

Apprenticeship Training

The thing about apprenticeships is that they aren't just about getting a job. Their main purpose is to make sure you receive the training and get the skills to be a hit in the world of work. It's a bit like *Batman* (wait, bear with us). Without your apprenticeship training and qualifications, you are like Christian Bale in pyjamas. Still deadly, but add the suit, the Batmobile and all the gadgets and you're contending with a whole different person. Add apprenticeship training to your armoury and you're well on the way to being a (yes, we're going to say it) superhero of the job world.

So what will apprenticeship training consist of? Unfortunately, there'll probably be no push-ups, combat training and martial arts, but you will study towards qualifications whilst working for a company. That means you'll be splitting your time between work and college, so you can get the best of both worlds.

What qualifications will I gain with an apprenticeship?

The qualifications you'll get will vary from apprenticeship to apprenticeship. However, all apprenticeships aim to provide you with a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ), a Higher National Certificate (HNC) or another equivalent qualification. If you complete the apprenticeship, you'll be the proud owner of a Key Skills qualification and a technical certificate too. Not quite as impressive as owning a Batmobile – but who cares?

Tell me more...

Let's delve a little more into the anatomy of an apprenticeship. It's a structured programme and it is required to have the following elements: a knowledge-based element, a competence-based element, transferable or 'key skills', and a module on employment rights and responsibilities. Don't groan! You won't be spending all of your time in a classroom.

The whole point of an apprenticeship is that you'll get to experience life beyond college and get thrown into some real work situations. On-the-job, you'll pick up relevant technical skills, gain an understanding of the industry, and acquire the competences needed to perform your duties to the required standard. All apprenticeships aim to give you a basic set of 'key skills' too, such as communication, numeracy, problem solving and teamwork.

When does my apprenticeship training start?

There's no national starting date as apprenticeships are available all year round. Of course, when you start the work-based part of your training will depend on your employer.

How long will it last?

Apprenticeship training can last between one and four years. Most of the training will be on-the-job, so you'll be working at least 30 hours a week for the employer. You'll spend the rest of your training at a local college or training provider.

Your training time will be split between your employer and training provider. You might spend two days a week at college and three days in the office or workshop. Alternatively, you might only go to college once a fortnight (or maybe even less). Some employers use a 'block training' approach, concentrating the required off-the-job training into weekly or fortnightly slots across the year.

How much does apprenticeship training cost?

Here's the good bit: if you're under 24, your apprenticeship training will be funded by the government. That means no tuition fees and no debt. On top of that, you'll be paid by the employer. The current minimum wage for apprentices is £2.68 an hour; however, most employers tend to pay more than the minimum apprenticeship wage.