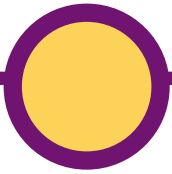


# Apprentice's guide to Higher Education

Where next?



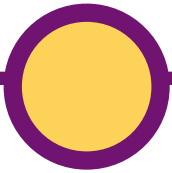
This booklet has been designed for learners who have completed or are about to complete a level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship and are considering further study.

We'll explain the benefits of higher education and the different types of qualifications you can go on to study, which often incorporate work-based learning elements similar to your apprenticeship and flexible study options.

We will also direct you to where you can go for further information on fees, finance and how to apply.

The National Apprenticeship Service has made a commitment to support progression options for apprentices into higher education.

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



## Why?

If you are about to complete an advanced apprenticeship why would you now want to start studying for a higher level qualification?

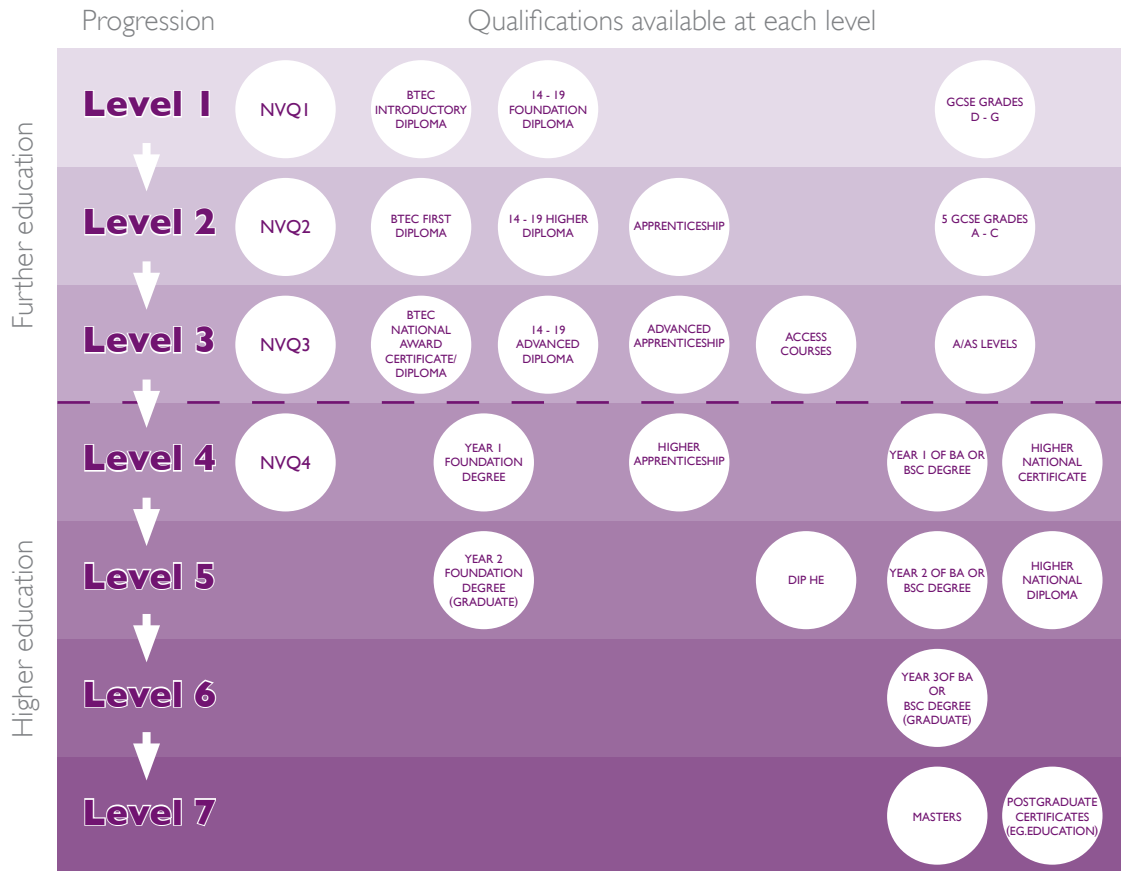
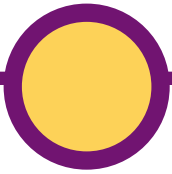
**Better Prospects:** Graduates have better careers prospects and having a higher level qualification opens up many other career opportunities.

**Self Employment:** If you want to work for yourself, you'll be better equipped with a higher qualification.

**Professional Qualifications:** Increasingly more professions are restricting membership of their professional bodies to those possessing a higher qualification.

**Employers:** Higher level qualified employees are more 'marketable' to employers because the independent study and research skills they have gained will help deliver long-term business success.

**Earn while you learn:** There are work-based study options available in higher education similar to the Apprenticeship framework.



Opportunities exist to progress to different qualifications at each level



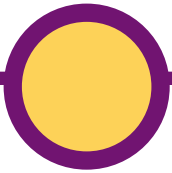
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## Ways of studying

There are a variety of flexible ways to study for a degree or higher level qualification so you can plan this around the commitments you already have. You don't have to go to a higher education institution full-time for three years. **Work-based learning** means you can carry on working whilst attending a university or further education college part-time. Your day to day work activities will contribute to the course assignments and are formally recognised as a major contribution to the academic qualification you are taking.

The Open University offers a wide range of **distance learning** higher level courses. All the courses are part-time so you can carry on working whilst studying. You can also tailor a bespoke programme of study that suits your needs and business requirements. For more information see [www.open.ac.uk](http://www.open.ac.uk)

For information on full-time degree courses, either contact the university or college directly or apply through [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)



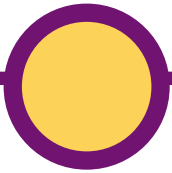
## Pathways

**National Vocational Qualifications** levels 1, 2 and 3 are already part of the Apprenticeship framework. These qualifications can also be studied at level 4 and level 5.

**Higher National Certificates** (level 4) and **Higher National Diplomas** (level 5) are work related qualifications and can count towards membership of professional bodies and other employer organisations. They are available in a wide range of subjects and can be taught as full-time or part-time courses. By completing a HND you could go straight into the second or final year of an honours degree.

**Higher Apprenticeships** are a continuation of the Apprenticeship framework at level 4. The technical certificate may involve a NVQ 4, HNC or even a Foundation Degree. Although still in their infancy they have already been developed in the Engineering, Health Care, IT and Accountancy sectors.

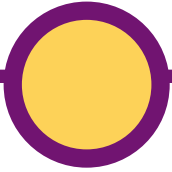
**Professional bodies** sometimes award their own higher level qualifications and provide individuals with industry-specific skills. Certain industries have now made professional qualifications an essential requirement and many employers will provide full support to employees both financially and with time off to study. These qualifications are often taught through local colleges and universities or via distance learning. Please contact the appropriate professional body to find out more about sector specific professional qualifications.



**Access to Higher Education Diploma** courses are entry routes into higher education specifically designed for mature students (aged 19+) without the necessary academic qualifications. They can help develop your skills, confidence and underpinning knowledge for entry onto a higher education course. For more information see [www.accesstohe.ac.uk](http://www.accesstohe.ac.uk)

**Foundation degrees** (level 5) are 'stand alone' degrees which have been designed with support from employers to provide the essential skills and knowledge required by today's industries and businesses. They are available on a full or part-time basis. They will enable you to develop new and existing skills and will enhance your career prospects. You can also 'top up' the Foundation degree by progressing to the final year of a full honours degree. [www.findfoundationdegree.co.uk](http://www.findfoundationdegree.co.uk)

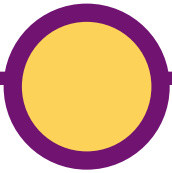
**Honours degrees – BA(Hons)/BSc(Hons)** (level 6) are taught full time usually over three years or via part-time flexible models available through various universities and some further education colleges. They are also available as distance learning eg: The Open University. Degrees are taught across a wide range of subjects and specialities. You will need to check that you meet entry requirements for each course. For more information see [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk)



## Entry requirements and Tuition fees

**Entry requirements** for a course are specified by the university or college, but learners without the formal entry requirement can often have their professional work experience and knowledge taken into consideration when applying. Universities and colleges of further education have a system (sometimes called **APL**, Accreditation of Prior Learning or **APEL**, Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) to identify, assess and recognise your prior learning and achievement which could be counted as the entry requirement and possibly towards the higher education qualification itself.

**Tuition fees** for courses are set by the university or college. If you are employed, your employer may choose to pay the full fees or share the cost with you. For information on financial support for course fees and student loans please see [www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance](http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance)



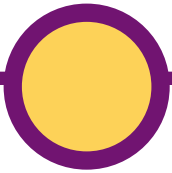
## Case study

Helen Smith completed her advanced apprenticeship in one year and achieved a distinction for her NVQ level 3 in Business and Administration.

Helen is 24 and had already completed a part time Access to Higher Education Diploma. She would have loved to have gone to university but as she has a young daughter to support she felt she couldn't afford it. She needed an income so Helen decided to work but found it hard to secure a job as she didn't have any relevant work experience. The apprenticeship route has given Helen the opportunity to earn a salary whilst gaining valuable work experience and achieving a level 3 qualification.

Helen was recruited for Bucks County Council through the new Apprenticeship Academy piloted by Aylesbury College and has been working for the Business Development Unit within the Children and Young People's Service. The Unit has been so impressed with Helen that they have put forward a business plan to offer her a permanent job and utilise the skills that she has developed whilst on the apprenticeship scheme. She has also applied to the Open University to do a BA (Hons) in Business Studies.

"The apprenticeship has given me the valuable work experience employers require, whilst offering a progression route into higher education to study for a qualification that will be relevant and appropriate to the career I choose."

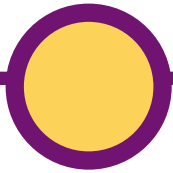


# Learning providers in the region\*

## Berkshire

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
University of Reading	<a href="http://www.reading.ac.uk">www.reading.ac.uk</a>	0118 378 8618/9 <a href="mailto:student.recruitment@reading.ac.uk">student.recruitment@reading.ac.uk</a>
Bracknell & Wokingham College	<a href="http://www.bracknell.ac.uk">www.bracknell.ac.uk</a>	0845 330 3343 <a href="mailto:study@bracknell.ac.uk">study@bracknell.ac.uk</a>
East Berkshire College	<a href="http://www.eastberks.ac.uk">www.eastberks.ac.uk</a>	0845 373 2500 <a href="mailto:info@eastberks.ac.uk">info@eastberks.ac.uk</a>
Berkshire College of Agriculture	<a href="http://www.bca.ac.uk">www.bca.ac.uk</a>	01628 824444 <a href="mailto:enquiries@bca.ac.uk">enquiries@bca.ac.uk</a>
Newbury College	<a href="http://www.newbury-college.ac.uk">www.newbury-college.ac.uk</a>	01635 845000 <a href="mailto:enquiries@newbury-college.ac.uk">enquiries@newbury-college.ac.uk</a>
Reading College	<a href="http://www.reading-college.ac.uk">www.reading-college.ac.uk</a>	0800 371434 <a href="mailto:enquiries@reading-college.ac.uk">enquiries@reading-college.ac.uk</a>

\*This list comprises of the institutions within Progress South Central Lifelong Learning Network's partnership.  
For more information on Private Training Providers and other Learning Providers in the region please speak to your college or training provider.

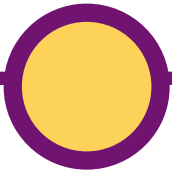


## Buckinghamshire

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
Bucks New University	<a href="http://www.bucks.ac.uk">www.bucks.ac.uk</a>	0800 0565 660 <a href="mailto:advice@bucks.ac.uk">advice@bucks.ac.uk</a>
Aylesbury College	<a href="http://www.aylesbury.ac.uk">www.aylesbury.ac.uk</a>	01296 588599 <a href="mailto:customerservices@aylesbury.ac.uk">customerservices@aylesbury.ac.uk</a>
Amersham & Wycombe College	<a href="http://www.amersham.ac.uk">www.amersham.ac.uk</a>	0800 614016 Via the Contact Us page on the website

## Hampshire

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
Basingstoke College of Technology	<a href="http://www.bcot.ac.uk">www.bcot.ac.uk</a>	01256 306560 <a href="mailto:information@bcot.ac.uk">information@bcot.ac.uk</a>
Brockenhurst College	<a href="http://www.brock.ac.uk">www.brock.ac.uk</a>	01590 625555 <a href="mailto:enquiries@brock.ac.uk">enquiries@brock.ac.uk</a>
Farnborough College of Technology	<a href="http://www.farn-ct.ac.uk">www.farn-ct.ac.uk</a>	01252 407041 <a href="mailto:info@farn-ct.ac.uk">info@farn-ct.ac.uk</a>
Highbury College	<a href="http://www.highbury.ac.uk">www.highbury.ac.uk</a>	023 9238 3131 <a href="mailto:info@highbury.ac.uk">info@highbury.ac.uk</a>
Sparsholt College	<a href="http://www.sparsholt.ac.uk">www.sparsholt.ac.uk</a>	01962 776441 <a href="mailto:enquiry@sparsholt.ac.uk">enquiry@sparsholt.ac.uk</a>

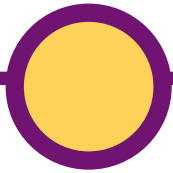


## Oxfordshire

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
Oxford Brookes University	<a href="http://www.brookes.ac.uk">www.brookes.ac.uk</a>	01865 484848 <a href="mailto:query@brookes.ac.uk">query@brookes.ac.uk</a>
Abingdon & Witney College	<a href="http://www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk">www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk</a>	01235 216439 or 01993 208028 <a href="mailto:enquiry@abingdon-witney.ac.uk">enquiry@abingdon-witney.ac.uk</a>
Oxford & Cherwell Valley College	<a href="http://www.ocvc.ac.uk">www.ocvc.ac.uk</a>	01865 551810 <a href="mailto:lwaweru@ocvc.ac.uk">lwaweru@ocvc.ac.uk</a>
Ruskin College	<a href="http://www.ruskin.ac.uk">www.ruskin.ac.uk</a>	01865 554331 <a href="mailto:enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk">enquiries@ruskin.ac.uk</a>

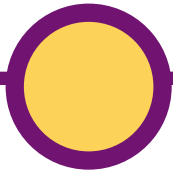
## Surrey

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
University of Surrey	<a href="http://www.surrey.ac.uk">www.surrey.ac.uk</a>	0800 980 3200 <a href="mailto:ug-enquiries@surrey.ac.uk">ug-enquiries@surrey.ac.uk</a>
Brooklands College	<a href="http://www.brooklands.ac.uk">www.brooklands.ac.uk</a>	01932 797 797 <a href="mailto:info@brooklands.ac.uk">info@brooklands.ac.uk</a>
Guildford College	<a href="http://www.guildford.ac.uk">www.guildford.ac.uk</a>	01483 44 85 85 or 01483 88 40 40 <a href="mailto:info@guildford.ac.uk">info@guildford.ac.uk</a>
Nescot College	<a href="http://www.nescot.ac.uk">www.nescot.ac.uk</a>	020 8394 3038 <a href="mailto:info@nescot.ac.uk">info@nescot.ac.uk</a>



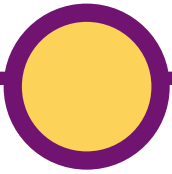
## Other regional providers

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
Swindon College	<a href="http://www.swindon-college.ac.uk">www.swindon-college.ac.uk</a>	0800 731 2250 Via the Contact Us page on website
Solihull College	<a href="http://www.solihull.ac.uk">www.solihull.ac.uk</a>	0121 678 7000 <a href="mailto:enquiries@solihull.ac.uk">enquiries@solihull.ac.uk</a>
Uxbridge College	<a href="http://www.uxbridge.ac.uk">www.uxbridge.ac.uk</a>	01895 853333 <a href="mailto:enquiries@uxbridgecollege.ac.uk">enquiries@uxbridgecollege.ac.uk</a>
The University of West London	<a href="http://www.tvu.ac.uk">www.tvu.ac.uk</a>	0800 036 8888
The Open University	<a href="http://www.open.ac.uk">www.open.ac.uk</a>	0845 300 60 90



## Other useful links

Institution	Web address	Phone and email
Learning Opportunities in the South East	<a href="http://www.learning-opportunities.org.uk">www.learning-opportunities.org.uk</a>	<a href="mailto:info@learning-opportunities.org.uk">info@learning-opportunities.org.uk</a>
fdf – Foundation Degree Forward	<a href="http://www.fdf.ac.uk">www.fdf.ac.uk</a> <a href="http://www.findfoundationdegree.co.uk">www.findfoundationdegree.co.uk</a>	Enquiries via 'contact us' on website
National Apprenticeship Service	<a href="http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk">www.apprenticeships.org.uk</a>	02476 826482 <a href="mailto:nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk">nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk</a>
UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service)	<a href="http://www.ucas.ac.uk">www.ucas.ac.uk</a>	0871 468 0 468 <a href="mailto:enquiries@ucas.ac.uk">enquiries@ucas.ac.uk</a>
Next Steps Careers Service (for 20+)	<a href="http://nextstep.direct.gov.uk">nextstep.direct.gov.uk</a> <b>or</b> <a href="http://www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk">www.careersadvice.direct.gov.uk</a>	0800 100 900
Connexions (for 13 to 19 olds)	<a href="http://www.connexions-direct.com">www.connexions-direct.com</a>	080 800 13219 Via the "email" link on website
Hot courses (information on part-time courses offered throughout the UK)	<a href="http://www.hotcourses.com">www.hotcourses.com</a>	<a href="mailto:support@hotcourses.com">support@hotcourses.com</a>
Student Finance	<a href="http://www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance">www.direct.gov.uk/studentfinance</a>	0845 300 50 90



## Frequently asked questions

### **What does the course cost in real terms?**

Apart from course fees, the cost of books and other study materials, you need to think about travel, child care, accommodation and other day-to-day costs. For information on grants for part time study see

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/Applyingfortheirsttime/DG\\_171530](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/Applyingfortheirsttime/DG_171530)

### **Am I too old to study a Foundation degree?**

You are never too old to study for a Foundation degree. The minimum age to start a Foundation degree is 18, but about 75% of students are over 21 when they start studying, and many are considerably older.

### **What help can I get for childcare costs?**

The help available will depend upon your circumstances, whether you are studying full or part time, and whether you are working. If you are working you may be entitled to tax credits. You may find the institution you are studying at has child care facilities for students. For more information see

[www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/Extrahelp/DG\\_171503](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/StudentFinance/Extrahelp/DG_171503)

### **How do I apply for a higher education course?**

If you have decided on a full time undergraduate course you need to apply through UCAS [www.ucas.ac.uk](http://www.ucas.ac.uk).

However; if you are applying for a part time Foundation degree or professional studies course you need to apply to the institution where you will be studying.

Published by



Progress South Central is the Lifelong Learning Network for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Surrey. We are a partnership of four higher education institutions; Buckinghamshire New University, Oxford Brookes University, University of Reading and University of Surrey and their partner colleges. Our priority is to support progression for vocational students into and through higher education.

[www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk](http://www.progresssouthcentral.org.uk)

Email: [psc@reading.ac.uk](mailto:psc@reading.ac.uk)

Information in this booklet is believed to be accurate at the time of going to press. Please refer to information on individual websites for the most up-to-date information. Booklet designed & produced by Bubble Creative Solutions Ltd.

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