



# How to employ an Apprentice

A guide for employers

# Apprenticeships at Blackburn College

Start a career Apprenticeship and become a Blackburn College Apprentice.

## What is an Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships are real jobs with training to full industry standards including a combination of training and study. Designed in collaboration with employers you will receive a structured programme - providing you with the knowledge, skills and behaviours you need to succeed whilst getting paid.

## An Apprenticeship includes:

- ▶ Paid employment with holiday leave
- ▶ Hands-on-experience in a sector/role of interest
- ▶ Formal assessment which leads to a nationally recognised



Nov 2024

*We are rated*  
**GOOD**  
for **Apprenticeships**  
by **Ofsted**



# Apprenticeships

## for businesses with ambition

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**Workforce planning allows you to think ahead and consider options for training your existing staff to fill posts in advance of taking on new employees to fill your skills gaps.**

An Apprenticeship Programme offers your business a cost-effective solution to make your training budget go further.

### Why employ an Apprentice?

From a cost-effective way of training employees with the skills your business needs, to seeing a positive return on investment - an apprenticeship programme is the best investment you can make to grow your business and build a motivated and loyal workforce.

### Two routes to taking on an Apprentice

You can employ a new recruit as an Apprentice - anyone over the age of 16 can apply. You can upskill or reskill your existing staff by enrolling them on to an Apprenticeship Programme.

## Train. Retain. Gain.



**Train** your new apprentices in the skills your business needs. Our experienced officers carry out a free Training & Needs Analysis (TNA) to identify any skills gaps that could be addressed by hiring an Apprentice.



**Retain** your valued employees by upskilling them on to a higher-level apprenticeship. Once qualified they will be equipped to bring innovative ideas ensuring your business remains successful and resilient.



**Gain** benefits of having motivated and highly qualified employees. Completing an Apprenticeship programme gives your employees a sense of pride and achievement. Employees mentoring them also get to pass on their knowledge and feel valued at the same time.



## How we assess applicants

We screen all potential Apprentice candidates before they make it on to our 'work ready' list. We do this by inviting them to undertake an Initial Assessment.

This is an assessment that is done under exam conditions. The Assessment checks their current level of English and Maths. Skills which are crucial for employees working in any sector.

We also analyse their CV for relevant work experience and check if they have existing transferrable skills for their chosen Apprenticeship programme.

We then interview them to ascertain their suitability as a potential Apprentice and to ensure they are 'work ready' for any job vacancies.

## Hassle-free recruitment

You can be assured, by the time candidates are recommended to you, they have been screened by us. We forward CV's of the most suitable candidates for you to interview.

So, you get a hassle-free recruitment process, and a high calibre 'work ready' Apprentice candidates. All we ask in return is that training is undertaken by Blackburn College.

## Apprenticeship Funding

### Levy paying employers

All businesses with a wage bill of £3 million or more will be contributing to the Apprenticeship Levy scheme – this money can be used for Apprenticeship training.

### Non-levy paying employers

SME Businesses will be eligible for 100% of funding for training apprentices ages between 16-24. If you employ an apprentice aged 25 or over, you will be required to pay 5% of the Apprenticeship training.

## Salaries

The minimum wage for Apprentices rises every April. The current rate is **£8.00** per hour, but you can pay more if you wish.



## Off the job training

From 1 August 2025, the Department for Education (DfE) introduced a new policy that sets a fixed number of off-the-job (OTJ) training hours for each apprenticeship, depending on the type of course. For example, the Level 3 Business Administrator apprenticeship now requires a minimum of 348 OTJ training hours. These set hours apply only to apprentices who do not have relevant prior experience in the subject area. Additionally, the DfE has clarified that the same OTJ training requirements will now apply equally to both full-time and part-time apprentices, removing previous distinctions based on working hours. This change aims to standardise training expectations and ensure consistent quality across apprenticeship programmes.



# Apprentice

## National Insurance Exemption – Under 25

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**Your business can save money and offset The National Insurance Contributions increase in salary costs by hiring an apprentice under 25 and potentially save £1000's per year.**

The National Insurance exemption applies to all apprentices under the age of 25, whether they are new or existing employees, provided they earn less than £967 per week.

In addition, employers may receive a £1,000 grant for each apprentice aged 16–18. From October 2026, a further £2,000 incentive will be available for recruiting apprentices aged 16–24.

There are also additional incentive payments available for 16–18-year-old apprentices undertaking a Foundation Apprenticeship.

Additionally, non-levy paying SME's can also receive 100% funding for training apprentices aged up to 24 on enrolment and 95% funding for apprentices aged 25 and over.

### E.g. Hiring an apprentice aged 16 – 18 (non-levy paying)

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**Salary** £18,000

**National Insurance saving (per year)** £1,950

**Training costs** £0

**Additional grants:**

- £1k 16-18
- £2k 16-24 Recruitment
- £2K 16-21 Foundation Apprenticeship

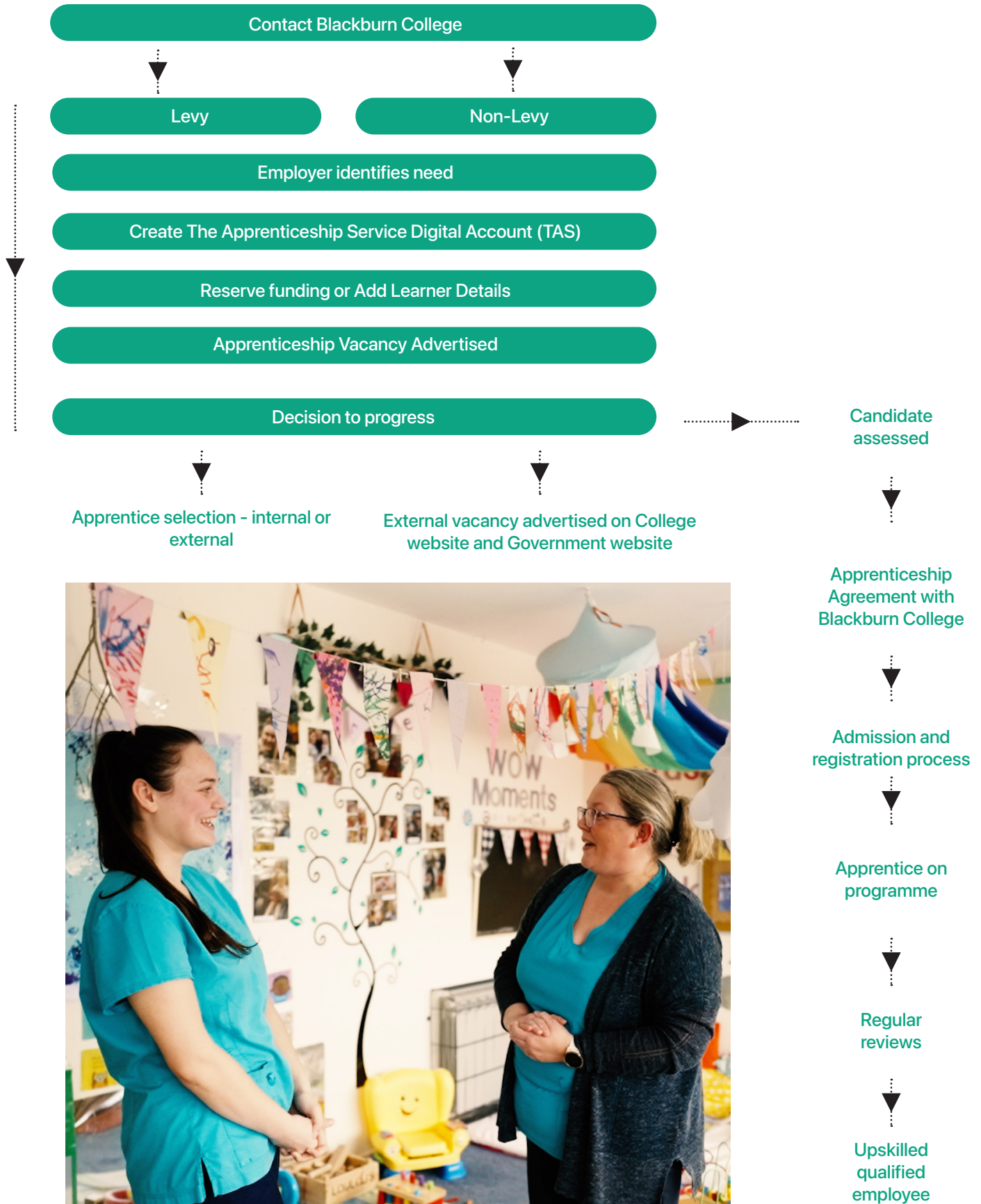




## In a nutshell

- ◆ No National Insurance contributions to pay for apprentices under 25
- ◆ You still get £1,000 grant for every 16-18 apprentice you employ plus another £2,000 for 16-24 and if an Foundation apprenticeship a further £2K.
- ◆ You get 100% funding for training apprentices aged up to 24 for and SME and if not fully funded by the Levy.
- ◆ SME get 95% funding for training apprentices aged 25 and over
- ◆ The apprentice must be on an approved UK Government apprenticeship standard
- ◆ The apprentice should earn less than £967 a week (£50,270 a year)
- ◆ The apprentice still pays Class 1 National Insurance contributions through their salary.
- ◆ This exemption only benefits the employer.

# The Recruitment Process and Funding



# 97.4%

## Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Achievement

### Ofsted 'Good'

Blackburn College is awarded a Good rating (November 2024)

What Ofsted had to say about Blackburn College:

**"Most apprentices make good progress on their apprenticeship and develop substantial new knowledge and skills".**

**"... apprentices develop swiftly the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours that they need to be successful".**

We can help you recruit! Once you complete a vacancy form, we advertise and manage the process, and identify suitable candidates for your role.



### Contact us - we'll help you all the way

Speak to our experienced Business Development Team to discuss your specific training needs and courses we offer.

We'll guide you through the recruitment and selection process and support you at every stage.  
**01254 292 500** or **apprenticeships@blackburn.ac.uk**

# Apprenticeships Available

**\* Higher Level Apprenticeship**

Take a look at our wide range of Apprenticeships we have available.

## Accounting, Business & Finance

Accounts / Finance Assistant Level 2

Assistant Accountant Level 3

### Professional Accounting Technician Level 4\*

Administration Assistant Level 2

Business Administrator Level 3

Customer Service Practitioner Level 2

HR Support Level 3

### People Professional Level 5\*

## Early Years & Education

Early Years Practitioner Level 2

Early Years Educator Level 3

Teaching Assistant Level 3

## Motor Vehicle

Autocare Technician Level 2

Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician (Light Vehicle) Level 3

## Textiles & Apparel

Sewing Machinist

## Digital

Multi-channel Marketer Level 3

IT Solutions Technician Level 3

Cyber Security Technician Level 3

## Hair & Beauty

Hairdressing Professional Level 2

Advanced and Creative Hair Professional Level 3

Beauty Therapist Level 2

Advanced Beauty Therapist Level 3

Beauty Wellbeing & Holistic Therapy Apprenticeship Level 3

## Construction & Engineering

Carpentry & Joinery (Site) Level 2

Carpentry & Joinery (Site) Level 3

Electrician Installation Level 3

Gas Engineering Operative Level 3

Domestic Plumbing and Heating Level 3

Engineering Operative Level 2

Engineering Machining Technician Level 3

## Housing

Housing and Property Management Assistant Level 2

Housing and Property Management Level 3

### Senior Housing/Property Management Level 4\*

## Health & Social Care

Adult Care Worker Level 2

Health and Social Care Foundation Level 2

Senior Healthcare Support Worker Level 3

Lead Adult Care Worker Level 3

Leader in Adult Care Level 4

# Apprenticeship Levels

Blackburn College can offer you a wide range of Apprenticeships across all levels.

## Foundation Apprenticeship

Level 2  
Approx 8 Months

## Intermediate Apprenticeship

Level 2  
8 – 18 months

## Advanced Apprenticeship

Level 3  
8 – 48 months

## Higher Apprenticeship

Level 4  
24 months+

The College works with a wide range of employers including:

- EG On the move
- Blackburn With Darwen Borough Council
- WEC Machining Ltd.
- East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust
- Ribble Valley Borough Council
- and many more.



# Phoebe Smith

## Employer

Together Housing

## Apprenticeship

Business Administration

## Quote

*"My apprenticeship helped me gain more knowledge because the work is practical, you get hands on experience doing it and it helped me gain more confidence "*



# Will Boyer

## Employer

Paul Wilson Electrical & Renewable Solutions Ltd

## Apprenticeship

Construction - Electrical

## Quote

*"I was able to get hands on experience from learning and my manager! "*



# Nico Novello

## Employed by

Andy Jones Barbers

## Apprenticeship

Hair & Barbering

## Quote

*"I chose to study at Blackburn College as I'd heard all good things from clients, friends and family, so it was a no brainer doing a Barbering apprenticeship!"*



# Romaisa Farooq

## Employer

401 Group

## Apprenticeship

Accounting

## Quote

*"The best thing about Blackburn College was my tutor, he gave me all the support I needed throughout my apprenticeship."*



# Looking after our Apprentices

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**We are dedicated to supporting our learners achieve their best. This includes our commitment to safeguarding and protecting the welfare of our students’.**

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is the term used for protecting people from maltreatment and keeping individuals safe and protected from harm, abuse and neglect. All students have the right to be protected from:

- ◆ Physical Abuse – deliberate physical injury/harm
- ◆ Emotional Abuse – abuse that has a negative impact on emotional health and wellbeing
- ◆ Mental Health Issues
- ◆ Sexual Abuse and Exploitation
- ◆ Neglect and Self-Neglect
- ◆ Domestic Abuse (unhealthy relationships)
- ◆ Forced Marriage
- ◆ Financial Abuse
- ◆ Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- ◆ Radicalisation and Extremism
- ◆ Discriminatory Abuse

## Our Safeguarding Team



**Matt Robinson**  
Designated  
Safeguarding  
Lead

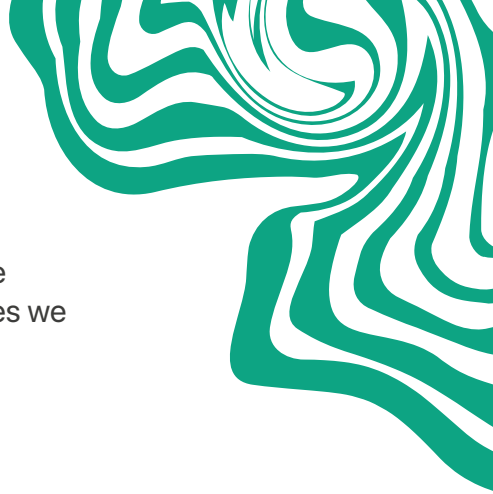


**Rachel Birleson**  
Operational  
Safeguarding Lead

**Zara Heffernan**  
Deputy Designated  
Safeguarding Lead

**Jayne Horsfall**  
Safeguarding  
Intervention  
Worker

**Rob White**  
Safeguarding  
Intervention  
Worker



## British Values

At Blackburn College we educate our students and Apprentices within the framework of fundamental principles and teach them the five British Values we as a country abide by.

- ◆ Democracy
  - ◆ The rule of law
  - ◆ Individual liberty
  - ◆ Mutual respect
  - ◆ Tolerance
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## PREVENT

Prevent is the Government initiative that aims to intervene early to support people susceptible to radicalisation and counteract the ideological causes of terrorism.

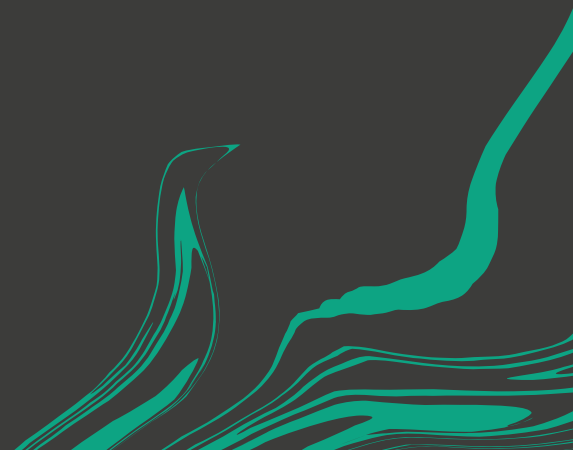
Radicalisation refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism.

To keep our Apprentices safe they undertake a College induction training course within 4 weeks of starting their Apprenticeship Course that covers the following:

- ◆ Radicalisation and Extremism
- ◆ Staying safe online
- ◆ What can you trust
- ◆ British Values

Discussions around the Prevent Agenda are revisited throughout the apprenticeship journey both in College and in the workplace.

Remember! If you have concerns or want more information, advice or guidance contact the College's dedicated Safeguarding Team.



## Safeguarding Direct Contact:

Telephone: **01254 292424**

Email: **[safeguarding@blackburn.ac.uk](mailto:safeguarding@blackburn.ac.uk)**

## Find out more

01254 292500

[apprenticeships@blackburn.ac.uk](mailto:apprenticeships@blackburn.ac.uk)

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