

THE APPRENTICESHIP JOURNEY

Apprenticeships vs Academic Qualifications

It's important to know how the apprenticeship aligns with education and qualification levels. It's also a great way to know how apprentices can move through the different levels as they progress throughout their career.

Apprenticeship qualification levels span from level two (GCSE) to level seven (Masters), and they are categorised as Intermediate, Advanced, Higher and Degree apprenticeships.

The apprenticeship levels are displayed below:

	Level	Equivalent Education Level
Intermediate	2	GCSE
Advanced	3	A Level
Higher	4 and 5	Foundation Degree and above
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelors or Masters Degree

Apprentice

Once the individual has been identified and completed any company induction etc, they will start the enrolment process. Each training provider has their own process – the below is a generic overview.

Information, advice and guidance

The apprentice will be provided with the information and support they need to ensure the apprenticeship programme is right for them. The Apprenticeship Coach will inform the apprentice of the expectations, course length, delivery method, assessments etc.



Initial Assessment

An individual can only complete an apprenticeship if they can show they require significant learning to achieve the outcomes. The initial assessment (formerly called a skills scan) ensures that the knowledge, skills & behaviours will be beneficial to the apprentice's development and meet the needs of the business. This is sent to the manager for approval/comment. If the score is too high, the apprentice will speak with their Apprenticeship Coach to discuss further. If below 65%, they will move to the next stage.

Functional Skills initial assessments

Regardless of whether or not the apprentice holds English and maths qualifications, everyone completing an apprenticeship must sit this initial assessment. They show the level individuals are currently working at, and identify any areas where they may need additional support, and whether they need to complete Functional Skills qualifications as part of the apprenticeship. If the initial assessment results are too low, the individual may not be able to complete the apprenticeship at that time. There are numerous online resources available to help an individual upskill in these areas.

Apprenticeship application

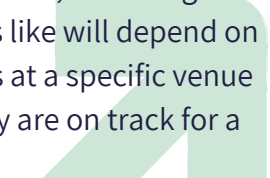
At this point they will complete the full application, ready to commence their learning. In general, this will be done with the training provider, the employer and apprentice. This is important as it clearly define and aligns the roles each party plays in successfully completing the apprenticeship and finalises the formal paperwork which enables the apprentice to be enrolled onto programme.

Induction

This is an in-depth session where the apprentice will learn everything needed to commence their apprenticeship. The aims of this are to: Understand the Apprenticeship Standard; Identify how to manage study time and skills; How to develop speaking and listening for maths and English; Explain the apprentice's responsibilities with regard to Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Prevent and British Values; Setting out the individual training plan.

On programme learning

During the minimum period of the apprenticeship the apprentice will study for their qualification, achieving their Maths and English Functional Skills and completing their off-the-job training. What this looks like will depend on the chosen Apprenticeship and may include some online sessions, practical training sessions at a specific venue etc. During this period, the apprentice will work towards submission deadlines to ensure they are on track for a timely completion.

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Assessment Gateway

Once the apprenticeship standard is completed and any functional skills exams have been passed, the apprentice enters Assessment Gateway. This is a meeting between the apprentice, the employer and the Apprenticeship Coach to discuss whether all mandatory elements of the apprenticeship have been completed. If agreed, the apprentice will then undertake the End Point Assessment (think of this as learning to drive with one Assessor Coach, and then taking your test with another).

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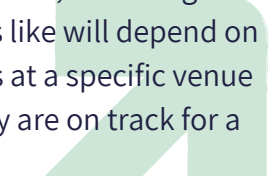
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End Point Assessment (EPA)

This usually takes place 8-12 weeks after the Assessment Gateway and its content will vary depending on the apprenticeship standard. It may include an interview, observation, presentation, multiple choice questions, scenario-based questions or questioning based on the submitted portfolio - some End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAO's) require the apprentice to undertake a project as evidence of competence. The apprentice and employer will receive detailed guidance from the Apprentice Coach and the EPAO on what is required. The apprentice will be graded Pass, Merit or Distinction. If EPA is failed, the apprentice may re-sit but will not be able to achieve higher than a Pass.

Certification

A formal certificate will be sent after achievement. This usually takes around 12 weeks, but may take longer depending on the Training Provider and EPAOs practices.

Progression

The apprentice may decide to take a break from learning or may want to progress onto the next suitable apprenticeship. An overview of the Occupational Map pathways can be found [HERE](#)

Further reading

[Apprentice Guide to Assessment](#)

[Your Rights as an Apprentice](#)

