

Apprentice Support Guide

A guide for Apprenticeship applicants



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What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships give you the opportunity to work for a real employer, earn a real salary and gain a real qualification whilst gaining valuable workplace skills and experience.

What are Apprenticeships?

An Apprenticeship is a real job with training so you can earn while you learn and pick up some nationally recognised qualifications as you go. They take between one and four years to complete and cover over 1,500 job roles in a wide range of industries, from things like engineering to financial advice, veterinary nursing to accountancy.

What types of Apprenticeship are there?

There are three types of Apprenticeship you can apply for depending on your current skills and qualifications:

- Intermediate Level Apprenticeship (level 2)
- Advanced Level Apprenticeship (level 3)
- Higher Apprenticeship (level 4 or above)

How old do you have to be? Anyone living in England, aged 16 and over and not in full-time education can apply to be an apprentice.

How much do you get paid?

The minimum wage for apprentices is *£3.90 per hour, but many employers pay more than this. The average gross weekly wage for an apprentice is £300 - £500. This is dependent on the sector, region and Apprenticeship level.

What hours will I work?

Your employment will normally be a minimum of 30 hours per week but may be more. In a small number of circumstances you may complete an Apprenticeship in less hours but there must be a valid reason and in these cases employment will be for a minimum of 16 hours per week.

Training

Apprenticeships are designed with the help of employers, so they offer a structured programme that takes you through the skills you need to do a job well. There are targets and checks to make sure that your employer is supporting you and you are making progress. As an employee you will be in the workplace for most of your time, as most training takes place on-the-job. The rest usually takes place at a training organisation (sometimes referred to as a training provider). Increasingly you will find that your training organisation will be utilising e-learning, e-portfolios and a variety of new technologies to help you to learn in the most fun and efficient way.

Raising the participating age (RPA)

The Government is increasing the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training. It means them continuing until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until their 18th birthday from 2015. You can take up an Apprenticeship as one of your options under RPA.

Registering on the 'Find an Apprenticeship' Website

To start your search for your ideal Apprenticeship, you need to go to <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship> to create an account.

Home > Education and learning > Apprenticeships, 14 to 19 education and training for work

Find an apprenticeship

Search the [find an apprenticeship service](#) for apprenticeships in England.

You don't need an account to search.

Create an account

You need to [create an account](#) to:

- apply for apprenticeships
- get email and text alerts about new apprenticeships and your applications
- track your applications

Log in to your account

You need your email address and password to [log in](#).

The process is different in [Scotland](#), [Northern Ireland](#) and [Wales](#).

Contact

National Apprenticeship Helpdesk
nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk
Telephone: 0800 015 0400
[Find out about call charges](#)

Top tip: Make sure your email address is a professional one as it will be seen by potential employers.

Complete your personal details:

Create an account

Your details

First name

Last name

Date of birth
Day Month Year

Contact details

Enter your postcode or start typing address

Enter email address
You'll need this to sign in to your account. The email address you choose will be seen by employers.

Enter mobile phone number
If you don't have a mobile, enter a landline number.

Sign in details

Email address
 [Edit your email](#)

Create password
Requires upper and lowercase letters, a number and at least 8 characters

Password strength:

Confirm password

I accept the [terms and conditions](#)

I accept the [terms and conditions](#)

An activation code will then be sent to the email address you registered, wait for the email and then enter the code back on the website to activate your account.

Activate your account



Wed 01/03/2017 11:19

nationalhelpdesk@findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk

Find an apprenticeship: Activation code

To Sabrina Keys

An email has been sent to **Sabrina.Keys@luton.ac.uk**. It'll contain a 6-character code that you'll need to activate your account.

Activation code

[Resend code](#)

Activate account

You must activate your account within 30 days of receiving your activation code. After 30 days your account will be deleted and you'll need to register again.

Find an apprenticeship

You've successfully created your account.

Your email address is sabrina.keys@luton.ac.uk.

To [activate your account](#) you'll need to enter a 6-character code:

XPRNDR

This code will expire in 30 days

Top tip: The activation email will usually appear in your inbox but it may be diverted to your spam folder – so you should check this too.

The website will then ask a few questions to start building up your own profile.

Once you've completed this you will be able to start browsing for Apprenticeships in your preferred area.

Tell us more about you

Please give us a little more information about you. This will help us to understand how effective the service is.

Are you?

Male Female Other Prefer not to say

Do you have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem?

Yes No Prefer not to say

[Why we collect this info](#)

Is there anything we can do to support your interview?

For example, do you need a signer or information in braille?

Yes No

What is your ethnic group?

We need this information to make sure we're giving equal opportunities to all candidates

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British

Find an apprenticeship

Search and apply for an apprenticeship in England

Search [Browse](#) [Saved searches](#)

Keywords (optional)

Can include job title, employer or reference number

All

Your location

Enter postcode, town or city or [use current location](#)

Within

5 miles

Apprenticeship level

Intermediate

Search

[Reset search options](#)

Apprenticeship Vacancies Mobile Search App

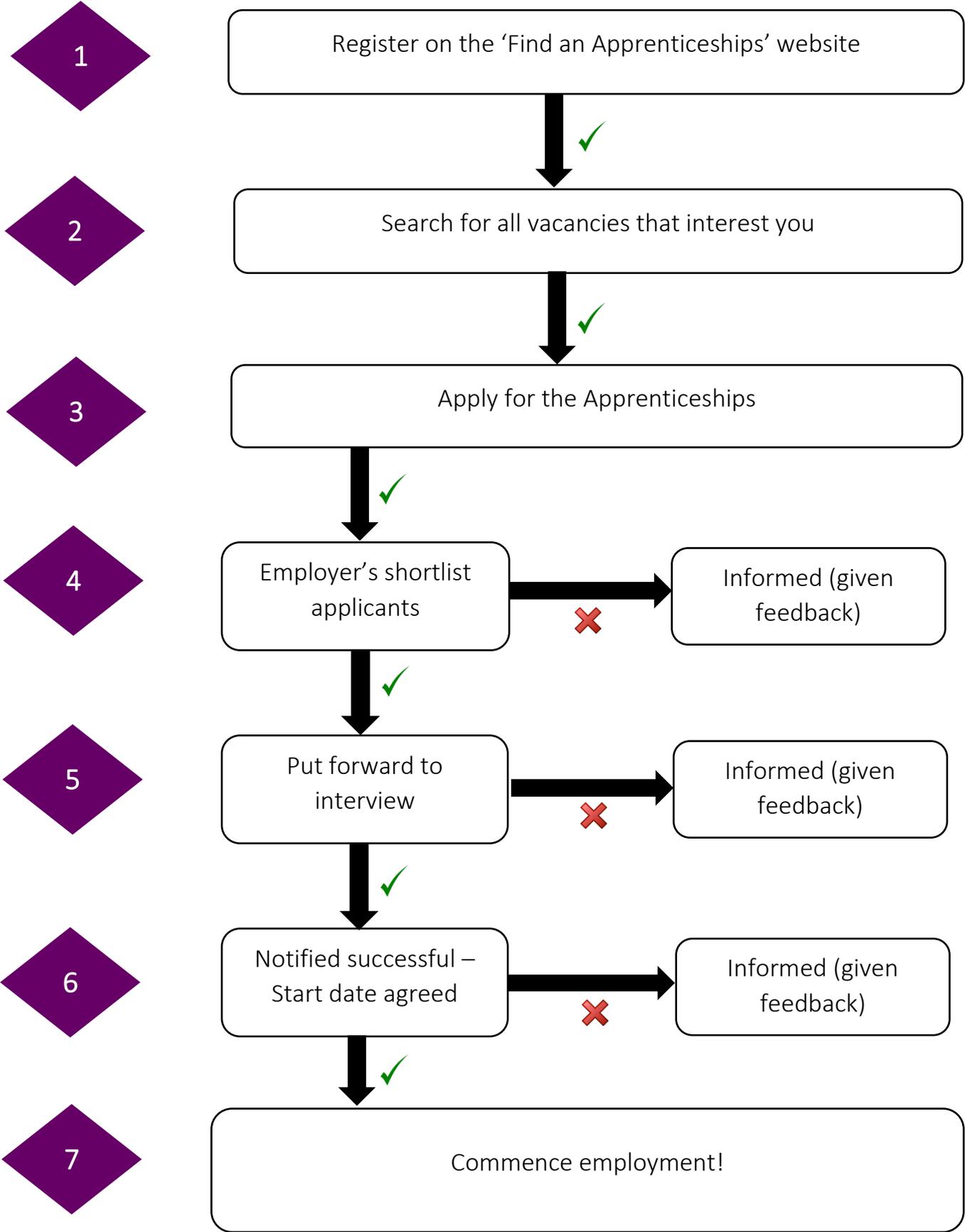
A new mobile application has been launched to make it possible for you to search of Apprenticeship vacancies in England, whilst on the move!



Download it now from the iPhone and Android stores, just search [AV Search – England](#)



The Recruitment Process



Improving Your Application

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths. Try using the following:

'I am...'

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skilled at... | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent at... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A skilful... | <input type="checkbox"/> Able to... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competent in... | <input type="checkbox"/> Very good at... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extremely good at... | <input type="checkbox"/> Talented at... |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar with... | <input type="checkbox"/> Qualified to... |

Employers are looking for various qualities and characteristics in a potential employee. Use the following list of words to help you when describing yourself, whether in an application or at interview:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able | <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse | <input type="checkbox"/> Keen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate | <input type="checkbox"/> Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alert | <input type="checkbox"/> Educated | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective | <input type="checkbox"/> Mature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical | <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient | <input type="checkbox"/> Methodical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articulate | <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> Objective |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assertive | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy a challenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Organised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astute | <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bright | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast learner | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capable | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Focussed | <input type="checkbox"/> Practical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committed | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Proactive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common sense | <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competent | <input type="checkbox"/> Good communicator | <input type="checkbox"/> Rational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer literate | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent | <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> Highly motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cope under pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest | <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative | <input type="checkbox"/> Imaginative | <input type="checkbox"/> Tactful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decisive | <input type="checkbox"/> Impressive | <input type="checkbox"/> Team player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpersonal skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenacious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent | <input type="checkbox"/> Thorough |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Desire to succeed | <input type="checkbox"/> Innovative | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Determined | <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Versatile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diplomatic | <input type="checkbox"/> Intelligent | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing |

Responses to Apprenticeship Application Questions

The table below shows examples of good and not so good responses. Use these examples to help you when filling out the application form.

Question	Good	Poor
What are your strengths? (E.g. team working, organising etc.)	'I feel that I have very good communication skills. As a keen team member of a local football team, it is crucial that we communicate constantly when on the pitch to ensure that everyone can work together to win the game. I have been praised by the team captain for the way that I communicate effectively on the pitch, saying that I am calm, motivational and fair.'	'I am currently studying at college. Punctual organised professional appearance and problem solving' What is wrong with this response? <input type="checkbox"/> Misuse of capital letters <input type="checkbox"/> Spelling mistakes <input type="checkbox"/> Punctuation
What personal skills would you like to improve? (E.g. time managing, questioning skills)	'I would like to improve my knowledge of the latest cutting and colouring techniques being used within the fashion industry and how these could be adapted to suit high street fashion trends.'	'I would like to improve my time management' What would an employer think of this response? <input type="checkbox"/> Poor attention to detail <input type="checkbox"/> Unlikely to turn up on time
Is there anything we can do to support your interview?	'No thank you.'	'Nope' What do you think? <input type="checkbox"/> Rude/unprofessional <input type="checkbox"/> Not how you would talk to an employer

Hobbies and Interests

If you are struggling to think of hobbies or interests to include in your Apprenticeship application, use this list for inspiration:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Animals, farms, zoos | <input type="checkbox"/> Horse-riding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archery | <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging / Track |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art / Painting / Drawing | <input type="checkbox"/> Models |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astrology | <input type="checkbox"/> Motorcycles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Music / concerts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Photography |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bird watching | <input type="checkbox"/> Playing a musical instrument |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Games / Card games | <input type="checkbox"/> Pool / Pinball / Video games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating / Water-skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Puzzles / Sudoku |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Camping / Hiking / Picnics | <input type="checkbox"/> Rugby |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cars / Mechanics or racing | <input type="checkbox"/> Running |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chess | <input type="checkbox"/> Roller-blading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Climbing / walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Science / Electronics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computers | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewing / Needlework |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooking / Baking | <input type="checkbox"/> Skateboarding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crafts | <input type="checkbox"/> Space / Aviation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cricket | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming / Diving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dancing / Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis / Ping-pong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dog walking | <input type="checkbox"/> Theatre / musicals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Duke of Edinburgh Award | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Films / cinema | <input type="checkbox"/> Walking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> Website design |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football | <input type="checkbox"/> Woodworking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf / regular or miniature | <input type="checkbox"/> Yoga |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gym / keep fit | |

Final Application Checklist

Before you submit make sure you...

- Check the closing date for applications to be submitted
- Ask someone to read your application to check for spelling and grammar mistakes
- Include some examples of your skills, not just a list of strengths
- Save a copy of your application
- Print off a copy of the job advert and your application
- Check the location of the job you have applied to
- Check that you have answered all of the questions



Top Tips

- * If the employer is asking for GCSE grades A*-C and you did not achieve these grades, it could still be worth applying for the job. You would need to say that you were willing to work towards achieving Functional Skills within the duration of the apprenticeship programme.
- * Remember to print off or save a copy of the job advert as you will need to use the advert to help you to prepare for interview (if you are invited to attend one) and you will also need to take a copy of the advert with you to the interview.
- * Check Find an apprenticeship regularly as new vacancies are posted daily. This will give you the best chance of being one of the first applicants and prevent you from missing out on a great opportunity before the closing date.
- * If you change any of your personal details such as email address or mobile number, don't forget to change them in Settings.
- * If you see `There are currently no apprenticeships that match your search`, try editing your search by using different keywords, expanding your search location or by selecting a different (or `all`) level.

Interview Checklist



Prior to submitting an application:

- Ensure your voicemail message on your mobile phone is appropriate
- Make sure your email address is sensible and not embarrassing
- Spell and grammar check your CV, ensure it is up to date

Prior to interview:

- Research the organisation and job you're applying for
- Prepare at least 2 or 3 questions that show an interest in the job and organisation
- Work out how to get to the interview and how long the journey will take
- Prepare answers to some typical interview questions e.g. 'why do you want this job?'
- Prepare examples of when you have used skills relevant to the job

Appearance:

- Take a bath or shower prior to interview
- Wear clean and ironed clothing
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear – formal shoes, not trainers
- Wear matching socks
- Polish/clean your shoes
- Make sure your hands and fingernails are clean
- Wear conservative makeup, accessories and jewellery (including nail varnish)
- Brush your teeth
- Wear subtle perfume/aftershave
- Cover tattoos with long sleeves
- Remove facial piercings (one set of small earrings is fine)
- Remove chewing gum prior to interview

Body Language:

- Shake hands firmly
- Smile
- Sit when you are offered a seat
- Use good posture

- Be attentive, nod or take notes
- Make eye contact but avoid staring
- Avoid negative behaviour (yawning, crossing your arms, checking your watch, looking at your feet etc.)
- Be composed (no fidgeting, playing with hair, tapping your feet)

Responsiveness:

- Take a copy of your CV and a pad and pen to take notes if necessary
- Switch off your phone or set to silent (turn off vibrate as this can still be heard)
- Be on time
- Shake hands with the interviewer
- Use interviewer's title and surname
- Refer to the job advert/job description when answering questions
- Show enthusiasm
- Speak clearly, using proper grammar
- Avoid slang, swear words and suggestive language
- Answer questions clearly and concisely
- Focus on your strengths
- Avoid interrupting the interviewer

Attitude:

- Be respectful
- Be positive and enthusiastic
- Be attentive
- Be knowledgeable about the company
- Use the interviewer's name
- Be professional

Closing the interview:

- Ask any questions about the organisation/job that you prepared prior to the interview
- Stand and shake hands
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time
- Emphasise your interest in the job
- Ask when a decision will be made

Benefits of Apprenticeships

There are a number of different schemes available to support you both whilst you are looking for an Apprenticeship and when you successfully secure employment. You can also check with your training organisation or local authority for details of what is available in your area.

NUS Apprentice Extra Card

The deals don't stop once you find employment as an apprentice. Did you know that apprentices are entitled to an NUS card through the National Union of Students?

For just £11 you could have access to discounts from more than 120 high street and online retail partners meaning you could save around £525 per year. Discounts are available on travel, sport, books and DVD, technology, mobile and broadband, fashion and beauty and going out. You can even save 11% on your 16-25 Railcard, saving you a third on train fares.

Further Information:

<http://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk/>



Useful Links:

Luton Adult Learning www.lutonacl.ac.uk or you can call 01582 490033 for any enquiries.

Luton Borough Council www.luton.gov.uk <https://jobs.luton.gov.uk/>

Find an Apprenticeship <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

National Apprenticeship Service



Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/apprenticeships



Follow us on Twitter: @Apprenticeships



Join us on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/national-apprenticeship-service



Watch our YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/ApprenticeshipsNAS



Download our free AV mobile search app to access live job vacancies in your area