



Recruiting an apprentice

A step-by-step guide



Step one

Selecting a training provider

Government's online [Apprenticeship Service](#) lets you to search for apprenticeship training providers by job role or keyword so you can find the right provider for your sector.

When deciding on your provider, consider how much experience they have in your sector, and if they work with businesses similar to yours.

Do they have any testimonials on their website or have they achieved any industry-accredited qualifications?



Step two

Calculate the cost of hiring an apprentice

Use the online tool on the [Apprenticeship Service](#) website to calculate how much your apprenticeship training will cost.

If your businesses has a pay bill of less than £3m each year, you will only be required to make a 'co-investment' of 5% (a reduction from 10%) for all new apprenticeship starts, with government funding of 95% provided to cover the remaining costs.

Remember, apprenticeship funding doesn't need to be spent on employing a new member of staff. You can use funds to support existing staff to develop new skills, helping improve morale and boost staff retention.

Apprenticeships are available to anyone aged 16+ who live and work in England. There is no upper age limit.



Step three

Writing the person specification and job description

This will help you decide the type of person you'd like to employ and what tasks you'd like them to do.

The person specification should include the essential and desirable skills that person will need to do the job you're advertising.

The job description should clearly outline the main duties of the job and what area of the business it supports.



Step four

Deciding how much to pay

Employers can decide how much they want to pay an apprentice as long as it meets the National Minimum Wage for apprentices, which is currently £3.50 per hour.

You should pay a salary you think is fair and reflects the amount of work and study your apprentice is committing to. A fair wage will also help you recruit the best candidates.



Step five

Advertising your apprenticeship vacancy

There are many different options available but the most effective is government's [Apprenticeship Service](#) website.

As well as being a free service, it's also the official job site for apprenticeships in England and used by thousands of potential candidates. It lets people search for apprenticeships based on geography, occupation and job role. Your training provider can help you to set this up.

Other places to advertise your apprenticeship opportunities include your company website, local newspapers or online recruitment sites.

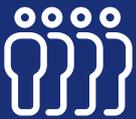


Step six

Inviting applications

Applications made through government's official Apprenticeship Service website will capture all the information you need to review and shortlist candidates based on their skills and experience.

If you'd like to learn more about your applicants, and how they might deal with a particular situation at work, consider including extra open questions in your application so can you compare and contrast responses.



Step seven

Shortlisting suitable candidates

This can be done in two ways:

1. Request your training provider supplies all submitted applications for you to review.
2. Ask your training provider to complete an initial shortlist and only supply you with the strongest applications.

When making your final shortlist of candidates to interview, remember more than one person should be involved in the process to ensure it is objective and not bias. Only put forward for interview those candidates you feel best match the person and job specification.



Step eight

Preparing to interview your candidates

Prepare in advance the questions you'd like to ask. Ask questions that allow people to show their understanding of the job role and explain why they would be best suited to the job.

Remember many people that apply for apprenticeships can be young – aged between 16-24 – and may not have a lot of interview experience. Incorporating a practical task can be a good way to break up the interview and allow people to show a different skill set.



Step nine

Carrying out the interview

Be sure to introduce everyone on the interview panel and make candidates feel relaxed and comfortable.

You may need to encourage candidates to provide more detailed answers by asking some leading questions, e.g. 'Tell me a bit more about that?' or 'How do you think that experience helped you?'

Give the interviewee the option to ask any questions and explain next steps at the end of the interview, e.g. when they might hear back about the position.



Step ten

Selecting and appointing the successful candidate

Once you've decided which candidate you'd like to offer the role to, most businesses like to call them to share the good news. You can then follow up the phone call with an official offer letter. If they accept, you will need to prepare a Contract of Employment.

You may prefer your training provider to contact the unsuccessful candidates. It's important you do this within the timescale outlined during the interviews.



Step eleven

Giving feedback to unsuccessful candidates

Providing feedback to unsuccessful applicants is an important part of the interview process as it allows people to develop and improve.

Be prepared to highlight the things people did well, but also the areas they could do better. Honest and constructive feedback will help candidates with future applications.

Keep a record of all feedback provided to applicants as you may need it if one were to complain about the interview process.



Step twelve

Creating the Apprenticeship Agreement

The Apprenticeship Agreement is a document that provides clear details about what you'll do for the apprentice, including; how long they'll be employed for; what training you'll give them; details of their working conditions and the qualifications they'll be working towards.

You can write your own or [download](#) a template from the Apprenticeship Service website.

You will also be required to sign a Commitment Statement with your apprentice and training provider. This must include; the schedule for training; what is expected and offered by the employer, training provider, and apprentice; and how you will address and resolve any queries or complaints.