

## ASK Webinar: Exploring the range of apprenticeships

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Anna Morrison:

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to today's webinar, brought to you by Amazing Apprenticeships on behalf of the ASK programme. My name is Anna Morrison and I'm the founder and Director of Amazing Apprenticeships, and you will see on screen today I'm joined by my colleague Helen Twomey, who's our Schools and Resources Manager. And so we're going to be doing a bit of a double act for you today. You're going to hear from both of us.

Now, first of all, I want to start by saying happy National Apprenticeship Week 2025. I hope you've had a really great day. For those of you who may have missed it National Apprenticeship Week runs from the 10th to the 16th of February, so all the way through to next Sunday, and every day there are hundreds of events happening in schools and colleges across the country, with employers, there's media stuff - I was on the radio this morning. There's just loads happening and you will pick up lots of information about apprenticeships as the week rolls on.

So if we go to the next slide, like I said, today, you are going to be hearing a double act from myself and Helen. We're going to cover as much as we can about that very important topic of exploring the range of apprenticeships. So we're going to cover as much as we can in the next 30 minutes. We are using the webinar function today, which means we cannot hear or see you, but we would love you to get involved. So thank you to everyone who has submitted questions in advance. It's great to see the kind of areas that you want to get into and we will try and cover as much of that as possible. But if you have any questions about anything we're covering as we're going through the presentation slides today, then please drop it into the Q&A box. You've got two options. You can have your name attributed to that question or you can actually tick 'anonymous'. So if you'd rather send us your questions anonymously, that's absolutely fine. We never read out who has said it anyway. And look out for your inbox tomorrow or in your inbox tomorrow where you'll get an email through with the recording of today's webinar and the slide decks as well. So, it should be tomorrow.

So let's get started. I'm going to hand over to Helen, who's going to do the very first bit of this presentation, and then I will be back with you shortly. So, Helen, over to you.

Helen Twomey:

Oh, thank you, Anna. Sorry everyone, I think you could see me while Anna was talking because of our, because of our sound sharing. That might have been a bit strange if you could see me just looking smilingly at the screen while Anna spoke. Apologies for that.

So today's session, as you will know, that it's all about exploring the range of apprenticeships. So we're going to look at apprenticeship standards. What are they? What does it mean? Exploring the range itself, what's out there, what kind of different apprenticeships there are, how to explore as well, and then once you've found a standard that you're interested in, what to look out for and how to kind of get the best out of your experience of searching.

So, moving on, to get through this, we've only got half an hour. At the moment, the latest stat that we've had

from the government is that nearly 70% of occupations can be entered via an apprenticeship, which is a huge amount. So you'd be forgiven for not knowing what all of those are, of course, but we'd like to highlight a few of them for you today, so you can see a few on screen. But we've also picked out a few that we think are really interesting and tried to just kind of pick some from each of the different areas.

So many people, when I speak about my job and apprenticeships, are really surprised by some of the apprenticeships that are available now. So you can in different ways, you can become a teacher through an apprenticeship, a Sports coach, an Arts therapist, a Solicitor, Pastry chef. Lots of interesting ones in the, in the creative sector. So this one I particularly like. It's quite long, it must be quite long for people to put on their CV, but Hair, wigs, make-up and prosthetics technician. So you can see on there lots of different ones. Very new this year, the first cohort in 2024 - September 2024 with the Doctor apprentices. So yeah really, really wide range of apprenticeships available. So, yeah, don't be put off exploring because there's something for everyone.

What we're going to look at today is exploring kind of in three different ways, really. So exploring apprenticeship standards, exploring across industries and exploring employers as well. And that's the way that we kind of, a three, three-pronged approach, I suppose, to looking at apprenticeships and looking and exploring the standards. The first one I'm going to speak about is quickly, is apprenticeship standards. So it doesn't, I don't think it's the most obvious name, 'standard'. It doesn't kind of tell you necessarily what, what it's all about. Despite it being a bit confusing, it makes a lot of sense once you dig into it. So, apprenticeship standards set out what an apprentice will be doing and the skills required of them by job role, and they're developed by employer groups known as trailblazers. And it's essentially all the things that the apprentice will be training for to be able to do the job that the apprenticeship is linked to. So knowledge, skills, behaviours are all set out within the standard and they're specifically tailored to make sure that they succeed within that job role. So it's everything you need to know about what that apprenticeship will involve all in one place, which can therefore be a little bit tricky to look at straightaway. So we're going to dig down into that a little bit more today.

Two really good places to explore apprenticeship standards. One is the A to Z of apprenticeship standards, which Amazing Apprenticeships produce. We don't put a specific date on when we release it, but as things change, definitely at least once a term that will be updated, if not more often, depending on how many changes have been within the standards themselves. But also where all apprenticeship standards sit at the moment, and Anna's going to mention a little bit more about that in a minute. There are, is the Institute from Apprenticeships and Technical Education website, better known, probably more succinctly known as IfATE. Both these places are where all the apprenticeships are listed. The A to Z is more literally a list and the level of the apprenticeship, so you can have a quick look through that. It's a good place to start when you want to look a bit more deeply into what each apprenticeship involves, IfATE is a brilliant place to look. One thing to be really aware of is that whilst there might be these brilliant lists and this brilliant website with all apprenticeship standards on doesn't mean there's always going to be lots of vacancies for you in the right area at the right time. So whilst there are loads of brilliant apprenticeships out there, it's also really important to be able to find the right one for you at the right time.

So we're going to talk a little bit more at the end of the webinar about how to search and apply. So, and signpost you to some good resources for that. So I think I'm going to hand over to Anna now. I'm going to switch our sound so that it's not just me that you see.

Anna Morrison:

Okay. Hopefully that's working and you can now see me. Hi, everyone. So, yeah, Helen's run through and some of those slides and it's prompted a load of questions coming through already. I can see someone has emailed us to or messaged us to say doctor? That is right. The doctor degree apprenticeship is one of the newest apprenticeships that was launched last year. So it was launched, I believe, in quite a small pilot group to begin with initially, but it definitely is up and running. So if you're interested in that one, go and take a look.

So what I'm going to do now is talk you through the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education website and specifically the bit where you can search for different apprenticeships. And if you're not familiar with looking at a site like this, I appreciate you might come to this and kind of go, oh my goodness, what am I supposed to click on? Where should I start? So I'm going to take you through some of the key areas. Now The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education have been responsible over the last eight or nine years for the development of new apprenticeship standards. So, like Helen was saying, the creation of the standards, where groups of employers have got together to look at different roles within their business, where they feel that an apprenticeship needed to be developed and then they've worked with officials from the Institute, we call them the Institute for short or IfATE for short, and they've sat down and they've built those standards and that's what we're going to help you to explore and understand a little bit more about today. So this is really part of what will help you to see what's available.

I get asked all the time, some of them can be quite random when I'm out and about talking to people and they'll say, can you be an apprentice in such and such? Can you do an apprenticeship in X, Y or Z? And this is the place that you need to come to be able to see. So what you'll see on the screen there is the website, the Institute for Apprenticeships.org and on the right-hand side, this is what it looks like when you click on Search for the apprenticeships. And so what you'll see at the top there is Keyword. So Keyword is actually a really good facility that you can use, a good function, where if you've got a word or a couple of different words linked to a job role, you can type them in there and it will bring up different standards that you can then click on.

So if you look on the right-hand side at the moment, you can see Early years teacher at the top, and then the next one down is Food and Beverage Team Member. So then what you can do is click on that title and then it will open up the standard. We're going to tell you more about that shortly. Then, the way that they are displayed is in routes, so industries, and that's the second one down. Now, there are 15 routes. And then if we go to the next slide, we can, oh no, sorry. This one.

So the routes, you can see there that we've got Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care, all the way down to Transport and Logistics. And again, particularly if you're at school or college and you're used to thinking about subjects that you like doing, you won't necessarily see your subjects reflected in the routes and that's because of how employers working with the Institute are encouraged to categorise the different job roles that they've got. Sorry, I'm going to put you to the test now. Can we go back two, and then I'm going to, I'll try and show you. Really I'm putting you to the test. Sorry, sorry! Okay, so then there's another box that says Status. Now, Status is important and particularly if you're working in apprenticeships behind the scenes, like me, so that you can see what's been approved for delivery and what might still be in development or being reviewed. So, again, you can tick 'Standards approved for delivery' and this means that training providers and employers are able to offer them. Some of the other boxes where it says that they are being reviewed or being replaced even, or that they're not yet ready for delivery. That means that you can't actually do an apprenticeship in them yet. Or it may be that, you know, just things are happening behind the scenes, maybe they're updating them and so you need to wait for the new one to come out. So the one that we always use is 'approved for

delivery'. And then Apprenticeship Levels, which I've definitely got another slide on. So we'll come to that in a few minutes, talking through where the different levels are.

So I hope some of, of this detail is useful in helping you to start to make sense of where we're going. So these are the areas we're going to focus on, mainly the routes and the levels. And this is a slightly different way of looking at apprenticeships, because we're not just talking to you about going and looking for vacancies. I think it's useful for you to understand what sits behind those vacancies.

So on the next slide, like I said, these are the routes. So this was the one that we already talked through. So there's 15 different routes, and within these routes there will be different numbers of apprenticeship standards that are created. So on the next slide, what you can see is of those nearly 700 apprenticeship standards that we've got, you can see how they're split across some of those different areas. Now, just because they've got loads and loads of standards like Engineering and manufacturing, doesn't necessarily mean that's where all the jobs are. Similarly, if there's quite a small number of apprenticeship standards like Hair and beauty, that doesn't mean that there's only a small number of people taking those apprenticeships. It's really to do with the standards that have been created to support that industry for the different types of job roles that they've got at different levels.

So on the next slide, what you will see is actually the number of apprenticeship starts. And this is taken from data on gov.uk, looking at those different routes, and then you can see a real mix, can't you? You can see that actually Business and administration, which includes management as well, so management falls into that one. It has been the highest route started by apprentices, and Creative and Design being down at the bottom is one of the lowest. And now one of the reasons for that is not that there aren't Creative and Design apprenticeships, there are, but they are harder to find in that industry. And we, it's still an area where things are really evolving and emerging. Someone has said are any of these degree apprenticeships? Yes. So when we're talking about the levels, you've brought me nicely onto my next slide.

Let's try and understand the levels. So in apprenticeships we use words and we use numbers when we're talking about the levels of apprenticeships. On this website, you will see down at the bottom where it says Apprenticeship Level, it says 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. So level two is also known as an intermediate apprenticeship. Level three is also known as an advanced apprenticeship. Higher apprenticeships is actually the umbrella term that we use for levels 4, 5, 6 and 7. Although usually when we're talking about higher apprenticeships, people generally mean level four and five, because then we have degree level apprenticeships at level six and then we have master's level apprenticeships at level seven.

It's really important to keep an open mind when you're looking at the levels of apprenticeships. I know there's a lot of interest and a lot of media attention on degree apprenticeships, but I would really encourage you, because you're going to have really good information now by being able to look at the Institute for Apprenticeships website and then looking at the type of vacancy, what you may find actually is that routes into certain industries may start at level three or level four, for example, then there might not be a level five. So it might not look like a completely linear progression, but maybe then you jump to a level six.

Someone has just asked, can you do a level you already have? Absolutely. There is no limit to the number of apprenticeships that you can do and the level. The only thing you do need to realise is that there's a certain funding rule, meaning that you can't do a level of apprenticeship in a subject that you've already studied. So, for example, if you had already done A-level IT, or Information and Technology, and then you wanted to do a level three apprenticeship, an advanced apprenticeship in Information, Communication and Technology, then

you may find that you may not be able to be funded for that. But your training provider would work through all of this with you. This really isn't something for you to worry about.

I've got another question here saying what level is more appropriate for a year 11 student to go on to post-school please? And this is a really interesting question. So we do find that the majority of year 11s who go on to apprenticeships will start at level two or level three, so intermediate or advanced. And again, this isn't necessarily down to your academic achievements, you know, you could have got, I was going to say straight A's, but you could have got, you know, all of the top scores, that's old language, isn't it? Top, all nines at GCSE. You know, and you could have got straight A's at A-level, brilliant academically. However, that doesn't necessarily mean you can do the job so, or have any experience in doing that job. So it's always about looking at the job role that's being offered, the experience that you need for that role. And then the employer and the training provider working with you will make sure that you are on the appropriate level of the apprenticeship and that, you know, any of those funding rules are satisfied as well.

Someone says couldn't, can you do a level four and go to level seven? Potentially, it will depend on whether within the standard that we talked about, there are any entry requirements. So for some level sevens, it may be that you need a level six qualification. So you either need a degree or a degree-level qualification to be able to get onto level seven or significant experience. And so there will be things, there will be entry requirements that could be put in place by the employer and the training provider, but also they may be a requirement of the apprenticeship standard.

Someone's saying, what level should you go for being in year 12? So I would be saying that you should be looking at all levels. Please don't limit yourself by thinking, oh, okay, you know, I've done level three, so therefore I only want to look at higher and degree apprenticeships. It could be that you look at advanced level apprenticeships, it could be that you look at intermediate. It will really depend on the type of job role that you are looking to go into. So, for example, if you're in year 12 and you're thinking, actually, I want to get into hairdressing, then it's most likely that your starting point will be the intermediate level two apprenticeship.

Someone's saying, can you get a job after doing a level three? Well, a level three advanced apprenticeship is a job. So yes, absolutely, you might continue in employment with that employer. You may progress to employment with a different employer. You may decide to stop and take a break, just like other people do in, in job roles as well. But absolutely, you'll already be employed, you're in the perfect position, aren't you, to continue in employment.

All these questions are flying in! Helen's going to look at me and say, we're not going to get through all the slides. Right, let's move on and I'll try and weave in some of the other slides. So right, if we go to the next one.

So this is what an apprenticeship standard looks like behind the scenes. So when you click on that link for the standard and you get into some of the detail here, then what you will see set out are knowledge, skills and behaviours, KSBs, that you will be required to work towards. And so there's quite a lot of detail here about the apprenticeship, the type of duties that you'll have, the role that you'll have, and a summary of the level that they would expect you to be working at. I think it is good to have this detail, particularly if you get to the point of applying for apprenticeships, then it's definitely a good idea to be able to go and look up the apprenticeship standard and be able to reflect some of these words in your application as well. And indeed, you may have some questions about it as well. So it might be something good that will prompt you to think about things that you might be asking when you are at interview.

If we go to the next role, you'll just see a little bit of potential disconnect as well between some of the different titles that are used and what you may see. So each standard has one title. There will be a title. We've picked Furniture manufacturer. Okay. So what that then says, though, when you click into the standard is there's some typical job titles within it. So you can see how that then opens up and then there's even more job titles. So the job title of the apprenticeship that you're going for may not be the title of the apprenticeship standard that you are studying towards. I can give you an example of this. So we have an apprentice in our team who is, her job title is actually Business 360 Apprentice. 360, meaning that she will rotate throughout the business, working with different teams and across different projects. The apprenticeship standard that she is studying is called Content Creator and it's a level three apprenticeship, but it is not her job title. Her job title is not Content Creator. It's actually Business 360. So just so that you understand why you might see things or see a job title that is different to the apprenticeship standard, it's not always a direct fit.

Okay. I think I'm handing back to you, Helen, aren't I?

Helen Twomey:

Yes, thank you. Sorry about our sound switching. So. Thank you, Anna. We spoke about, earlier, I mentioned that obviously there are all these amazing apprenticeship standards out there, but not necessarily roles that are available vacancies so we wanted to just highlight a couple of, but we haven't got time in this webinar to discuss that now but we will always be covering this in other webinars and in other resources. So we did a webinar back in last month, end of last month, called 'How to search and apply for apprenticeships', all about the different places you can find vacancies, the different ways that you can apply, and kind of tips and all sorts of things around that. So that is on that link for you to watch back if you want to. Coming up at the end of this month on the 27th of February is a webinar called 'Using Find An Apprenticeship to search and apply'.

So Find An Apprenticeship, which Anna mentioned, is the huge job site with thousands of vacancies and we're going to hear from someone from the Find An Apprenticeship team at the DFE talking all about how to use Find An Apprenticeship effectively and all the new things as well that have come in to support you in your apprenticeship search. So two ways there that you, once you've explored your standards, as we've discussed that you can then start looking for vacancies for yourself. So we have got an 'Any questions?' slide and I know that we have been kind of getting them coming in as we've gone along. So if there are any that we particularly still would like to answer, I think, Anna, you've been answering all the ones on the Q&A, haven't you? We've had a couple more come in as well.

Anna Morrison:

Yeah, I'm happy to pick up. So, yeah, we've had loads of questions through. Thank you. I'm going to try and pick out, someone said, are we going to send the slides for the links? Yes, absolutely. Those will be with you tomorrow.

Now, someone has asked about the potential changes to level 7 apprenticeships and how might this affect the options my son is considering? So, yes the government have made an announcement that they are going to be changing some of the ways that level 7 apprenticeships are funded. We don't yet have the detail on this, so it wouldn't be fair of me to comment on this because we don't know how the government are going to approach it, whether it will be the majority of level 7s, all level 7s, whether some individuals will still be funded. Level 7s, we understand, will still exist, but it may be that the employer will be required to pay for them rather than being able to take it out of their apprenticeship levy or accessing government funding for it. So that's where we're at. We definitely will update you as we can throughout the Spring.

So someone has asked, is everyone that offers apprenticeships on this website or do businesses offer their own and we need to find them. Yep. So Find An Apprenticeship is the government system for advertising apprenticeship vacancies. However, it is not mandatory that employers use this system. So if they've got their own recruitment channels or if they're a big employer and they've got their own system set up, they can do that, they can use their own systems themselves. So although Find An Apprenticeship is a really, really good starting place, it's not the only place that you will see apprenticeship jobs advertised. I would really recommend you join some of our other webinars or watch the recordings where we get into a lot more detail about how to find vacancies through social media, through your friends and family network and all of that.

Someone else has asked, is there any support for neurodiverse applicants in advance to help with the application, plus attending the interview? I'm really pleased that we are seeing a lot more development in this space and we're seeing employers being really, really inclusive in the way that they recruit. Now, it's not perfect. We haven't got it right across every base, but we do know that the majority of employers will ask if there are, if there's anything that they can do to support you. And I think it's really important if you are neurodivergent or if you're working with someone who has any additional needs at all, that you support them to feel confident in putting that into their application and sharing any of those support needs that they have. Because what we are finding is that employers are really working very hard to be supportive of individuals that they're bringing through the process. They want you to show your true potential, they want it to work for you, they want you to be able to do your best. So yeah, we're seeing, seeing a lot more happening in that space for sure.

Another question saying, what obligations are on the apprentices to remain with the businesses after they qualify? Are qualifications globally recognised? That's a big question, isn't it, in the five minutes that we've got left. So apprentices can be on permanent or fixed-term contracts of employment, so we will find there's a real mix and it will be down to you as to what works for you and what the employer is able to offer you. Now, employers who provide permanent contracts of employment, the expectation is the apprentice continues in employment with them at the end. That's what we do. That's what lots of employers do. However, some employers, because of perhaps headcount issues or budgetary constraints, will offer fixed-term contracts, which means at the end of their apprenticeship, there is no obligation to continue that employment or for the apprentice to stay with that employer. That really works in the favour of a lot of apprentices who perhaps then become skilled and qualified and then perhaps go off and set up their own businesses or travel the world and take their qualifications with them. And we've seen that, we've seen lots of apprentices travel, but actually what we do find is the majority of employers want to retain that investment, because taking on an apprentice, employing them, training them, teaching them all of that detail about the company is a huge investment and the majority of employers want to keep their apprentices. They don't want them going down the road to the competition or to their competitor. So although employers offer fixed-term contracts, what we do find is that the majority of apprentices stay in employment either with that employer or perhaps moving to another employer, and support is put in place by the employer and training provider for that.

What would happen if I don't manage to finish my apprenticeship? is another question that's come through. Well, you will be supported by your employer and your training provider to complete your apprenticeship and we absolutely hope that you would stay and complete. It could be that if there are qualifications that you've achieved within that apprenticeship, then you'll get those qualifications, but perhaps not the overall apprenticeship certificate. But we do understand, you know, there is flexibility in the system. Sometimes you may find that you want to change employers. That can happen, and we've seen apprentices who have kind of taken their apprenticeship that they've maybe started with one employer and then moved it to another employer. Other apprentices find themselves working in an industry and actually decide to change roles or

perhaps go for a different apprenticeship as well. That feels like a negative one to finish on. Let me find some more positives.

Do employers ever fund your accommodation? Some do. So we do see some relocation packages offered by employers, not all, but we have seen an increase in relocation that's out there. Is the salary paid by the employer or the government? So the salary is paid by the employer. The Apprentice National Minimum Wage is increasing in April this year to £7.55 an hour. That's the minimum an apprentice can be paid and we do find that some employers will pay significantly more than that.

Are there any other particular ones, Helen, that we need to pick out? There's so many, there's so many! We just need to do like an hour of Q&A, I think, with you all, don't we?

Okay, how can adults who are seeking jobs benefit from apprenticeships? And this is another thing, so apprenticeships are not just for young people, and I know I've talked a lot about school and college leavers today, but actually apprentices can, apprenticeships can be started by anyone as long as you are over the age of 16 and have completed or finished full-time education. So you can't be in full-time education and an apprentice, basically. So, yes, we do find that almost half of apprenticeships actually are started by adults these days. Those aged 25+ and are a brilliant way to reskill or upskill. So we find some adults who will use apprenticeships to change careers, but we also find adults who will be in the workplace and will use an apprenticeship as a way to gain skills and qualifications and enable them to have some of that career progression. So yeah, great question because we do see a lot of that as well.

Okay, so let's finish up because we've, yeah, we've gone through lots of questions there. So we've got a few slides with a few extra resources. We'll be circulating all of these to you. So if we go on to some of the other slides. So for any teachers and careers advisers listening in, don't forget of course the ASK programme, the Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge for Schools and Colleges programme offers schools a huge amount of support where individuals are able to come out and run sessions in your school or college. Other support that's available of course is through our website, Amazing Apprenticeships, on the National Careers Service, and we also have a monthly Vacancy mailing so you can sign up to any of these and use any of the resources that are available.

Future webinars coming up. So at the end of this month we've got how to use Find an Apprenticeship to search and apply. So if you're looking for opportunities I would really encourage you to come along because we're going through in quite a lot of detail actually, the features and functions of Find an Apprenticeship. And then later on in March we've got 'How to Impress in the apprenticeship application process' and then in April 'Preparing for apprenticeship assessment centres'. So again, areas that we get quite a lot of questions about so hopefully those webinars will be useful for you.

Launched today is our monthly edition of Choices magazine, which is the ultimate parent and carer guide to apprenticeships and technical education. This comes out every month so please do use it, read the case studies and there's quite a lot of case studies on degree apprentices in the February edition and their different pathways into degree apprenticeships. So whether it was school leavers or someone coming in from T Levels or coming in from college and studying A-levels, it's really good.

And of course we've got the Higher and Degree apprenticeship listing as well which we release twice a year. It's a huge bumper collection of thousands of higher and degree apprenticeship vacancies all in one place, so I think you'll enjoy reading that. Schools, colleges, if you're listening in and you receive Choices magazine,



please remember to share it with your parents and carers and your students and your colleagues, because I think there's lots of stuff in there that everyone would find really interesting.

Okay. We've overrun by just a couple of minutes, haven't we? But it's been really great to be with you all this afternoon. I'm sorry we didn't quite get to all of your questions, but I hope you did find it useful and there's some information there that you can take away. Look out for the recording and the slides in your inbox tomorrow and have a brilliant rest of National Apprenticeship Week. Thank you so much for joining us. Take care. Bye.