

APPRENTICESHIP LEVELS EXPLAINED



Ranging from foundation to degree level

What are the different levels of apprenticeship?

Apprenticeship levels range from level 2 (foundation and intermediate) through to level 7 (master's level) covering a wide range of different job roles across all sectors.

Which level is right for you?

The level of apprenticeship undertaken will depend on the needs of the employer and the job role, as well as the apprentice, their previous experience and qualifications held. Your training provider will also be able to guide you as to the most appropriate level for you.

L2	Foundation
L2	Intermediate
L3	Advanced
L4+	Higher
L6-7	Degree

How long do apprenticeships at different levels take?

The apprenticeship standard will set out the expected duration of the apprenticeship, with a new minimum duration of 8 months being introduced from 1st August 2025 for some apprenticeships. The planned duration will be agreed with the employer, apprentice and training provider.

Foundation apprenticeships

Introduced from August 2025, foundation apprenticeships will support individuals who are:

- aged between 16 and 21 (or 15 years of age if the apprentice's 16th birthday is between the last Friday of June and 31st August)
- aged between 22 and 24 years old, who either
 - hold an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan
 - have been, or are, in the care of their local authority
 - are in prison or a prison leaver

Foundation apprenticeships are designed to have a minimum duration of 8 months, and to support progression onto a further level of apprenticeship.



Linked resource

Find out more about foundation apprenticeships in this useful guide (see link below).



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Intermediate apprenticeships

Intermediate apprenticeships are typically considered to be the same level as GCSEs. They are a fantastic way to get started with your career in an entry level role within an organisation.

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Advanced apprenticeships

Advanced apprenticeships are considered to be the same level as A-levels, T Levels or other level 3 qualifications. Many individuals who have completed a level 3 qualification will progress to an advanced apprenticeship to gain workplace experience and knowledge.

Higher apprenticeships

Higher apprenticeships include qualifications at levels 4 and above. They can be suitable for those looking to progress from level 3 qualifications, including advanced apprenticeships and T Levels.

Degree apprenticeships

Degree apprenticeships are offered by universities and other Higher Education providers. They contain either a full degree, or a degree-level qualification and go up to master's level (which is post-graduate).



Linked resource

Find out more about Degree apprenticeships in this useful guide (see link below).



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Can you do more than one apprenticeship?

Yes! The great thing about apprenticeships is that you can complete more than one during your career. The level and type of apprenticeship that you undertake will depend on your prior learning and the job role that you are doing. Speak to your employer and training provider to find out which options could be available for you in the future.



What is changing?

As well as the introduction of foundation apprenticeships from August 2025 (see page 1 of this Rapid Read), the government has announced that from 1st January 2026, level 7 apprenticeships will continue to be government-funded for young people aged 16-21, and aged 22-24 for care leavers and those with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan at the start of their apprenticeship in England. You can read more about the changes to level 7 apprenticeships through the Government website (see link below).



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