

APPRENTICES

# A GUIDE TO APPRENTICESHIP APPLICATIONS

**Hints and tips to help you succeed.**



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# Introduction

An apprenticeship is a paid job which offers hands-on work experience alongside off-the-job training. This means that the application process for an apprenticeship will often be the same as it would be for any form of employment.

Typically, an employer would ask for:

- an application, which can be online or paper based
- a CV or covering letter
- an interview, if the application is shortlisted

Many employers will have different recruitment practices so it's important that you research the employers' website and read the job advert carefully before applying.

This guide has been created to provide an introduction to the apprenticeship application process and provides hints and tips to help applicants prepare and succeed.

For further guidance and support on job applications, CVs and interviews, visit the National Career Service website; <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>

## Finding apprenticeship opportunities

There are lots of apprenticeships to choose from and 'find an apprenticeship' is a great way to view current vacancies.

The service can also be used to save and apply for vacancies and also set up alerts for any new vacancies in specific sectors and locations; <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

Some employers advertise apprenticeship vacancies on their own websites where applicants can apply directly.

## Applying for more than one apprenticeship

Submitting applications to more than one employer increases the chance of securing an apprenticeship.

Employers often advertise at different times of the year, so it's important to understand that finding an apprenticeship can sometimes be more complicated than applying for full-time education (e.g. university).

## Job applications

An employer may ask applicants to fill out an application form instead of sending a CV. These may be paper-based or online forms which typically list questions for the applicant to complete.

Information the employer may ask for includes:

- contact details
- education history
- work history
- skills that are relevant to the job
- references

It is important that applicants read the job description and application details before filling in the application.

Before submitting the application, it is important to:

- check spelling and grammar
- check the contact information
- sign and date it
- save a copy for use with future applications or reference during the interview stage

## CVs and cover letters

Employers usually ask applicants to submit a covering letter and CV.

A CV is a short, written summary of the applicants skills, achievements and experience. It is used in the first stages of the application process and is often requested by employers instead of an application.

There are different styles of CV, so use the one which best matches the stage you are at in your career.

Typical items to include on a CV are:

- contact details (e.g. name, address, telephone number and email address)
- a short personal profile that introduces who the applicant is
- work and education history
- hobbies, interests or achievements

A covering letter should always accompany a CV. It is a short letter that introduces the applicant and encourages the employer to consider the applicant for the job.

When writing a covering letter it is important to:

- research the company
- send it to the right person
- write an opening paragraph
- demonstrate suitability for the job
- sign off effectively

Tips to consider when writing a covering letter:

- write a new covering letter for each application you make to ensure it is targeted to that company and job
- use the same lettering and style as the CV
- ensure that the company name and recruiter details are correct
- use the right language and tone but keep it professional
- be clear and to the point
- back up any statements you make with evidence
- double check spelling and grammar
- keep a copy for reference in the interview stage

There is lots of additional information and guidance about application forms, CVs and covering letters on the National Career Service website;

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/careers-advice#getting-a-job>

If you are still considering your options, it might be worth applying for an apprenticeship at the same time as applying for university to allow additional time to reach a decision.

# What employers are looking for

Although many employers look for similar traits in an apprentice, it's important to research the company and gain a better understanding of what they are looking for because each employer can differ.

Below is a quick overview of what some well-known apprenticeship employers have said they look for:

**“Teamwork is an important part of life here, so we look for people who love collaboration and want to learn, grow and share their achievements with others. Try and demonstrate examples of teamwork in your application.”**

*- Airbus*

**“Be prepared. Be passionate. Be proactive. Take time to understand the industry before applying.”**

*- Bentley*

**“Draw on your work and educational experience where relevant in your application and throughout the process.”**

*- EDF Energy*

**“Our biggest tip across our application process for Lloyds Banking Group apprenticeships is... just be yourself! If you share our vision, are eager to learn and can help push us forward, then we want you!”**

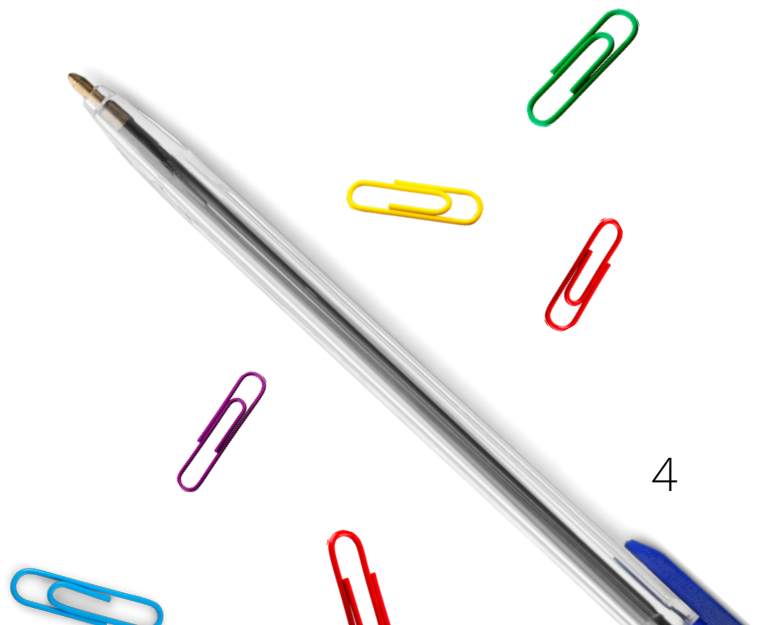
*- Lloyds Banking Group*

**“Refer back to the job description to help you, and consider listing your experiences and skills on a piece of paper next to you so you don't forget the essentials.”**

*- BBC*

**“Ensure your CV is up to date and make sure you include: key skills, languages, work experience, hobbies and interests.”**

*- Coca-Cola European Partners*



# How hobbies can support an application

During the application process, applicants are often asked to demonstrate how they use essential skills.

Hobbies and extracurricular activities are a great way to showcase these skills and experiences.

To help, we've provided some examples of which skills different hobbies can demonstrate:

## **Art/Photography**

Creativity, eye for detail, passion, patience, idea development.

## **Comedy**

Initiative, resilience, creativity, idea development, humour, confidence.

## **Cooking**

Creativity, attention to detail, patience, self-expression, multitasking, fast-paced decision making.

## **Dance**

Creativity, dedication, perseverance, motivation, resilience, discipline, confidence, self-belief.

## **Drama**

Confidence, self-awareness, presentation skills, dedication, resilience, teamwork, communication skills, creativity.

## **Gaming**

Communication, analytical skills, resourcefulness, adaptability, technical skills, problem solving.

## **Make-up, beauty, fashion**

Creativity, following trends, research, techniques, interpersonal skills, confidence, attention to detail.

## **Music**

Dedication, creativity, teamwork, perseverance, memory, listening, collaboration, confidence.

## **Pet ownership**

Dedication, responsibility, care, patience, time management.

## **Puzzles**

Strategy, logic, determination, analytical skills, problem solving, perseverance.

## **Reading**

Imagination, empathy, creativity, attentiveness.

## **Scouts/Guides**

Initiative, teambuilding, confidence, leadership, communication, problem solving.

## **Social media**

Presentation skills, audience awareness, self-awareness, interpersonal skills.

## **Socialising**

Communication, interpersonal skills, planning, rapport building.

## **Sports/fitness**

Motivation, communication, passion, dedication, teamwork, leadership, time management, competitiveness.

## **Volunteering**

Motivation, passion, dedication, communication, interpersonal skills, networking, sense of community, empathy.

# Resilience and coping with rejection

Apprenticeships are real jobs which means that multiple people may apply for one role.

The application process can be very competitive, particularly when applying for opportunities with larger companies.

Many applicants find that they are not successful in securing an apprenticeship after their first few applications. It is likely that applicants will have to apply for a few apprenticeship vacancies before they are successful.

Many applicants may feel disheartened if their application is unsuccessful but it is important to remain positive and continue applying until the right opportunity presents itself.

Tips to stay on track when dealing with an unsuccessful application include:

- try to remain positive and understand that the application process is competitive
- stay engaged with the application process and continue searching for vacancies
- seek some help and support with the application process through friends, family, teachers or career advisers
- visit employer websites and find out more about their recruitment process
- ask for feedback on the application and understand the areas that need improvement

- use 'find an apprenticeship' to set up vacancy alerts;  
<https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

## Additional support

For more information and advice on the application process you can:

- visit [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) for additional resources
- speak to a national career service adviser by calling 0800 100 900 or using their webchat;  
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/webchat/chat>
- visit your local Jobcentre Plus
- speak to your local college or school career adviser
- visit the National Career Service website;  
<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/>

For more information, visit:  
[www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)

