

An Employer's Guide to **APPRENTICESHIPS**

Learning
and Skills

APPRENTICESHIPS



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A smarter way to recruit, develop and retain talent

Hiring the right people, and keeping them, is one of the biggest challenges businesses face. Apprenticeships offer a proven, cost effective solution - and we're here to make the process simple, supported, and successful.

This guide shows you:

- Why apprenticeships make business sense
- How funding and incentives work
- How we help you recruit the right apprentice
- The wide range of apprenticeships we deliver

Why choose Gateshead Council Learning and Skills?

When you choose us, you're partnering with a provider that delivers real results for employers across the region.

- **Trusted by over 350 employers**
- **75% apprenticeship success rate - 10% above the national average**
- **Rated 'Excellent' by the employers we work with**

We don't just deliver training.

We help you build a skilled, motivated workforce that grows with your business.



EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

"We've been recruiting apprentices with Gateshead Council Learning and Skills since 2017, and they've made a big, positive impact on our business. By supporting day-to-day operations, they reduce pressure on staff and allow work to flow efficiently across departments. Eva, our Content Creator apprentice, has been a star!

"We would definitely recommend employing an apprentice with Learning and Skills."

Richard Derrick, Owner of Thorne and Derrick International



EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

"Company-wide we have always experienced great success with apprenticeships provided through Gateshead Council. Three of the five-person Accounts team in our department are former apprentices - proof of the value that apprenticeships have added to our business.

"An apprenticeship gives the individuals an opportunity to not only earn whilst they learn but gain the vital practical experience they wouldn't necessarily get from further education and classroom learning. We couldn't recommend Gateshead Council highly enough when it comes to their apprenticeship programmes and hope to have many more success stories in the years to come."

Oliver Weatherall, Assistant Finance Director at Pattinson Estate Agents

Apprenticeships explained

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a real job with real training.

Apprentices are paid employees who develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for a specific role while working in your business. Training is delivered by a registered provider and leads to a nationally recognised qualification.

Apprenticeships cover everything from entry level roles through to degree level occupations. They help you:

- Grow your own talent
- Address skills shortages
- Build a capable, qualified workforce

Who are apprenticeships for?

Apprenticeships are for any person aged 16+ who wants to earn while they learn and develop skills for a specific career. They're ideal for those just starting out in the world of work, individuals looking to retrain or change direction, and existing employees who need to build new skills to progress within your organisation. Apprenticeships offer flexible development opportunities for both new recruits and your current workforce — making them a powerful tool for growing talent at every stage.



EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

"Apprenticeships are a really good way to 'grow your own', building a strong staff team for the future. From day one they are working alongside experienced staff who are great role models of best practice.

"Our apprentices attend lots of valuable training as well as whole-school training and learn our policies, procedures, and the way we work – things which are very important in a childcare setting. They're getting hands-on experience on the job, learning the day-to-day life of a nursery practitioner.

"Working fulltime alongside their peers means they get to play an important role in the team, following the example of our wonderful staff."

Kelly Keating, Deputy Manager at Bensham Grove Nursery School

How apprenticeships work

Apprenticeships combine paid employment with structured off-the-job training.

Your apprentice:

- Works as part of your team
- Develops role-specific skills on the job
- Completes planned training (usually one day a week or in blocks)

Progress is supported through regular reviews, with a final assessment confirming full occupational competence.

The result?

Productive employees trained to meet your business needs.

How the money works

Apprenticeships are currently one of the most supported and heavily subsidised ways to recruit and upskill staff.

We guide you through funding, incentives and eligibility, handling the paperwork with you - so you can focus on running your business.

Financial incentives available to employers include:

- **Free training for apprentices aged 16-24** – SMEs no longer contribute 5% towards training costs.
- **£1000 payment for hiring a young apprentice** – For apprentices aged 16-18 (up to 24 for care leavers or those with an EHCP).
- **£2000 payment for SMEs hiring a young apprentice** – Available from October 2026 for apprentices aged 16-24.
- **£3000 payment for recruiting young people on Universal Credit** – Available for apprentices aged 18-24 (rollout date TBC).
- **No employer National Insurance contributions** – For apprentices under 25 earning below £50,270.

What will it cost me?

In most cases, your main cost is the apprentice's wage.

- **First year of the apprenticeship:** £8 per hour
- **After the first year:** 16-18-year-olds stay at £8 per hour. 19+ year-olds are paid National Minimum Wage for their age.

Training costs are largely, or fully funded, depending on your business's size and the apprentice's age.

Figures correct as of April 2026.

Learning = Skills

EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

"We wanted someone who could become part of the business. We wanted a young person here who could learn a variety of roles. For us, it's not about bringing someone in and then replacing them with someone else in a year's time. It's about Owen being here long-term and growing his skills within our business."

"Gateshead Council Learning and Skills did a great job in bringing in candidates suitable to the role – they were there to support us, and we made the final decision on who was the right apprentice for us."

Clare Craven, Joint Owner of Tyne Tees Ceramics



How funding works

Levy-paying businesses

- Annual wage bill over £3 million
- Pay the Growth and Skills Levy monthly
- Use levy funds to pay for apprenticeships

Non-levy-paying businesses (SMEs)

- Annual wage bill under £3 million
- Government pays 95% - 100% of training costs
- Training costs are free for apprentices aged 16-24

In short: **apprenticeships offer exceptional value for money, with generous government support and minimal risk to your business.**

We'll support you at every step.

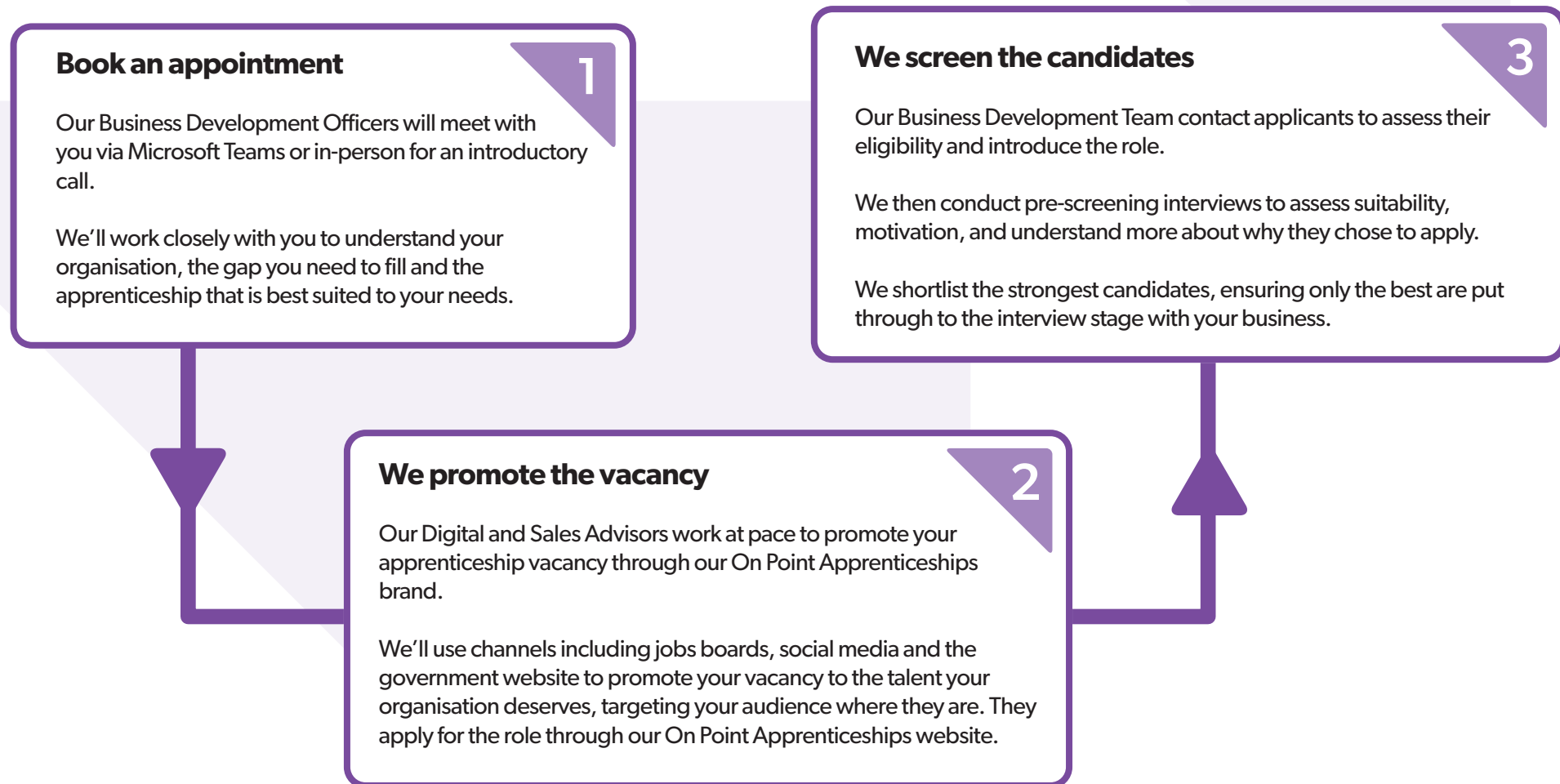
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Finding you the right apprentice

If you've never done it before, recruiting an apprentice can seem daunting.

That's why we're here to help you discover which apprenticeship you need and then help you recruit the apprentice for the job.

Our recruitment service is efficient and completely free. Here's how the process works.



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We arrange the interviews

4

Our Business Development Officers work with you to pick a time and date of your choosing. They'll arrange interviews with shortlisted candidates, ensuring all the admin work is done for you.

The real journey begins

6

Your new apprentice begins their role and our apprenticeships team hands over to the curriculum team. You meet their tutor, the person who will support you both throughout the apprenticeship, and the real journey begins!

You choose the right apprentice for you

5

You complete the final interviews and assess the candidates to choose the best fit for your business.

You perform all the necessary pre-employment checks for your company, and we arrange a start date with your new apprentice.

Our apprenticeship programmes

We provide apprenticeships to businesses across a range of sectors.

Here are all of the programmes we currently provide training for.

Business & Administration

Administration Assistant (Level 2)
Business Administration (Level 3)
Associate Project Manager (Level 4)
Career Development Professional (Level 6)

Childcare, Healthcare & Education

Adult Care Worker (Level 2)
Health Care Science (Level 2)
Early Years Practitioner (Level 2)
Community Activator Coach (Level 2)
Early Years Educator (Level 3)
Lead Adult Care Worker (Level 3)
Teaching Assistant (Level 3)
Early Years Lead Practitioner (Level 5)
Leader in Adult Care (Level 5)
Specialist Teaching Assistant (Level 5)
Learning and Skills Teacher (Level 5)

Creative, Marketing & Communications

Content Creator (Level 3)
Cultural Learning and Participation Officer (Level 3)
Public Relations and Communications Officer (Level 4)

Customer Service & Retail

Customer Service (Level 2)
Sales Executive (Level 4)

Digital & IT

Digital Support Technician (Level 3)
Application Support Lead (Level 4)

Employability & Community Services

Community Wellbeing Worker (Level 3)
Employability Practitioner (Level 4)

Facilities & Operational Services

Facilities Operative (Level 2)
Trade Supplier (Level 2)

Foundation Entry Level Apprenticeships

Health & Social Care
Digital
Catering
Hospitality

Apprenticeship Units

We also offer a range of Apprenticeship Units - short courses which allow businesses to address skills gaps at a much faster pace.

Contact us for more information.



EMPLOYER FEEDBACK

"Gateshead Council Learning and Skills have always been well organised, supportive and well-structured. They're great with communication and offer us a high calibre of candidates every time we look to recruit an apprentice."

"The apprentices themselves strengthen the quality of our workforce – they bring fresh ideas, breathing innovation and life into our organisation."

"Personally, I feel a sense of pride and achievement knowing that we've helped to develop these young people's talents."

Susan Cooke, Reception Team Lead at Collingwood Surgery

Get in touch

If you need any more information about apprenticeships, we're always here to help.

Whether you want to start your journey today, want a quick chat, or a more in-depth conversation, contact us at:

 LSbusinessdevelopment@gateshead.gov.uk

 0191 433 8727

Our team



Jo Pointon,
Partnership Manager



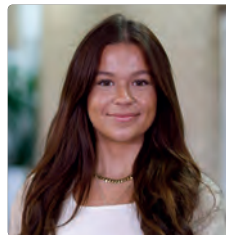
Oliver Leach,
Business Development Officer



Nina Cole,
Business Development Officer



Marie-Sophie Champavier,
Sales and Digital Marketing
Advisor



Poppy Melia,
Business Administration Apprentice



Connor Park,
Business Administration Apprentice

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