



# Apprenticeship Guide for School Leavers

# Planning to leave school this year?

If you are planning to leave school as soon as you can, which in England is on the last day of June if you'll be 16 by the end of the summer holidays, you need to have a plan.

Remember, this is to leave school, not leave education completely. If you choose to leave school at the earliest opportunity then you must then do one of the following until you're 18:

- Stay in full-time education but study at a college of further education (rather than school)
- Start an Apprenticeship
- Work or volunteer for 20 hours or more a week whilst in part time education or training.

## Well done for choosing the Apprenticeship route

Apprenticeships can be a great way of kickstarting your career. We hope you and your parent/guardian found the information session on Apprenticeships useful. We look forward to welcoming you back to the college in the spring to complete the registration process and to help you find your dream Apprenticeship. For now though it is important that you study hard for your GCSEs. This guide will provide you with some useful information and help you to prepare for when you visit our team to register for an Apprenticeship. The team will be waiting to see you in the spring.

## Just a reminder:

- It is important to remember that you will need to secure a work placement before you can start an Apprenticeship
- As you must be in education, employment or training when you leave school, please apply for a full-time programme as a back-up whilst we help you to secure a work placement
- An Apprenticeship is a qualification delivered as part of a full-time job
- Your employer will pay you a minimum of £3.90 per hour for between 30 and 40 hours per week and you will be given time at work to complete the qualification
- You can do a level 1 or level 2 English, mathematics and ICT qualification as part of your Apprenticeship
- Depending on the Apprenticeship that you are doing, you might come into college one day a week or your assessor will come and visit you at work to teach you
- Apprenticeships are a fantastic opportunity to 'earn whilst you learn'. You will complete your qualification whilst gaining real-life hands on experience in the world of work.

# Build your career – Think Apprenticeship



Apprenticeship qualifications go up to degree and even masters level without the debt of university



## 1 in 5

companies have a former apprentice at board level

# £100,000

The amount extra that apprentices earn over their lifetime compared with other employees



## 71%

apprentices stay with the same employer

## 83%

of employers who take on apprentices rely on them to become the skilled workers of tomorrow



## 90%

apprentices stay in employment after completing their Apprenticeship



Apprenticeships enable existing staff to upskill, helping employers to prepare their workforce for the jobs of the future.

No upper age limit to take up an Apprenticeship



Dudley College of Technology – one of the top colleges nationally for the number of apprentices that successfully achieve their qualifications / Ofsted Outstanding / 83.2% overall Apprenticeship success rate 17/18

# What happens now?

The next few months are a really crucial time for you. With your GCSEs coming up it is really important that you study hard, do your best, remember to take time to relax and have fun and concentrate on doing your best in your exams.

The Employment Hub team will be here for you when your exams are finished. We will work with you to find you your perfect Apprenticeship.

1<sup>st</sup> May onwards - you will be sent a letter inviting you to register at the Apprenticeship Hub.

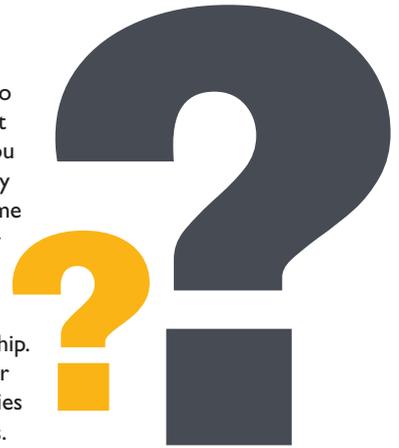
 - Apprenticeship Hub School Leavers Registration. Once you have received an invitation to register in the hub, you will come in for an informal registration interview with Emily, Owen, Julie, Emma or Ami.

When you have your registration date confirmed in your letter, email your most recent CV to **apprenticeships@dudleycol.ac.uk** with the date of your registration interview in the subject. If you don't have a CV, don't worry – there are some helpful tips later on in this booklet.

## What will I have to do at my registration interview?

At your interview you will meet your Employment Officer who will look after you throughout the Apprenticeship Recruitment process. Using the activities in this booklet they will chat to you about what you want to do long term and the kind of company you would like to work for in the future. They will also ask some practical questions like where you can travel to and what your predicted grades are.

1<sup>st</sup> July   - The date all 16 year olds can legally have their first day at work and begin their Apprenticeship. From the day you come into register, your Employment Officer will be putting you forward for any Apprenticeship opportunities that you are interested in and contacting you about interviews. Make sure if you change your phone number or update your CV that you let us know so we can update our records.



## Ofsted rated 2017 - Outstanding:

Through extensive partnerships Dudley College of Technology create excellent opportunities for learners to progress into further learning and jobs.

# Choosing a career path

We work with hundreds of employers across many sectors that recruit apprentices in different types of job roles.

To help prepare for your registration meeting at college in the spring, you will need to choose a career path.

## 1 Step

### Self Reflection

Before you start planning your chosen career path, consider your own interests, likes and dislikes. You could start answering the questions below or making a list of your own.

#### What are your interests?

- Art
- Music
- Sports
- Writing stories
- Looking after pets
- Playing computer games
- Socialising with friends

#### What are you good at, in school or in your free time?

- Science
- Maths
- Talking and writing
- Using computers
- Creative work
- Sport

#### What are your personal qualities?

- Talking to people
- Caring for people
- Listening to people's views
- Planning ahead
- Working well with people





All of the information  
you should be able to  
get from the internet  
or social media!

## 2 Step

### Exploring Careers

To get some inspiration, spend some time on the internet. Watch video clips and case studies of people in lots of different careers. The National Careers Service website has over 800 job profiles.

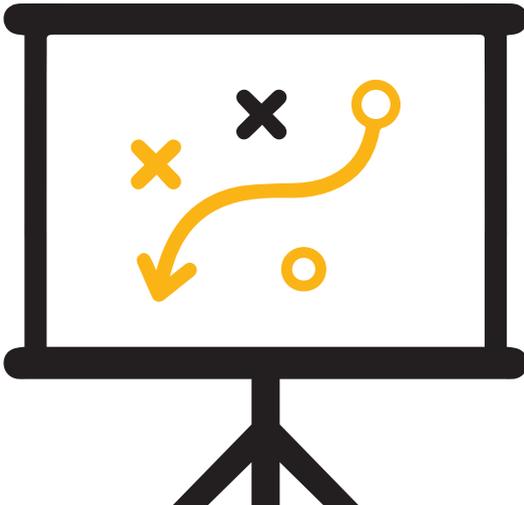
## 3 Step

### Planning/Selecting a Career Path

Once you have chosen a career path, check to see if you can do an Apprenticeship. If there's an Apprenticeship available, check the entry requirements.

#### Have a backup plan!

It's a good idea to think about a backup plan, just in case we are unable to find you a work placement straight away. We would always recommend applying for a full-time programme at the same time. As you must be in education, employment or training when you leave school.



# CV tips

## Everyone should have a Curriculum Vitae or CV when looking for a job.

A CV is your opportunity to tell an employer all about you, your qualifications, skills and experience. It should be no longer than 2 sides of A4 and should always be tailored to the specific role you are applying for. Taking time to review your CV regularly adding new qualifications and experiences as you get them shows any prospective employer that you are proactively looking for a role and that you are committed to finding your first job.

It can be really daunting when you sit down to write your first CV but we've put a few hints and tips below to help you on your way. There is also a sample CV on the next page for you to use as a guide.

### Personal Details

Always include your first and last name, your address and up to date contact details in your CV. If you don't want to use your full address, you can always put the area you live in such as 'Dudley' or 'Wolverhampton'.

### Education

Include all the qualifications or short courses you have done so far and put them in chronological order (the order in which you did them). Include the course, date, subject and where you studied. If you have done any short courses like First Aid, Manual Handling or Food Hygiene include these too!

### Work Experience

If you have ever had a part-time job or any voluntary work – always include this in your CV, it might not be relevant to the job you are applying for, particularly at the beginning of your career, but what it will tell the employer is that you have worked, are capable of working and have experience.

List any skills you have gained through your work for example handling money, punctuality and timekeeping, customer service skills and computer skills.

## Hint

Don't leave any gaps! Employer's don't like gaps – if you have a gap between leaving school and working, explain the gap, don't leave it to the employer's imagination!

## References

If you have an employer already who you know will be happy to give you a reference or a family friend who can offer a character reference include their up to date contact details!

## Sample CV

Billy Smith  
2 Sun Road  
Townland  
DY1 4RT  
0138 458978  
billy.smith@mymail.com

### Personal Statement

I have recently left The School Academy after gaining 12 GCSEs and I am now looking to gain an Apprenticeship in a Business Administration role within the NHS. Whilst I was at school I was a senior mentor and prefect which meant that I helped out at Open Evening and Parents Evening.

I am hardworking, friendly and confident and find it easy to speak to people, I currently work part time at my local newspaper shop, working behind the till taking payments, stacking shelves and speaking to customers. I also help the owner tidy up the shop at the end of the day and help with the deliveries when the shop is closed. I have good ICT skills and have used programmes such as Word, Excel and Outlook Express.

### Qualifications

King Arthurs School 2014 – 2019  
GCSE English Literature – grade 4  
GCSE English Language – grade 4  
GCSE Maths – grade 4  
GCSE ICT – grade 4  
GCSE French – grade 4  
GCSE PE – grade 4  
GCSE RE – grade 4  
GCSE Drama – grade 4  
Work History – grade 4

First Aid Level 1 certificate  
Safeguarding Level 1

### Hobbies and Interests

In my spare time I enjoy walking my dog, I also enjoy swimming and keeping active.

I like using the computer and internet and I enjoy reading, particularly the Harry Potter series.

I have my brown belt in Judo and I also play football every Saturday as part of the local five-a-side team and have been awarded player of the match 3 times this season

### References

Mr D Who  
King Arthurs School  
School Road  
SC1 2RD

## Hint

It is important to tailor your CV to the role for which you are applying. If you are applying for a role in a nursery, or a bank or any other company, make it clear in your CV that this is the job that you really want.

# Interview hints and tips

It only takes 7 seconds for you to make a first impression and you can only make a first impression once - so when you're preparing for an interview it is really important to put the work in to make sure your first impression is the best one.

We've given you a few hints and tips below to help you.

## Before you go to the interview;

- Do your research on the company
- Plan your journey and do a practice run (Google Maps and street view are really useful in helping you recognise the building on the day)
- Plan your outfit, make sure it is suitable and make sure it's clean.

Employers use interviews to decide how well you match the requirements of the job, they also help you to make sure the company is the right one for you.

The company will already have an idea of your skills and experience from your application but companies will want to meet you in person to get to know you better before they make a decision.

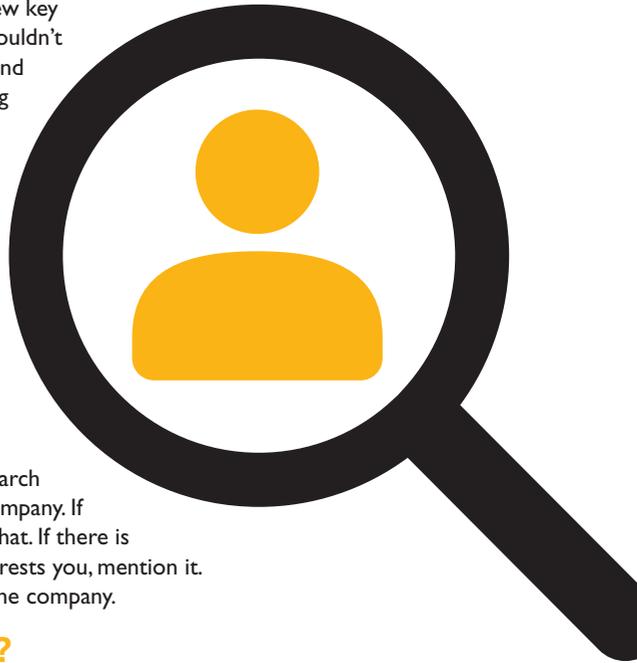
As with all interviews, preparation is vital. Showing a company that you have taken time to prepare tells them you are an organised person and enthusiastic about embracing a new opportunity.

This makes preparing answers to some common interview questions in advance especially important.

Some questions that you might be asked are;

## Can you tell me a bit about yourself?

This question is the most popular of all interview questions. It's a perfect opportunity to give the interviewer a great first impression. It's important to have a few key answers in your mind but your answer shouldn't sound rehearsed. Think about your skills and character and how they make you a strong candidate for the job you are applying for. Always think about relating it back to the job you are applying for. Are you good with computers? Are there any particular programmes you are confident using? Do you find it easy to speak to people? Are you a confident person? Are you creative?



## Why do you want to work here?

Demonstrate that you've done some research and have taken time to learn about the company. If they have recently expanded, mentioned that. If there is a particular part of what they do that interests you, mention it. Show that you have thought about what the company.

## What are your strengths?

Think of three or four things about yourself that you think are positive, think about the job you are applying for and how your strengths apply to the job.

For example, if you are applying for a reception type role, a good strength to have would be customer service skills or confidence when speaking to people.

If it is an engineering role then a good strength would be a logical approach to things or a naturally inquisitive mind.

Think about the skills the job your applying for needs and then see how your characteristics fit it. It's important however that you don't bend the truth.

## What are your weaknesses?

What are your weaknesses? Although it might sound it, being asked about your weaknesses is not necessarily a bad thing. Having a weakness shows an employer that you have recognised where you have an area to improve. Always try and turn your weakness into an area for development.

If your weakness is that you are a perfectionist and that you sometimes can be too hard on yourself, this can also mean that you have a keen eye for detail and take pride in your work.

If you have particular weakness, show how you've worked to overcome it.

## Give an example of a time when you had to cope with a difficult situation

This is another of the most popular questions. It allows the employer to assess your competency (how well you can do something) and how calm and reliable you are under pressure. Think about a time where you've coped with an unexpected problem, it doesn't have to be work-based, particularly where you've not had a job before. Just think of a time where you've faced an issue, and the steps you've taken to overcome it.

## Do you have any questions?

It's easy to just say no in order to end the interview, but it is so important to ask them a few questions to reinforce your genuine interest in the role.

Good interview questions to ask the employer include:

- How could I impress you in the first three months?
- What development plans does the organisation have?
- What is a typical career path in this job?
- What's your personal experience of working for this organisation?



# About The Apprenticeship Hub

## Advertise

We receive Apprenticeship vacancies from a wide range of employers for lots of different Apprenticeship programmes. We only send our employers applications from registered candidates, those who have been into the Apprenticeship Hub, done their BKSBS assessments and have sent us a CV.

We also advertise our Apprenticeship vacancies both on the college website and on [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk) making sure that all shortlisted applicants come into the hub to register before being put forward to the employer.

## Selection

The Hub team screen and match candidates to each vacancy using a job description and person specification supplied by the employer. We work to make sure that the candidates sent over are the best fit for the employer and we will always send you the vacancy information before submitting your CV to make sure you it is the right opportunity for you.

## Interview

We arrange all interviews on behalf of our employers and send you an interview confirmation with all the information you need to know. We will always speak to you after your interview to see how it has gone and you can choose whether or not to receive interview feedback from the employer.

## Enrol

You can't enrol onto an apprenticeship until you have successfully secured a job, so within the first two weeks of you starting work, a member of the Business Development team will visit you in the workplace to issue you with your first unit and complete your enrolment paperwork.



# Bursaries for apprentices

**Bursaries are available to support apprentices from disadvantaged backgrounds to meet additional costs associated with Apprenticeships.**

In 2018, the government launched the 'Care Leaver Bursary' offering £1000 for care leavers in the first year of an apprenticeship. All care leavers who start an apprenticeship after August 2018 are eligible for this bursary.



# Useful websites

**Count back 4 weeks from when you are ready to start work and start applying for Apprenticeship opportunities through the below websites.**

These websites are where all companies in the UK advertise their Apprenticeship Opportunities, you can search for vacancies near your house by using your postcode in the search box.

Please be aware that the majority of opportunities, unless stated otherwise, are for an immediate start so if you are still at school it is important that you only start to apply for opportunities around 4 weeks before you are able to start work.

[www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch](http://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch)

[www.dudleycol.ac.uk](http://www.dudleycol.ac.uk)

[www.indeed.co.uk](http://www.indeed.co.uk)



# Get in touch!



**Call us...**  
01384 363 082



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[dudleycol.ac.uk](http://dudleycol.ac.uk)



**Email us...**  
[apprenticeships@dudleycol.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@dudleycol.ac.uk)



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The Ofsted logo features three stylized human figures in white, arranged in a slight arc above the text.  
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