


Don't
dream it.
Do it.

Introduction

This guide is packed full of hints and tips about how to work your way through registering, searching and applying for your dream Apprenticeship job.

When you see this sign  take a few minutes to read our suggestions – it won't take long and we promise it will make a big difference to your application.

By reading through the different sections of this guide, you will be able to pick up valuable advice about the application process that will really help your application to stand out and hopefully get you through to the interview stage of the process.

We hope you find this guide useful and wish you every success in securing an Apprenticeship job opportunity.



The image shows a screenshot of the Apprenticeships.org.uk website. At the top, a black banner reads "Looking for an Apprenticeship?". Below this, the text "Register at apprenticeships.org.uk" is displayed. A "Top tip" section advises users to register for vacancy alerts. A "Log in reminder" section is followed by two input fields for "Username:" and "Password:". The Apprenticeships logo, featuring a stylized sunburst, is at the bottom.

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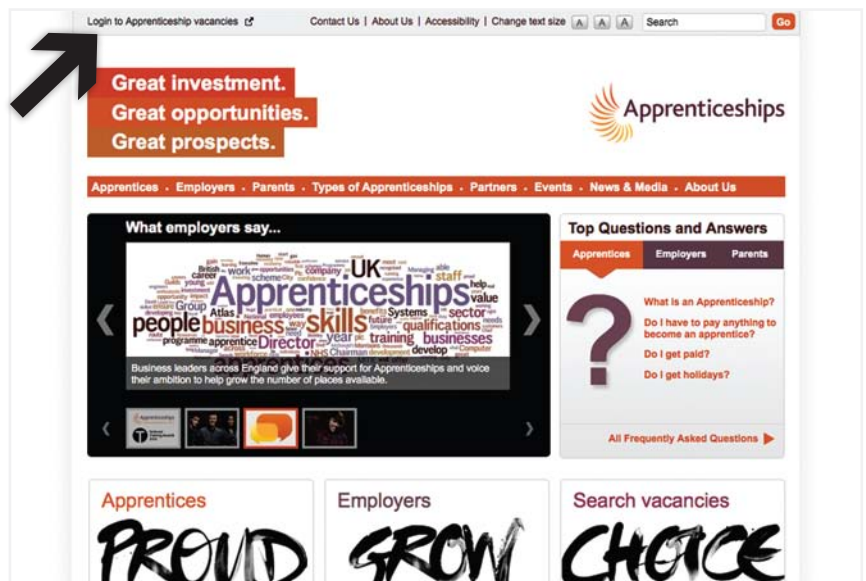
Step 1: Register

Notes

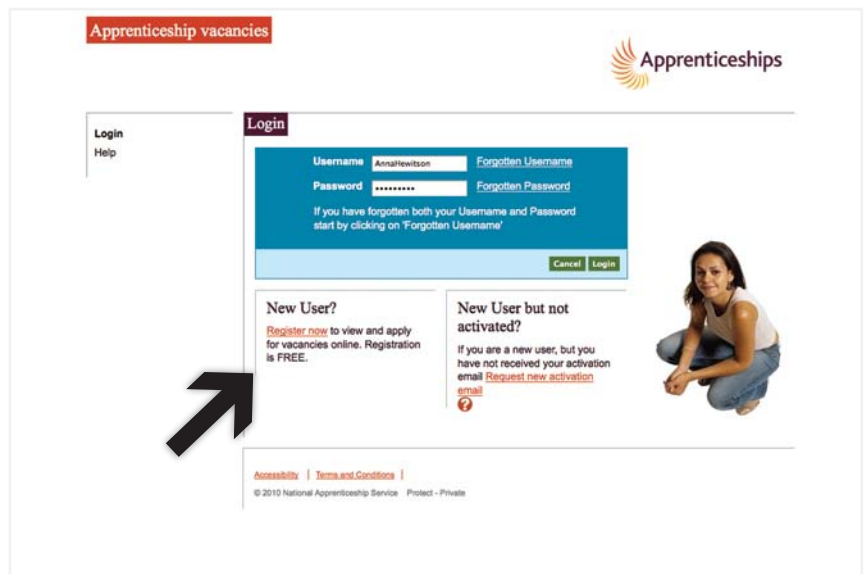
Registering on the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) vacancy website is completely free of charge.

To start your search you need to visit the website **apprenticeships.org.uk**

From the home page you can find out lots of useful information about apprenticeships. Click on **Login to Apprenticeship vacancies** as shown below (top left hand corner of the home page).



A new window will open and you need to click on the link that says **Register Now**.



Step 1: Register

You will work through a form to complete your details and create a new account that looks like this:

The screenshot shows the 'Apprenticeship vacancies' website registration page. The page has a header with the 'Apprenticeships' logo and a navigation menu with 'Login' and 'Help'. The main content area is titled 'Register Your Details' and is divided into two sections: 'Your Details' and 'Contact Details'. The 'Your Details' section includes fields for 'First Name *', 'Middle Name', 'Surname *', and 'Date of Birth *' (with an example '01/09/1980' and a help icon). The 'Contact Details' section includes fields for 'Email Address *' and 'Confirm Email Address' (both with help icons), 'Postcode *' (with an example 'CV1 2WT' and a 'Lookup Address' button), and 'Address'. A note at the bottom of the form states: 'Providing your telephone details will allow us to contact you, if needed during your application for an apprenticeship, see our [Terms and Conditions](#) on how your details will be used.'

When writing your date of birth you need to put the full year that you were born e.g. 01/03/1994 (not 01/03/94).

Select a User Name that you are going to be able to remember

Setting up the password is quite complicated because you have to

- Make it 8 – 20 characters
- Include a capital letter
- Include a number and
- Include a special character (something like a ? or !)

! Tips

- Make sure you use an email account that you can access straight away. Once you have completed your application you will receive an email so that you can 'activate your account.'
- Always try to include a telephone number if you have got one, it is important that training providers can contact you to discuss your application if they need to.
- Write down your username and password straight away before you forget.

Notes

Step 1: Register

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! Tips

- Try to use a sensible email address. Many candidates have email addresses that are very inappropriate and may put employers off.

Remember you need to activate your account. You will need to go into your email account (that you used in your registration form) and you will have an email waiting for you. You need to open the email and click on **Activate** your account.

You may need to check your junk mail folder as sometimes the activation email may be filtered to this folder instead of your inbox.

You are now ready to log in to your account and start searching!

Search the latest Apprenticeship vacancies at  **apprenticeships.org.uk**

Login details

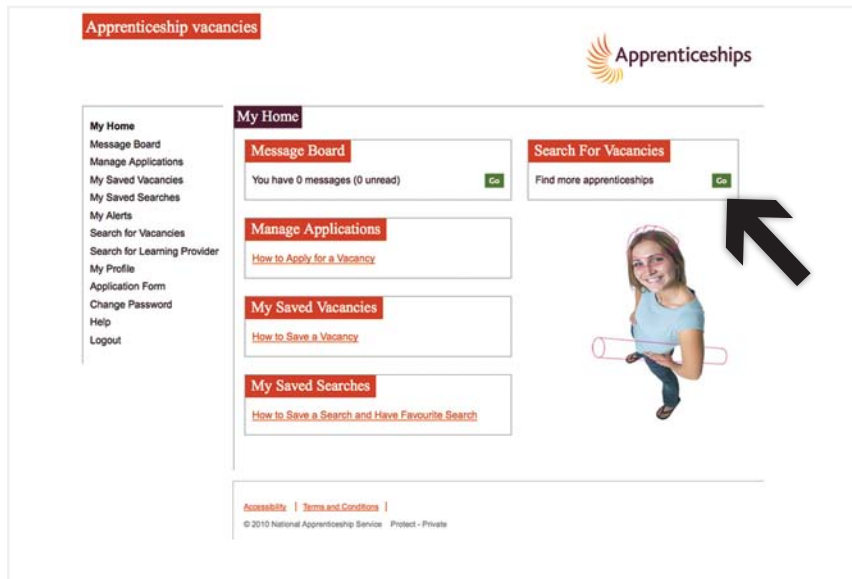
Username:

Password reminder:

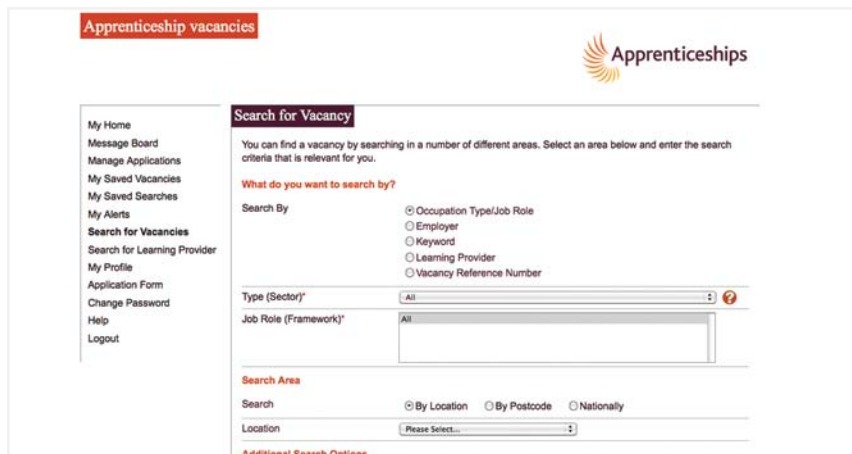
Step 2: Search

Once your account is activated and you have logged on, you will see the **My Home** page with 5 boxes on the screen. There will be a welcome email waiting for you in the Message Board.

To start searching for vacancies, click on **Go** in the Search For Vacancies box on the top right.



There are 5 ways in which to search for a vacancy.



When searching by Occupation Type/Job Role, use the drop-down menus to enter the broad area of work in which you are interested and then, if you can, narrow it down to the Job Role. For example, in Business Administration and Law, job roles include Accounting, Sales and Telesales, and Marketing. If you don't want to do this, leave it on All.

Notes

- Searching Nationally will give you all the vacancies for your selected occupation in England. Beware that this will give you a very large number of opportunities which might make selection difficult.

The screenshot shows the 'Apprenticeship vacancies' search interface. At the top left, there is a navigation menu with links like 'My Home', 'Message Board', 'Manage Applications', 'My Saved Vacancies', 'My Saved Searches', 'My Alerts', 'Search for Vacancies', 'Search for Learning Provider', 'My Profile', 'Application Form', 'Change Password', 'Help', and 'Logout'. The main heading is 'Search for Vacancy'. Below this, there is a brief instruction: 'You can find a vacancy by searching in a number of different areas. Select an area below and enter the search criteria that is relevant for you.' A section titled 'What do you want to search by?' offers radio button options: 'Occupation Type/Job Role' (selected), 'Employer', 'Keyword', 'Learning Provider', and 'Vacancy Reference Number'. There are two dropdown menus: 'Type (Sector)*' set to 'All' and 'Job Role (Framework)*' set to 'All'. The 'Search Area' section has radio buttons for 'By Location' (selected), 'By Postcode', and 'Nationally', with a 'Location' dropdown menu set to 'Please Select...'. The 'Additional Search Options' section includes: 'Vacancies Posted Since' set to 'All dates', 'Weekly Wage From' and 'Weekly Wage To' (both empty), and 'Apprenticeship Type' set to 'All'. At the bottom right, there are buttons for 'Cancel', 'Clear Search', and 'Search'.

Additional Search Options enables you to narrow your search more:

The Vacancies Posted Since drop-down menu will probably be of most use once you have been using the website for some time to look at vacancies. It will save you having to sort through vacancies that you have already seen.

! Tips

- Look every day at the Vacancies Posted Since Yesterday to give you the best chance of being one of the first applicants and not missing out on a great opportunity before the closing date.

When you come to the Weekly Wage boxes, if you are uncertain about wages it is probably better to leave this field blank. Please be aware that Apprenticeship wages vary depending on the Employer/Occupation Type and where you live.

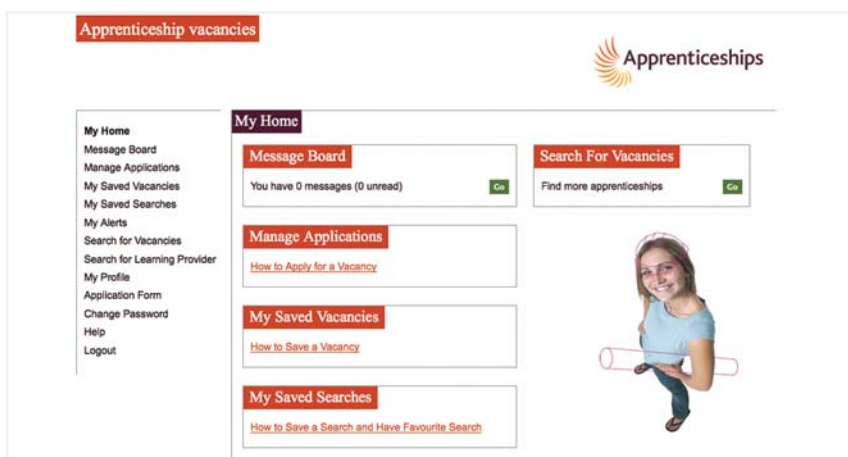
Select the level of Apprenticeship you are looking for from the Apprenticeship Types drop down menu.

Notes

Step 3: Apply

The good news is that you can set up your application form before you are ready to start applying for jobs so that once you do see a job that you want to apply for, you've already done most of the hard work and you will just need to make a few tweaks to your application so that it is relevant to the job you are applying for.

From your home page, you can access your **Application Form** which you can start to complete at any time.



! Tip

Before you start, print off a copy of anything that might help you such as you:

- UCAS Personal Statement
 - Curriculum Vitae (CV)
 - Any practice application forms that you have completed
 - Personal Statement
 - Achievement Portfolio
 - Copies of Certificates
- Remember to click on save at every section of the form. You can always return to it later to complete different sections as you **are ready**.

Notes

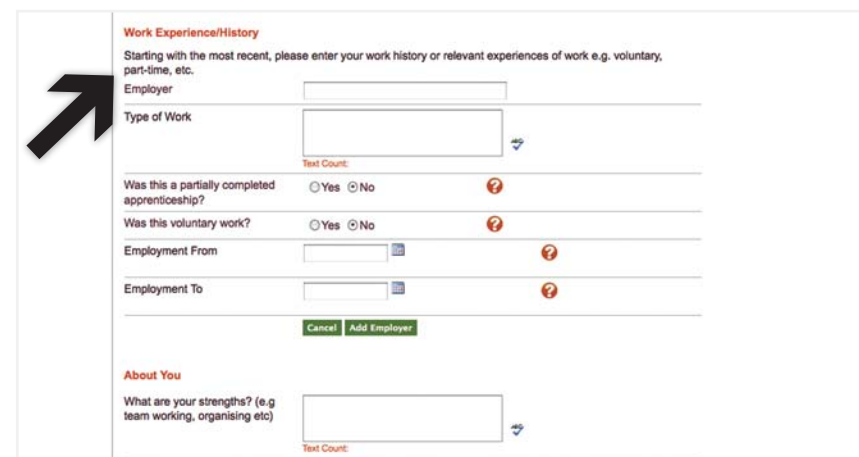
A vertical column of horizontal dashed lines for taking notes.

Work Experience/History

This section enables you to enter all of your work experience, whether this is paid or unpaid work.

When you start typing in the box that says 'Type of Work' you will notice that a character count will appear underneath the box. You have 200 characters to describe the type of work that you completed.

If you can't remember the exact dates then you can select the approximate dates.



The screenshot shows a form titled "Work Experience/History". Below the title is a sub-header: "Starting with the most recent, please enter your work history or relevant experiences of work e.g. voluntary, part-time, etc." The form contains several fields: "Employer" (text input), "Type of Work" (text input with a character count below it), "Was this a partially completed apprenticeship?" (radio buttons for Yes/No), "Was this voluntary work?" (radio buttons for Yes/No), "Employment From" (date input), and "Employment To" (date input). There are "Cancel" and "Add Employer" buttons. Below this section is an "About You" section with a text input field for "What are your strengths? (e.g. team working, organising etc)". A black arrow points to the "Type of Work" field.

Notes

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! Tips

- Practice writing your statement in a word document first, then you can cut and paste it into the box when you're happy with how it reads
- Remember to check the spelling and punctuation.
- Make sure you focus on tasks that you undertook that might be relevant to the types of jobs that you are applying for in the future.

Step 3: Apply

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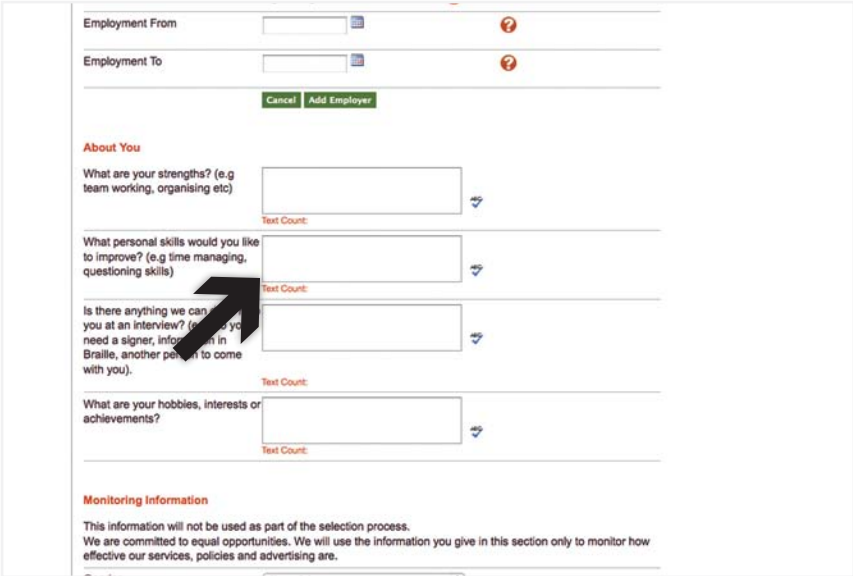
About you – What personal skills would you like to improve?

Although you have 4000 characters for this question you only need to write a good paragraph or a few sentences that answer the question, but in a clever way and linked directly to the job that you are applying for. For example, if you were going for a job in the IT industry you could say something like this:

‘I would like to improve my knowledge and awareness of the latest programming techniques being used in the workplace to increase efficiency and decrease costs to the employer’

Or if you were going for a job in hairdressing you could say something like this:

‘I would like to improve my knowledge of the latest cutting and colouring techniques being used within the fashion industry and how these could be adapted to suit high street fashion trends’



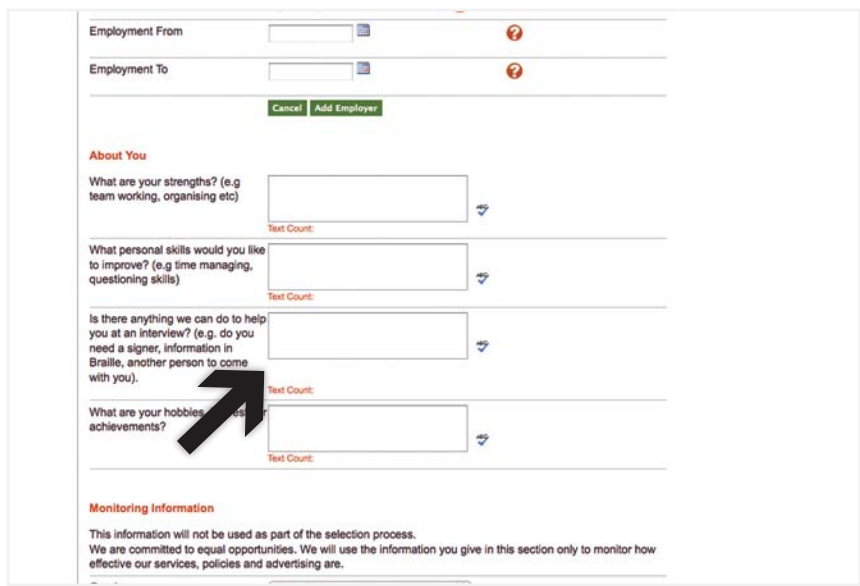
Step 3: Apply

About you – Is there anything we can do to help you at an interview?

Even if you do not require any support at interview, you should never leave this box blank

It is acceptable to write ‘No thank you’ or ‘Not applicable’ but never leave this (or any other box) blank on the application form. This is because the employer will not know if you have chosen not to answer or if you have accidentally missed it. This rule applies to every different type of job application that you may find yourself completing – not just Apprenticeships.

Notes



Step 3: Apply

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Additional Employer Questions

With every job application that uses the Apprenticeship Vacancies form, the employer is only allowed to change one thing, the rest of the form has to stay the same.

The only thing that they may change is to ask you two questions that are relevant to their job application. They will be displayed at the bottom of the application form and will look something like this:



The screenshot shows a section of the application form with two text input fields. The first question is "What do you think makes a good sales person?" and the second is "List, in order of importance, the key elements of a successful team?". Both questions are marked as "Additional question*" and have a "Text Count:" label below the input field. A large black arrow points to the first question.

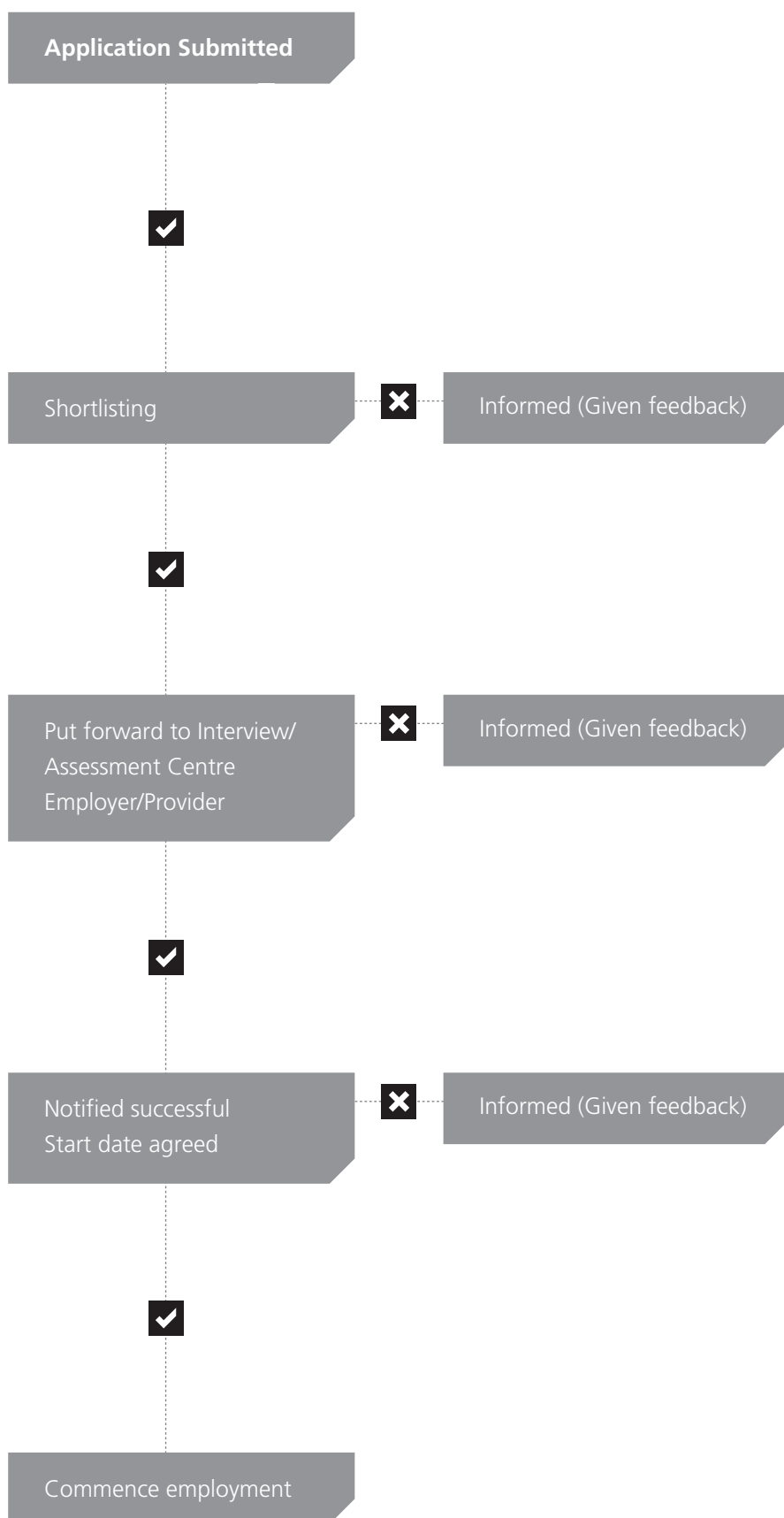
You do need to answer these questions and you need to think about the job advert, the employer and what you can tell them that might make you stand out from other applicants.

You should research their company through the internet so that you can tell them something interesting about your future career plans in that industry.

Other typical 'Employer' questions that you might see could include:

- Why do you feel you are a suitable candidate for this role?
- Why are you interested in completing an Apprenticeship?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- What experience of dealing with customers do you have?
- What qualities do you think are important in this job role?
- What do you think makes the difference between a good customer experience and an excellent one?

What happens next?



Notes

A vertical column of horizontal dashed lines for taking notes.

Interview Checklist

Do you know how to make a positive first impression at a job interview? Use this checklist to help prepare for your next interview.

Prior to submitting an application:

- Ensure your voicemail message on your mobile phone is appropriate
- Make sure your email address is sensible and will represent you in a mature way
- Spell and grammar check your CV, ensure it is up to date

Prior to interview:

- Research the organisation and job that you are applying for
- Prepare at least 2 or 3 questions that show an interest in the job and organisation
- Work out how to get to the interview and how long the journey will take – allow enough time to arrive at least 15 minutes early
- Prepare answers to some typical interview questions e.g. 'why do you want this job?'
- Prepare examples of when you have used skills relevant to the job

Appearance:

- Take a bath or shower prior to interview
- Wear clean and ironed clothing
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear – formal shoes, not trainers e.g. see back page
- Wear matching socks
- Polish/clean your shoes
- Make sure your hands and fingernails are clean
- Wear conservative makeup, accessories and jewellery (including nail varnish)
- Brush your teeth
- Wear subtle perfume/aftershave
- Cover tattoos with long sleeves
- Remove facial piercings (one set of small earrings is fine)
- Remove chewing gum prior to interview

Body Language:

- Shake hands firmly
- Smile
- Sit when you are offered a seat

- Use good posture, sit up straight
- Be attentive, nod or take notes
- Make eye contact but avoid staring
- Avoid negative behaviour (yawning, crossing your arms, checking your watch, looking at your feet etc.)
- Be composed (no fidgeting, playing with hair, tapping your feet)

Responsiveness:

- Bring a copy of your CV, the application form and the job advert with you
- Bring a pad and pen to take notes if necessary
- Switch off your phone or set to silent (turn off vibrate as this can still be heard)
- Be on time (even better – be early)
- Use interviewer's title and surname (address as Mr/Ms)
- Refer to the job advert/job description when answering questions
- Show enthusiasm
- Speak clearly, using proper grammar
- Avoid slang, swear words and suggestive language
- Answer questions clearly and concisely
- Focus on your strengths
- Avoid interrupting the interviewer

Attitude:

- Be respectful
- Be positive and enthusiastic
- Be attentive
- Be knowledgeable about the company
- Use the interviewer's name
- Be professional and mature

Closing the interview:

- Ask any questions about the organisation/job that you prepared prior to the interview
- Stand and shake hands
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time
- Emphasise your interest in the job
- Ask when a decision will be made

Interview Checklist

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths. Try using the following:

'I am...'

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Skilled at... | <input type="radio"/> Excellent at... |
| <input type="radio"/> A skilful... | <input type="radio"/> Able to... |
| <input type="radio"/> Competent in... | <input type="radio"/> Very good at... |
| <input type="radio"/> Extremely good at... | <input type="radio"/> Talented at... |
| <input type="radio"/> Familiar with... | <input type="radio"/> Qualified to... |

Employers are looking for various qualities and characteristics in a potential employee. Use the following list of words to help you when describing yourself, whether in an application or at interview:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Able | <input type="radio"/> Drive | <input type="radio"/> Keen |
| <input type="radio"/> Accurate | <input type="radio"/> Dynamic | <input type="radio"/> Knowledgeable |
| <input type="radio"/> Adaptable | <input type="radio"/> Educated | <input type="radio"/> Leadership skills |
| <input type="radio"/> Alert | <input type="radio"/> Effective | <input type="radio"/> Loyal |
| <input type="radio"/> Ambitious | <input type="radio"/> Efficient | <input type="radio"/> Mature |
| <input type="radio"/> Analytical | <input type="radio"/> Energetic | <input type="radio"/> Methodical |
| <input type="radio"/> Articulate | <input type="radio"/> Enjoy a challenge | <input type="radio"/> Objective |
| <input type="radio"/> Assertive | <input type="radio"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="radio"/> Organised |
| <input type="radio"/> Astute | <input type="radio"/> Fast learner | <input type="radio"/> Patient |
| <input type="radio"/> Bright | <input type="radio"/> Fast worker | <input type="radio"/> Perceptive |
| <input type="radio"/> Capable | <input type="radio"/> Flexible | <input type="radio"/> Persistent |
| <input type="radio"/> Calm | <input type="radio"/> Focused | <input type="radio"/> Polite |
| <input type="radio"/> Confident | <input type="radio"/> Friendly | <input type="radio"/> Positive |
| <input type="radio"/> Committed | <input type="radio"/> Good communicator | <input type="radio"/> Practical |
| <input type="radio"/> Common sense | <input type="radio"/> Gifted | <input type="radio"/> Pro active |
| <input type="radio"/> Competent | <input type="radio"/> Hardworking | <input type="radio"/> Punctual |
| <input type="radio"/> Computer literate | <input type="radio"/> Helpful | <input type="radio"/> Rational |
| <input type="radio"/> Consistent | <input type="radio"/> Highly motivated | <input type="radio"/> Reliable |
| <input type="radio"/> Cooperative | <input type="radio"/> Honest | <input type="radio"/> Resourceful |
| <input type="radio"/> Cope under pressure | <input type="radio"/> Imaginative | <input type="radio"/> Responsible |
| <input type="radio"/> Creative | <input type="radio"/> Impressive | <input type="radio"/> Supportive |
| <input type="radio"/> Decisive | <input type="radio"/> Insightful | <input type="radio"/> Tactful |
| <input type="radio"/> Dedicated | <input type="radio"/> Inter personal skills | <input type="radio"/> Team player |
| <input type="radio"/> Dependable | <input type="radio"/> Independent | <input type="radio"/> Tenacious |
| <input type="radio"/> Desire to succeed | <input type="radio"/> Innovative | <input type="radio"/> Thorough |
| <input type="radio"/> Determined | <input type="radio"/> Initiative | <input type="radio"/> Trustworthy |
| <input type="radio"/> Diplomatic | <input type="radio"/> Intelligent | <input type="radio"/> Versatile |
| <input type="radio"/> Diverse | <input type="radio"/> Intuitive | <input type="radio"/> Willing |

Applications Diary

Job Title/ Reference	Contact Details	Application Date

Applications Diary

Contact Name	Interview Date & Time	Company Address

What the shortlisters say...

"Good applicants have well written application forms where they have taken the time to give examples of their skills and have a good balance between academic achievement and enthusiasm for the job/industry that they are applying for"

"When we shortlist, we do look to see if the applicant has the desired GCSE results that the employer is seeking. However, this isn't the only thing that we look at. If the applicant can demonstrate that they have taken the initiative to set up and undertake work experience to add to their skills then this is sometimes enough to get them through to interview"

"Your application must be submitted on time and be free from errors. Weak applications are written in a hurry and are under-prepared."

"Avoid poor spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is critical if you want to be taken seriously in your application. Ask someone else with a good eye for detail to proofread your application before you submit it"

"Your application needs to sell you, be engaging, show your interest and enthusiasm and give an insight into your personality. Avoid humour though, this is still a professional document"

"A busy shortlister is looking for a reason to reject you as much as to offer you a place. Don't give them an excuse to put you on the 'no' pile because of a poor application"

"Your application needs to show that you have thought about why you are applying for the job."

"Remember to tailor your application for the job that you are applying for"

Interview Dress Code



How to write a winning Apprenticeship application

Final checklist:

Before you submit make sure you...

- Check the closing date for applications to be submitted.
- Ask someone to read your application to check for spelling and grammar mistakes.
- Include some examples of your skills, not just a list of strengths.
- Check your application is relevant to the job advert and that you have used some of the 'buzzwords.'
- Save a copy of your application.
- Print off a copy of the job advert and your application.
- Check the location of the job that you have applied to.
- Check that you have answered all of the questions.

[apprenticeships.org.uk](https://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)