



The Parents' Guide to

# NAW 2022

*For National Apprenticeship Week*

# Introduction

**The Parents' Guide to** provides parents with the information they need to help their teenage children make the right choices to create successful futures after GCSE and sixth form.

Our online guides are designed to inform, involve and guide parental support. They include the most up to date information on topics such as apprenticeships, universities and revision techniques.

Wherever we refer to 'parents' we mean 'parents and carers.' This includes grandparents, older siblings or any other person with significant caring responsibilities for children.

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[www.theparentsguideto.co.uk](http://www.theparentsguideto.co.uk)

As a parent, you're more likely to know about the university route to careers rather than the apprenticeship route. You may not have personal experience of apprenticeships or even know anyone who has taken one. This could sway you towards dismissing apprenticeships as a second-rate option rather than a first choice career plan. Don't rule out the fact that an apprenticeship could be the right choice for your child. They offer the opportunity to combine study with paid employment resulting in a professional qualification. There are no tuition fees (these are covered by the employer and the government) and the salary can cover living expenses.

Apprenticeships used to be associated with trade industries (such as electricians, mechanics or plumbers). Nowadays, apprenticeships can be taken in a wide range of industry sectors and provide entry to all types of careers, including accounting, banking, IT, law, management and television. Relatively new to the apprenticeship suite are "degree apprenticeships", offering an "earn while you learn" route to BSc or BA status. In other words, the end qualification is the same as if your

child had attended university full time, the difference is that they will not have incurred any debt in tuition fees and will finish their degree with robust and transferable workplace skills.

There are also options to take short term apprenticeships. If your child is not comfortable with committing to several years of further study, they can take one or two year options and still gain recognised, valuable qualifications. Better still, if they change their mind and decide they wish to extend the apprenticeship to gain higher level qualifications, this is often possible.

Taking an apprenticeship is not an easy option and competition can be fierce. It takes organisation and dedication to balance work, where your child will be expected to contribute to the same standards as everyone else, and study. Holidays are far fewer than at college or university. However, if they learn more easily through practical application, the work based nature of apprenticeships will suit them well and they will obtain valuable experience which will strengthen opportunities in finding rewarding work when the apprenticeship is over.

Level	Qualification / educational routes		
8	Doctorate (PhD)		NVQ 8
7	Masters degree (MA)		Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc		
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc	Higher National Diploma (HND)	
4			Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
	T Levels	BTEC (extended) diploma BTEC certificate	
2	GCSE Grades 4- 9 (C, B, A or A*)		Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1- 3 (D, E, F or G)		Traineeship / NVQ 1
	Academic route	Vocational route	Applied / work route

### Levels of Education

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland there are 8 qualification levels (1 - 8) plus an entry level qualification for those just starting. Generally, the higher the level, the more difficult the qualification is. Levels 1-3 are typically taught in schools and colleges.

With so many different qualifications, it can be hard to know what they mean and where they might lead to next. To help you understand, we've created a summary of what the levels mean highlighting academic, vocational and work-based routes to higher education.

# Apprenticeships

What your child chooses to do after GCSE or sixth form is both exciting and daunting. There are lots of options available and understanding the pros and cons between different choices can be challenging. Apprenticeships should not be over-looked; they offer the opportunity to combine study with paid employment resulting in a professional qualification. There are no tuition fees (these are covered by the employer and the government) and the salary can cover living expenses.

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Taking an apprenticeship is not an easy option and competition can be fierce. It takes organisation and dedication to balance work, where your child will be expected to contribute to the same standards as everyone else, and study. Holidays are far fewer than at college or university. However, if they have a more practical, work-related bias towards learning this will suit them well and they will obtain valuable experience which will strengthen opportunities in finding rewarding work when the apprenticeship is over.

Selecting the right apprenticeship will require your child to have reasonable confidence in the type of career they wish to follow although there is some flexibility. So how do you help them decide? We'll guide you.

## Useful links

[GOV. UK Overview](#)

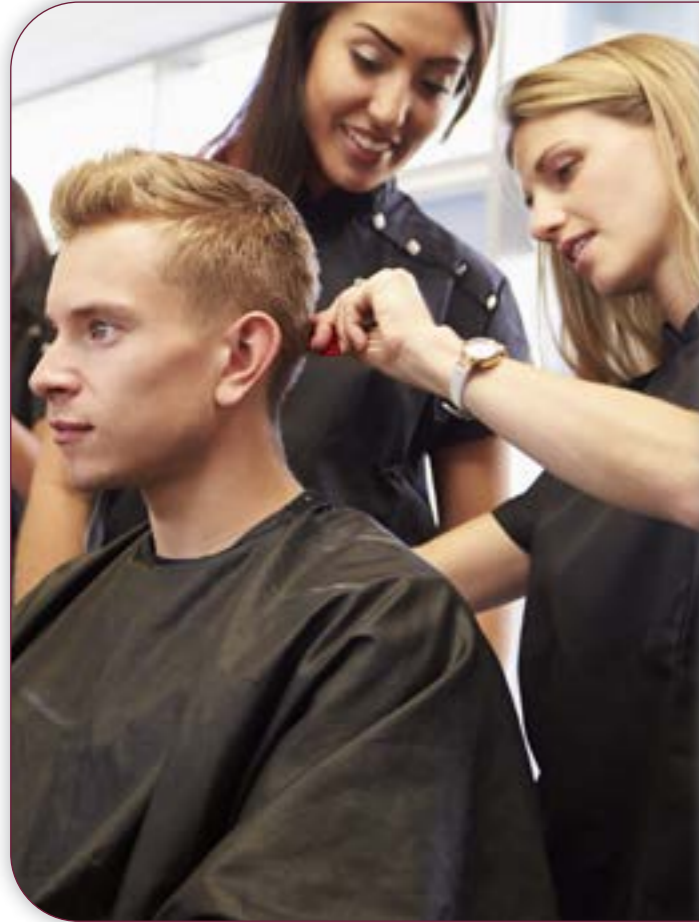
[UCAS](#)

[The Parents' Guide to](#)

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you to their website*



# Apprenticeship levels



## **LEVEL 2** *Intermediate apprenticeships*

**Typical length**  
12-18 months

**Entry requirements:**  
None or few

**Qualifications obtained:**  
GCSE, BTEC or equivalent

**Who's it for?**  
Mostly for 16-year-olds with limited or no academic qualifications.



## **LEVEL 4/5** *Higher apprenticeships*

**Typical length**  
3-5 years

**Entry requirements:**  
A levels or equivalent

**Qualifications obtained:**  
Higher national diploma / foundation degree

**Who's it for?**  
Mostly for those who want to qualify for professional career paths without attending university / college. Sometimes referred to as 'school leaver' or 'non-graduate' Programmes.



## **LEVEL 3** *Advanced apprenticeships*

**Typical length**  
12-24 months

**Entry requirements:**  
Usually 5 GCSEs

**Qualifications obtained:**  
A levels or equivalent

**Who's it for?**  
Mostly for 16-year-olds with reasonable academic achievements but who don't want to study in sixth form.



## **LEVEL 6/7** *Degree apprenticeship*

**Typical length**  
3-7 years

**Entry requirements:**  
At least 2 A levels or equivalent

**Qualifications obtained:**  
A BA or BSc degree or higher

**Who's it for?**  
Mostly for those with excellent sixth form results that want to study for a degree or similar whilst working. Aimed at attracting high-calibre candidates to bridge professional skills gaps.

# Is an apprenticeship the right choice?

## ADVANTAGES

Apprenticeships provide focused and applied training for those who already have a strong interest in a job or industry.

Not everyone is suited to academic style learning and apprenticeships provide a practical approach to obtaining qualifications.

Apprenticeships provide paid employment. In addition, your child will leave debt free.

Gaining work experience and on the job training may provide your child with a competitive advantage when applying for full time employment.

Apprenticeships develop key transferable skills which are considered lacking in the labour market.

Apprenticeships may provide future employment within the company and working within an organisation may reveal job roles they did not know existed.

Some students flourish with the responsibility and structure of an apprenticeship.

Degree apprenticeships offer the chance to gain a BA or BSc without incurring the debts associated with university study.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Apprenticeships may narrow options early on. Your child will need to have a fairly clear idea of the type of career they wish to pursue.

It may be difficult for your child to combine studying with working.

The salary of an apprentice can be quite low and your child will also need to consider financing their travel and living expenses if they are not living at home. Furthermore, your child may need to pay back their course fees if they choose to leave their apprenticeship early.

Your child may feel that they are missing out on the 'student life' offered at universities.

However, some universities and colleges still offer their degree apprentices a strong student experience.

Student fairs and networking events at university enable students to explore different career routes that they were not aware of when leaving school.

Many companies provide graduate schemes for university leavers on completion of their degree.

Entering the work place at an early age may lead to fatigue.

Degree apprenticeships are still quite new, so there is only a limited number of vacancies available at the moment.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

- Does your child have a clear idea of the type of job they want to pursue?
- Is your child more suited to an applied and hands-on working environment?
- Is your child organised and able to balance work with academic study?
- Does your child enjoy practical / active homework assignments?
- Will your child perform better under

the guidance of a supervisor in a work environment?

- Will your child enjoy the combination of different learning environments?
- Has your child undertaken any paid or voluntary work that they enjoyed?

**Don't worry if your child is still unsure which option is right for them. Students can apply for degree and higher apprenticeships at the same time as applying to university through UCAS.**

## Useful links

Amazing Apps

The Parents' Guide to

*I'm interactive! Click me and I'll take you to their website*

APPRENTICESHIPS COMBINE  
LEARNING WITH ON THE JOB  
TRAINING



# Where to find the right apprenticeship

**There's a wide range of ways to seek out apprenticeships and we recommend using a selection of options rather than relying on one.**

## Government website

Most apprenticeships are posted on the Government's website. By creating an account, your child can set up alerts and filters to see opportunities that are of most interest to them and to be emailed when new opportunities arise. However, not all apprenticeships will appear.

## Industry sector

It's smart to check apprenticeships directly on company, university or college websites. If your child doesn't know which of these sites to select, then they should first do some research on which industry sector may be of interest, and then find companies within this sector.

## Job boards

National job agencies will also advertise apprenticeships and options can be narrowed to review within local distances from home or specific job types. This might be a particularly good way to seek out apprenticeships in level 3-5 range.

## Useful links

GOV. UK  
Search

Apprenticeship  
Search

Not going to  
Uni

The Parents'  
Guide to

## Companies direct

Another alternative is for them to identify companies that are of interest and check those websites for apprenticeships.

Be warned! Applications to well-known international companies (such as Amazon, Coca-Cola, Facebook, Google, Virgin) will be highly competitive; however, it might be a good starting point for identifying what's included in the apprenticeship and seeking out other companies that provide similar content.

## School careers advisor

If your child is still at school or college, then getting them to speak with their careers adviser is a good move. Careers advisers are often the first to hear from companies advertising new apprenticeships

*For more information on apprenticeships and how to help your child research, apply and prepare for one, you may be interested in [The Parents' Guide to Apprenticeships 2021-2022](#).*

# Top 10 apprenticeship employers: 2021



APPRENTICESHIPS WITH THE TOP 20 EMPLOYERS WILL BE VERY COMPETITIVE



Statistics compiled by [www.NationalApprenticeshipWeek.co.uk](http://www.NationalApprenticeshipWeek.co.uk)  
Click here to learn more.



# The Parents' Guide to Apprenticeships

University is not the best choice for every student. Apprenticeships can be a great route to career success, especially for teenagers who find it easier to learn through practical application rather than academic study. Apprenticeships are often termed “earn while you learn” because they combine study with paid employment resulting in a professional qualification.

Don't rule out the fact that an apprenticeship could be the right choice for your child. Find out everything you need to know in The Parents' Guide to Apprenticeships:

✓ How to help your child prepare for interview

- ✓ The pros and cons – why apprenticeships are ideal for some teens but not others
- ✓ Types of apprenticeship – the qualifications needed to apply, what qualifications can be achieved and how long each apprenticeship lasts
- ✓ Degree apprenticeships – how they differ from full-time university degrees
- ✓ How to research an apprenticeship
- ✓ Top ten apprenticeship providers
- ✓ The application process and how it differs from applying to university
- ✓ What you can do to get them ready Preparing for life at work



The Parents' Guide to  
**APPRENTICESHIPS**  
2021-2022

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# Visit **The Parents' Guide to** website for more support and resources:

## Parent Guides

Our range of interactive guides provide you with easy to follow advice, hyperlinks to reliable sources and the most up-to-date information.

## Support articles

Browse through our collection of online articles covering a range of topics from supporting your child with their revision to helping them apply to university through UCAS.

## Parent Q&A

Almost every parent has questions about their child's education. Read through answers to commonly asked questions or ask your own.

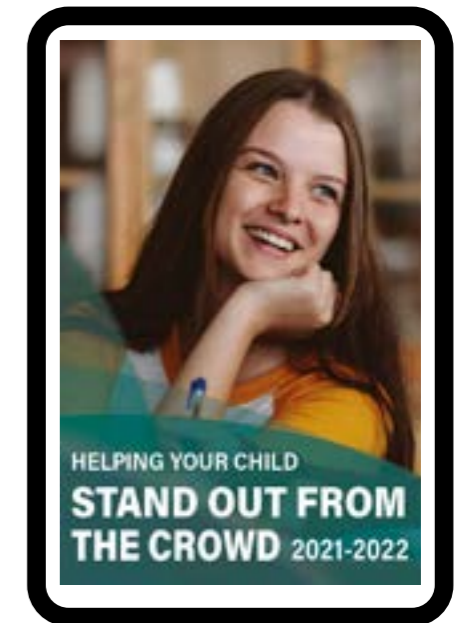
## Blog

Our blog provides reliable and timely advice and support to changes taking place across UK schools and colleges.

## Parent newsletter

Sign up to our parent newsletter and receive free support, advice and resources on how you can help your teenage children straight to your inbox.

*All our resources are ready for immediate download*



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