



# Bishop Ullathorne Catholic School



**Higher and Degree  
Apprenticeships**



## Introduction

This small booklet will help you to make the best application, demonstrating your understanding of the qualities needed to be a first class apprentice. Organisations are seeking to find applicants who have identified their strengths and experiences which match those qualities.

Apprenticeships offer a valid alternative to university, with the qualifications to match. If you choose a degree apprenticeship, you still get to graduate, along with several years of work experience. First and foremost, though, an apprenticeship is a job with substantial training and the development of transferable skills.

## What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a combined package of work and study. As an apprentice, you'll be employed by a company and paid a wage for the work that you do. Apprentices are entitled to the same rights as other employees: a contract of employment and at least 20 days paid holiday per year, plus bank holidays.

### How are they structured?

Higher and degree apprenticeships are available at levels 4 to 7. They combine work with study and may include a work-based, academic or combined qualification or a professional qualification relevant to the industry. Levels 4 and 5 are equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma or a foundation degree, level 6 is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree and level 7 is equivalent to a Master's degree. Typically, higher apprentices study part-time at college, university or with a training provider. Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete.

### What grades do I need?

Entry requirements vary from programme to programme, and depend on the sector and prior skills. If you have achieved A-levels you may still be expected to start at intermediate or advanced level as some sectors, such as engineering, require you to build up your occupational skills.

### What could I earn?

You must be paid at least the minimum wage. Many companies pay more than this, particularly for higher apprenticeships:

- An aerospace engineering apprentice at BAE Systems UK can earn £22,975 per year.
- A higher accountancy apprentice can earn over £13,000 per year.
- A software engineer apprentice can earn £14,500 per year.

In fact you could potentially earn upwards of £300 per week plus your employer and the government pay your tuition fees, meaning no university loans.

## Is this right for you?

An apprenticeship is not the easy option. You will be starting a challenging job and trying to prove yourself in the workplace, while getting to grips with studying for a degree. You will be expected to achieve academically and at work, managing your time and adjusting to longer hours with fewer holidays than at school or university. You might have to travel or relocate to find the right opportunity for you.

An apprenticeship is actually designed by employers, meaning you'll be developing the right skills and knowledge to be a success in your chosen industry. They're looking for personal aptitude and enthusiasm rather than just your academic ability. It helps if you have a particular interest in the area you want to work in and can demonstrate this from previous experience. Anything that can demonstrate your interest and your readiness for work could help you stand out from the crowd.

### **Which higher level apprenticeships are available?**

There are more than 100 apprenticeship types available. From accounting to aerospace engineering, new apprenticeships are being developed all the time with more highly skilled apprenticeships popping up each year.

Big companies like Rolls Royce, GlaxoSmithKline, Goldman Sachs and BAE Systems offer degree apprenticeships, but you'll also find smaller companies offering them, too.

As well as being flexible and adaptable to suit changing business needs at work, you'll also need to be self-motivated during independent study, and be prepared to put what you learn into practice.

### **Sought after skills and qualities**

Communication	Teamwork
Analysis	Collaboration
Creative solutions	Interpersonal skills
Attention to detail	Enthusiasm
Logical thinking	Motivation

## Examples of employers offering apprenticeships

Arcadis  
Balfour Beatty  
Barclays  
BBC  
Boots  
BT  
Capgemini  
Civil Service Fast Track  
Deloitte  
EY  
IBM  
Jaguar Land Rover  
KPMG LLP  
Laing O'Rourke  
Lloyds Banking Group  
Marks and Spencer  
National College for High Speed Railway  
Network Rail  
PwC  
Sainsbury's  
Santander  
Severn Trent  
Siemens  
Skanska UK Plc  
Tesco



## How to apply

For apprenticeship opportunities local to you and further afield go to 'Find an Apprenticeship' on GOV.UK. Once you register you can set up email and text alerts to inform you about new apprenticeship roles.

You can also find a range of vacancies at [ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](http://ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk) and [amazingapprenticeships.com](http://amazingapprenticeships.com) which provide useful information on well-known employers. It is worth checking directly on employer recruitment sites too.

### **When to apply?**

Unlike university applications, there is no fixed deadline when it comes to applying for apprenticeships. Vacancies appear throughout the year.

Don't wait until the deadline to apply, some companies close their recruitment as soon as they have sufficient candidates.

As a general rule, vacancies with larger companies start appearing in the autumn, but the majority pop up from January or February onwards. Smaller businesses might start recruiting a month or two before the job starts, so if you hope to start work in August or September, you might start looking from Easter onwards.

Do check start dates closely, to make sure you'll have finished school or college. Start your research early – the sooner the better, so you have time to fill any gaps in your CV with the things employers are typically looking for. This will include organising some relevant work experience.

### **Stay focused**

It's really quite normal to have some doubts and nerves about the process, especially around spring-time, when your friends have their university offers and you might still be waiting to find the right vacancy to apply to. Don't panic! Keep calm and focus on making a great application when the right opportunity arises. Remember this is a competitive process: you're applying for a job, so make sure you sell yourself as best you can.

### **The recruitment process**

There can be a number of hurdles to leap before you even get to a face-to-face interview: an application form, online tests, perhaps a phone or online interview, before heading to an assessment day.

You might find that smaller organisations have a slightly more informal or personal process, perhaps involving an initial written application, followed by face-to-face interview stages if you're shortlisted.

## Application tips

- Clearly read the job description, making note of key points such as entry requirements and 'essential' qualities
- Research the company beforehand, so you understand its key areas and priorities
- Include relevant experiences and skills
- Be specific and give examples to demonstrate what you have to offer
- Back up your statements with evidence
- Use an appropriate email address and voicemail message on your phone
- Regularly log on to your account to track your applications
- Don't let emails end up in your junk folder
- Don't undersell yourself. Be confident

### **Remember:**

Reflect on the CV and Interview Skills workshops you participated in during Year 12. Think about applying the STAR technique to your advantage and consider the feedback given after your mock interview.

Think through the relevant information you gained from talking to the employers on our Aspiring Professional day. Can you apply any of their guidance and knowledge you learnt through networking to your application?

Remember too, your work experience notes as they can prove extremely useful.



## Choosing between university and an apprenticeship

### **You can apply for both at the same time**

Don't panic, if you're undecided between going to university or applying for an apprenticeship. It is worth knowing that you don't have to decide right away.

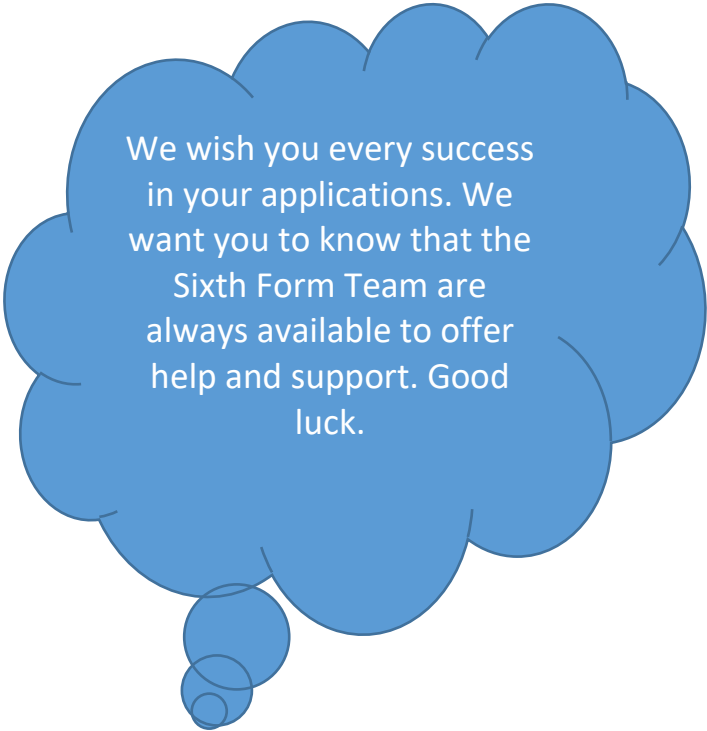
There is nothing stopping you from applying to university through UCAS while keeping your eye out for interesting apprenticeship vacancies. Try not to think about it as university *or* an apprenticeship. A degree or higher apprenticeship can lead to a degree-level qualification.

Just remember, apprenticeship schemes do not follow the same application and deadline patterns as applying to university – the deadline for your apprenticeship application will be down to individual employers, and you will apply for them directly.

You are not restricted to one apprenticeship application either. If you have seen more than one you are interested in – go for it.

Decision time will arrive eventually though, so research the options available to make the right choice for you.

Excellent advice can be found on the UCAS website and also [which.co.uk/university](http://which.co.uk/university).



We wish you every success in your applications. We want you to know that the Sixth Form Team are always available to offer help and support. Good luck.

# Notes