

# The Business Apprenticeship Guide

NEW 2019



**Which?**  
University

# What are business apprenticeships?

How an apprenticeship in business could lead you to the right job



**“Since starting my apprenticeship, I have learnt a whole range of new skills, all of which are required in my current role. For example, I have recently undertaken a two-month production scheduling training module for the site’s new computer system, which has massively helped increase my understanding of the system and the functions associated with my current role.**

**Being provided with opportunities to contribute to daily and weekly meetings has helped me develop my overall confidence.”**

**Business and supply chain higher apprentice, GSK\***

If you want to make sure businesses run smoothly or contribute to the success of an organisation, take a closer look at which business apprenticeship would suit you best.

## What’s a higher or degree apprenticeship?

It’s an alternative route to a degree, which involves working and studying at the same time. You gain hands-on experience while training,

along with a salary, and graduate without tuition fees. See table (right) for education levels. Find out more at [which.co.uk/apprenticeships](https://www.which.co.uk/apprenticeships).

## What does a business apprenticeship really involve?

What’ll you do in a business apprenticeship can differ hugely depending on the sector and the role. Plenty of organisations in the world of

business have embraced apprenticeships and more companies are getting involved each year. As a result, you’ll find vacancies in a range of sectors and roles, such as chartered management degree apprenticeships to level 4 apprenticeships in business and professional administration.

If you’re more focused on money and figures, you could also look out for apprenticeships in

accountancy and finance. For employees wanting to move up the corporate ladder to senior management, you’ll find a master’s degree apprenticeship for aspiring senior leaders too.

As a business apprentice your role could cover a range of areas from entry level administration to learning about management.

Tasks you may have complete to begin with include taking and typing up meeting notes, and correspondence. Compiling spreadsheets and learning about financial and confidential data.

Apprenticeship	Level	Equivalent educational level
Advanced	3	2 A-level passes/ Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation, bachelor’s or master’s degree
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor’s or master’s degree

# What to expect from an apprenticeship in business

How does it compare to the uni route, and what are employers looking for?

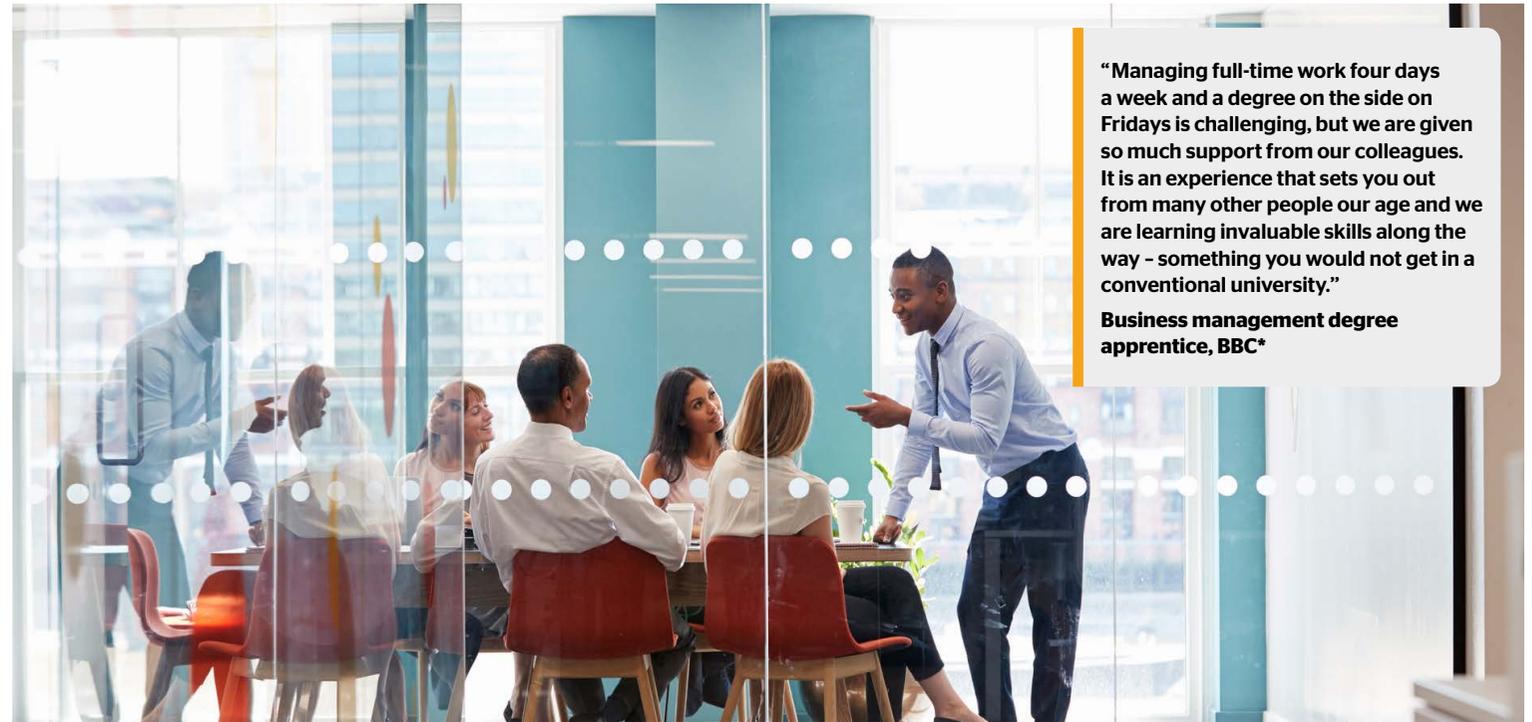
## University vs apprenticeships - what's the best choice?

An apprenticeship at a higher or degree level is no easy option. You'll be working for 80% of the time and balancing this with a higher or degree level qualification. No one expects you to know how to do the job right away, but you will be expected to start adding value to the company after a month or two, so get ready for a steep learning curve.

A key difference from full-time university is that you are making a commitment to one company from the start. The small print in your contract might mean that your commitment will have to continue even after the apprenticeship is complete. Check the details closely and find out as much as you can about whether the company is right for you before you accept the job. It's worth knowing that most companies recruit in such a way that they weed out candidates who wouldn't be a good match.

Look out for apprenticeships that lead to professional membership with the Chartered Institute of Managers, Association of Professional Sales, Public Relations & Communications Association and other professional bodies. Membership should help you to demonstrate your professional status, improve your career prospects and keep up to date with industry developments.

Some good news: it's not all work on an apprenticeship. Find out about the social side and the personal development on offer. Some companies have on-site gyms and sports teams; others offer team-building, volunteering or chance to give something back. Ask about any social programmes so you can get to know your colleagues outside the office environment.



**“Managing full-time work four days a week and a degree on the side on Fridays is challenging, but we are given so much support from our colleagues. It is an experience that sets you out from many other people our age and we are learning invaluable skills along the way – something you would not get in a conventional university.”**

**Business management degree apprentice, BBC\***

## Options with business

It's worth thinking about whether you would prefer to learn how to manage a business in its entirety or focus on a specific area like project management. Business aspects you may specialise in include:

- human resources (HR)
- operations
- procurement and logistics
- sales
- marketing
- finance.

The specific details of your role will depend on the needs of the business or the job sector you choose to work in. Sectors offering business apprenticeships include:

- retail
- agriculture
- hospitality
- transport
- recruitment
- education
- construction.

Don't be too narrow in your focus when looking for vacancies. Regardless of the industry

you work in, there should be a number of different roles on offer.

The development of business management and leadership skills is a key component of these apprenticeships, along with the underpinning knowledge of what makes a business succeed.

You'll probably spend at least some of your day working at a screen or behind a desk, but there might well be the chance to work with the public or colleagues, and get out and about for site visits and meetings. People skills and great organisation can be very important in apprenticeships like these.

# Finding the right apprenticeship

How to find out about apprenticeship roles and what employers want from an apprentice



## Which apprenticeship is right for me?

How will you know which company and which role will suit you best? Take the following steps before you choose to apply for an apprenticeship:

- Connect with companies online or via social media to find out more. Look out for webpages or social media accounts focusing on early career, apprenticeships, recruitment or school-leavers.
- Look out for insight days, open events, summer schools, work experience or virtual events where you can learn more about a company, its roles and whether it's a good fit for you – see Nestlé,

CGI and BT, for example.

- Don't assume that all big corporates are the same. Thoroughly research company information before you apply and make sure you're clear about which is the right role for you. Equally, don't ignore the small to medium-sized businesses where you might get chance to have a broader role.
- Look closely at all aspects of the company: the mission or values of the firm, the expected behaviours of the role, and how they select the right person for the job. You'll need to demonstrate why you are a good fit for a

company and the vacancy, and you'll improve your chances if you have a good understanding of its recruitment procedures.

## What are employers looking for?

The skills and qualities in demand include:

- communication
- presentation
- interpersonal abilities
- teamwork
- organisation
- time management
- flexibility
- resilience
- determination
- innovation
- leadership
- motivation.

Here are some typical entry requirements for business-related apprenticeships:

### ● **Morrisons Degree Apprenticeship**

104 UCAS points

### ● **Civil Service Fast Track Higher**

#### **Apprenticeship**

Five GCSEs at grade 4 and above, including English language and maths. Some schemes also require 2 A-levels at grade D and above, or equivalent

### ● **Nestlé Chartered Manager Degree**

#### **Apprenticeship**

104 UCAS points from three A-levels (excluding general studies) or equivalent

### ● **BT Business Management Apprenticeship**

#### **Higher apprenticeship**

2 A-levels with a minimum of C grades plus 4 GCSEs at grades 4 – 9 including English

language and maths.

### **Degree apprenticeship**

3 A-levels with a minimum of BCC grades plus 4 GCSEs at grades 4 – 9 including English language and maths.

### ● **FA Learning Ltd Higher Apprenticeship Business Administration (Human Resources)**

Three A-levels (or equivalent) at grade C or above.

## How to apply

Application processes vary slightly from employer to employer. For the most competitive and prestigious opportunities, you will go through a rigorous recruitment process. Companies might have to select a handful of the best candidates from hundreds or thousands of applications. You will find that recruitment for degree apprenticeships has lots in common with graduate recruitment processes.

Here are the different steps required to secure a place on a commercial higher apprenticeship with Tesco:

- Step 1: online application form
- Step 2: online tests
- Step 3: video interview
- Step 4: assessment centre (to include a group exercise, an interview and a presentation).

Transport for London's website has lots of information about what to expect from its recruitment processes and Barclays has a useful video explaining how an assessment centre works. You can pick up some tips on different types of interview at Prospects.

To find out more about the specific details for your chosen company, take a look at the company website.

# Getting an apprenticeship

How much could you earn and where could it lead?

## How much can I expect to earn as a business apprentice?

Higher apprenticeship salaries start at around £12,000 per year, with slightly higher salaries on offer in London.

RateMyApprenticeship calculates average salaries from thousands of reviews supplied by current or recent apprentices. They estimate that the average salary of a higher-level business apprentice starts from £17,000.

## Starting salaries for apprentices include:

- Visa Europe Business Degree Apprenticeship: £18,500
- Rolls-Royce Commercial Degree Apprenticeship: £12,657
- Civil Service Fast Track Higher Apprenticeship: £19,500 - £27,000.

Try to look at more than starting salaries alone. It's fairly common for salaries to increase through the duration of the apprenticeship. Other employee benefits might include salary bonus schemes, discount schemes, health schemes and share schemes.

## Where could it lead?

After a business higher or degree apprenticeship, potential roles on offer include:

- chartered manager
- project manager
- associate project manager
- junior management consultant
- HR consultant
- HR partner
- aviation operations manager
- hospitality manager
- events manager

- construction manager
- school business manager
- GP practice manager
- relationship manager (agriculture)
- digital marketing manager
- CRM manager
- business administrator
- operations manager
- regional manager
- department manager
- retail manager
- commercial analyst
- procurement operations support
- buyer
- assistant buyer

- commercial relationship support,
  - contract associate
  - supply chain controller
  - business support officer
  - personal assistant
  - administration team leader
- Apprentices completing an undergraduate-level degree apprenticeship should have similar opportunities available to those leaving a graduate programme.
- Following a senior leader master's degree apprenticeship, roles might include:
- senior leader
  - executive
  - director

- chief operating officer
- chief financial officer
- chief executive officer.

## Future salary range:

Middle and senior-management roles in business can deliver an attractive salary. With your higher and degree apprenticeship and the experience it brings, you can expect to earn from around £17,000 to £80,000 per year, according to figures from National Careers Service. The most senior roles in a company might result in earnings as high as £150,000 per year, or more. Of course, all salaries will depend on the type and size of the business and the level of responsibility held.



# Where to find out about apprenticeships

Find out what companies and universities are taking part in apprenticeship schemes

If you don't know where to begin with your search for an apprenticeship you may find the following lists of companies and universities helpful.

## Which companies offer business apprenticeships? Here are some:

- 3M
- Accenture
- Airbus
- Aldi
- Arcadia
- Arcadis
- Asda
- Atkins
- Atos
- BAE Systems
- Barclays
- BBC
- Boots
- BT
- Capgemini
- CGI
- Civil Service
- Direct Line Group
- GSK
- Hewlett Packard
- IBM
- Lloyds Banking Group
- Mace
- Marks & Spencer
- Mase Construction
- McDonalds
- Morrisons
- National Grid
- Nestlé
- Rolls-Royce
- Santander

- Sellafield
- Siemens
- Sky
- Tesco
- Thales
- TfL
- TUI
- UBS
- Unilever
- Vertu Motors Ltd
- Vodafone
- WSP

While you'll find plenty of opportunities with big business, don't miss out on opportunities with small- to medium-sized employers too. Take a look at the National Apprenticeship Service website or research the employers in your area who recruit at this level.

## Universities delivering business apprenticeships

- Anglia Ruskin University
- Aston University
- University of Bedfordshire
- Birkbeck, University of London
- Birmingham City University
- University of Bolton
- BPP University
- University of Bradford
- Buckinghamshire New University
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- University of Chester
- Coventry University
- University of Exeter
- Glasgow Caledonian University
- University of Gloucestershire
- University of Greenwich
- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Huddersfield
- University of Hull
- University of Kent
- University of Lancaster
- Leeds Beckett University
- Leeds Trinity University
- University of Lincoln
- Liverpool John Moores University
- London South Bank University
- Manchester Metropolitan University
- Middlesex University
- University of Northampton
- University of Northumbria
- Nottingham Trent University
- The Open University
- University of Plymouth
- University of Reading
- University of St Mark and St John
- University of Salford
- Sheffield Hallam University
- Staffordshire University
- University of Suffolk
- University of Sunderland
- Teesside University
- University of Ulster
- University of West of England, Bristol
- University of Winchester
- University of Wolverhampton
- York St John University

A range of colleges offer apprenticeships in this field, including Blackpool and the Fylde College, Hull College, Ealing Hammersmith and West London College, Buxton and Leek College and West Thames College.

You'll also find plenty of private organisations delivering the training for these degree and higher apprenticeships. For example, Pearson College Limited, QA Apprenticeships, Ioda Limited and McDonalds Restaurants Ltd.

## Finding out more:

- Rate my Apprenticeship
- National Apprenticeship Service
- UCAS Careerfinder
- All About School Leavers

**"Be yourself, be confident and smile! Let your personality and enthusiasm come across in your interview to show how passionate you are about the apprenticeship scheme."**

**Degree apprentice, Human Resources, Nestlé\***

## ★ RATEMY APPRENTICESHIP

\*With thanks to [ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk](https://ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk) for sharing reviews and apprentice experiences.

## TOP TIP

Find out about other degree apprenticeship in the specialist section on our website: [which.co.uk/apprenticeships](https://which.co.uk/apprenticeships)

**Which? University**  
[university.which.co.uk](http://university.which.co.uk)

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To read our Complete Guide to Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and see our other industry guides go to [which.co.uk/apprenticeships](http://which.co.uk/apprenticeships)

