement your existing work skills.

References

Mrs Annette Smith, Course Tutor
Leicester College
Aylestone Road
Leicester LE2 7LW
Tel 0116 224 2240

Mr Peter Smith (Manager) Boots
30-36 Gallowtree Gate
Leicester
LE1 1DD
Tel: 0116 262 2266

Tips for Great Interviews

For almost all apprenticeship vacancies you will be required to attend an interview.

If you would like help preparing for your interview please give our careers team a call on 0116 224 2240 and they can support you.

Top Tips:

Prepare:

Find out as much as you can about the employer by going through their website. Their social media feeds can also give you a good idea of what the company's about. Double check what you need to bring with you to the interview – sometimes employers want to see certificates or evidence of work you've done. Finally, make sure you know where you're going and how long it will take you to get there. Allow yourself plenty of time.

Do Your Homework:

Re-read the apprenticeship advert again carefully and see what the employer is looking for. Think about recent examples of times you've met the job criteria, because it's likely you'll be asked questions on this topic.

First Impressions:

We all know how much these count. A smart outfit, a polite manner and arriving on time are all a good way to create a positive first impression (arriving too early can almost be as bad as too late: try not to arrive more than 30 minutes before your interview time).

786 learners
aged 16+ began their
apprenticeships
with Leicester College
In 2015/16



Abbey Park Campus

Painter Street
Leicester
LE1 3WA

St Margaret's Campus

St John Street
Leicester
LE1 3WL

Freemen's Park Campus

Welford Road
Leicester
LE2 7LW

📞 For all enquiries call **0116 224 2240**

🌐 visit **leicestercollege.ac.uk** or

✉ email **info@leicestercollege.ac.uk**

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