

How to write a winning Apprenticeship Application

You have found an apprenticeship that really interests you and you want to apply. Before you rush in to submitting your application, read our top tips below for making your application stand out.

Creating your profile:

First things first, you need a profile on the Governments *find an apprenticeship* website. You will be asked to fill in the following sections;

- What are your main strengths?
- What skills would you like to improve during this apprenticeship?
- What are your hobbies and interests?

Then you will need to list all your qualifications and work experience - make sure you keep this up to date. If you have just received your exam grades, update your profile with your achievements. Ensure you list all your work experience also, it's good for employers to see what level of experience you have.

All the above will form your profile that you can use to apply for different positions. When you apply for a specific role you'll also be asked to answer one or two questions from the employer that are particular to that role. These questions are key and a great opportunity to show how interested you are in the role and for you to explain why you think you will be a great fit for the Company.

If you want to know how to write a great application, we have put together a list of Do's and Don'ts

Do's:

- Do your research
- Think about what the employer is looking for
- Think about what you want to achieve in the future
- Take your time
- Get someone to read through your application

Don't's:

- Leave qualifications off the application
- Write short answers or not answer the Employer questions at all!
- Use poor spelling and Grammar
- Provide wrong contact information

If you follow the above, you'll be well on the way to writing a great application.

Vacancies:

www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship

www.cogentskills.com

The Cogent Skills team would like to wish you good luck. If you have any questions about applying for an apprenticeship please get in touch and we'll be happy to help.

 **01925 515200**

 **info@cogentskills.com**

Do's:

Do your research

One of the key things employers look for in applications is passion, both for the role and the Company. Look at the Company website and see what they do. Have they been in the news recently for anything exciting? Re-read the job description and highlight any specific areas that are of particular interest to you.

You can use this research when talking about why you want to apply for the role.

Think about what the employer is looking for

Re-read the job description and see what skills you can pick out that they mention, or that you think might be useful. Then try to think of times you have demonstrated those skills or attributes. They don't always have to be obviously related, like an engineering qualification for an engineering apprenticeship (although this is great!) Perhaps you have a hobby of building model planes – this shows great patience and attention to detail. Perhaps you play a musical instrument to a high level – this shows you're dedicated and like to follow things through. Think about the skills you have and explain why you think this would be helpful.

Think about what you want to achieve in the future

If you were to be successful in securing the apprenticeship, what do you want to achieve? Is there a particular skill you want to develop, or perhaps you have a future career in mind that you could progress into with the Company once this is completed. Employers are looking for someone to invest in who they can help progress, so you need to show them why you are a good investment and what you could achieve in the future.

Take your time

Don't rush your application. These applications are all about putting your best foot forward and showing everything you have to offer. It takes time to do all the preparation mentioned above. If you do it though, it will really show.

Get someone to read through your application

Sometimes it's good to get a second opinion. Before you submit your application, get someone to read through the application. Sometimes a fresh set of eyes can give you a different perspective or spot something you've missed.

Dont's:

Leave qualifications off the application

Apprenticeships have academic entry requirements, they also have restrictions so it is possible to be over qualified for a role. It is very important you list all qualifications including GCSE's AS levels, BTEC's NVQ's etc. Also, if you are currently studying, make sure you list this with your predicted grades.

Some applicants miss off any qualifications where they didn't get a high grade, but we really recommend you list everything. A D in GCSE Science is better than no GCSE science at all! Also, if you started studying a qualification but didn't finish, let us know about it. There could be relevant learning you did that would be helpful to your application.

Write short answers or not answer the Employer questions at all!

Your application should be about you selling yourself to the employer showing them why you are better than anyone else for this apprenticeship. If you write very short answers (or don't answer the questions at all!) it looks like you haven't put any effort into your application. This gives a bad impression which could make the Hiring Manager think you aren't very interested in the position.

We recommend 1 to 2 paragraphs for the 3 profile questions, and at least 1 paragraph of 5 sentences for each of the employer questions. If you aren't sure what to write, keep on reading and we can offer you advice.

Use poor Spelling and Grammar

Maybe you have a B in your GCSE English, but if you're not using that skill in your application it can work against you. Make sure you are writing in full sentences, with capital letters (especially "I" when referring to yourself – this catches a lot of people out) and proper punctuation. If you find spelling and grammar tricky or you're not sure, get someone to check what you have written before submitting.

Provide wrong contact information

Writing a brilliant application is great, but it won't get very far if we can't contact you to take your application further. Be extra careful when typing your contact information to make sure it's correct, and if any of your information changes get in touch so that we can update our records. If possible, it's also good to link your email address to your mobile so you will get a notification as soon as you are contacted.