

Employing an apprentice

1. Overview

[Apprentices](#) are aged 16 or over and combine working with studying to gain skills and knowledge in a specific job.

Apprentices can be new or current employees.

You can [get government funding](#) to cover some of the cost of training and assessing an apprentice if you're in England.

You must pay the apprentice at least [the minimum wage](#).

Your apprentice must:

- work with experienced staff
- learn job-specific skills
- study during their working week (for example, at a college or training organisation)

Hiring your apprentice

There are several steps to taking on an apprentice.

1. Choose an [apprenticeships framework or standard](#) for an apprenticeship in your industry and at a suitable level.
2. [Find an organisation that offers training](#) for the apprenticeship framework or standard you've chosen.
3. Check what [funding is available](#).
4. Advertise your apprenticeship - your training organisation will do this for you through the [find an apprenticeship](#) service.
5. Select your apprentice and [make an apprenticeship agreement and commitment statement](#) with them.

You can use an [apprenticeship training agency](#) if you want to employ an apprentice without the responsibility for running the apprenticeship scheme.

How long it lasts

Apprenticeships must last for at least a year. They can last up to 5 years depending on the level the apprentice is studying.

Get help

Fill in the [enquiry form](#) or contact the National Apprenticeship Service for more information.

National Apprenticeship Service

Telephone: 0800 015 0600

[Find out about call charges](#)

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Contact your apprenticeship authority if you're an employer in:

- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

2. Get funding

You can get help from the government to pay for apprenticeship training.

The amount you get depends on whether you pay the apprenticeship levy or not. You pay the levy if you're an employer with a [pay bill over £3 million each year](#).

If you do not need to pay the levy

You pay 5% towards the cost of training and assessing your apprentice. You need to:

- agree a payment schedule with the training organisation
- pay them directly for the training

The government will pay the rest (95%) up to the [funding band maximum](#). They'll pay it directly to the training organisation. You could be eligible for [extra funding](#) depending on both your and your apprentice's circumstances.

Apprenticeships that started before 1 April 2019

You contribute 10% towards the cost of training and assessing your apprentice and the Government pays the rest (90%). This rate continues until your apprentice completes their training.

If you pay the levy

You'll receive funds to spend on training and assessing your apprentices. The government will add 10%.

How you get your funds and pay for training depends on whether you're in:

- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Wales](#)
- [Northern Ireland](#)

Get help

Fill in the [enquiry form](#) or contact the National Apprenticeship Service for more information about the funding available.

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3. Pay and conditions for apprentices

You are responsible for paying your apprentice's wage and giving them their contract of employment. You must pay apprentices at least the [minimum wage rate](#).

The [National Minimum Wage calculator](#) works out the exact amount that you have to pay an employee.

Conditions

Apprentices must work towards an [approved apprenticeship standard or framework](#). Their training must last at least 12 months.

They must be employed in a real job that gives them the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills they need to pass their assessment.

You must pay your apprentice for time spent training or studying for their apprenticeship, whether while at work or at a college or training organisation.

You must offer apprentices the same conditions as other employees working at similar grades or in similar roles. This includes:

- paid holidays
- sick pay
- any benefits you offer such as childcare voucher schemes
- any support you offer such as coaching or mentoring

Apprentices and redundancy

Apprentices have the same employment rights as your other employees. Follow the process for [making staff redundant](#) if you have to make an apprentice redundant.

[Get legal advice](#) if you want to end the apprenticeship early for another reason.

If you're unsure whether you can commit to a full apprenticeship but would still like to hire an apprentice, you can use an [apprenticeship training agency](#). If you pay the [apprenticeship levy](#) you cannot use funds from your [digital account](#) to pay for these services.

4. Make an apprenticeship agreement

You must sign an apprenticeship agreement with your apprentice.

This gives details of what you agree to do for the apprentice, including:

- how long you'll employ them for
- the training you'll give them

- their working conditions
- the qualifications they are working towards

You can write your own apprenticeship agreement or download an [apprenticeship agreement template](#).

Commitment statement

You must also sign a commitment statement with your apprentice and the training organisation.

It must include:

- the planned content and schedule for training
- what is expected and offered by the employer, the training organisation and the apprentice
- how to resolve queries or complaints