



Hawarden High School

UCAS & Apprenticeship Handbook 2026-27

A guide to completing UCAS applications and applying for Degree Apprenticeships

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Hawarden High School
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Civic Universities

Aston University
 University of Bradford
 University of Bristol
 University of Central
 Lancashire*
 City University
 Coventry University
 University of Huddersfield
 University of Leeds
 University of Liverpool
 University of Manchester
 University of Newcastle
 upon Tyne
 University of Portsmouth
 University of Salford
 University of Sheffield
 South Bank University
 University of Sunderland
 University of Teesside*
 *town not city environment

City Campus Universities

University of Bath
 University of Birmingham
 University of Exeter
 University of Hull
 Leicester University
 University of Nottingham
 Nottingham Trent
 University
 Oxford Brookes University
 University of Reading
 University of Southampton
 University of Surrey

Greenfield Campus Universities

University of East Anglia
 University of Essex
 University of Glamorgan
 Keele University
 Loughborough University
 University of Sussex
 University of Warwick

University of Buckingham (Private)

Collegiate Universities

University of Cambridge
 (Oxbridge)
 University of Kent at
 Canterbury
 Lancaster University
 University of Oxford
 (Oxbridge)
 University of York

Multisite Universities

Anglia Polytechnic
 University
 University of Brighton
 De Montford University
 University of East London
 University of Greenwich
 University of Lincoln
 Manchester Metropolitan
 University
 Middlesex University
 University of Northumbria
 University of Plymouth
 Staffordshire University
 Thames Valley University
 University of Westminster

Campus Clusters

Bournemouth University
 Brunel University
 University of Central England
 in Birmingham
 University of Derby
 London Guildhall University
 University of Hertfordshire
 Kingston University
 Leeds Metropolitan
 University
 Liverpool John Moores
 University
 University of Luton
 University of North London
 Sheffield Hallam University
 University of the West of
 England, Bristol
 University of Wolverhampton

University Colleges

Bath Spa University College

University College College
 Chichester
 Harper Adams University
 College
 University College
 Northampton (was Nene)
 Queen Margaret University
 College, Edinburgh
 Stranmillis University
 College, Belfast
 Surrey Institute of Art and
 Design,
 University College
 University College
 Worcester

University Of Wales

University of Wales,
 Aberystwyth
 University of Wales Bangor
 Cardiff University
 University of Wales
 Lampeter
 University of Wales,
 Swansea
 University of Wales
 Institute Cardiff
 University of Wales
 College, Newport
 University of Glyndwr
 Swansea Institute of
 Higher Education
 Trinity College Carmarthen

The Open University

University of London

The Colleges
 Imperial College
 King's College
 London School of
 Economics
 Queen Mary
 Royal Holloway
 University College
 Goldsmiths College
 School of Oriental and
 African Studies



Specialist Colleges

Courtauld Institute
Heythrop College
London School of Jewish Studies
The School of Pharmacy
The Royal Academy of Music
The Royal College of Music School of Slavonic and East European Studies
Trinity College of Music
The Royal Veterinary College
Wye College

Northern Ireland

The Queen's University of Belfast
University of Ulster
Stranmillis University College, Belfast
Enniskillen College of Agriculture

Scotland

University of Aberdeen
University of Abertay Dundee
University of Dundee
University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow
Glasgow Caledonian University
Heriot-Watt University
Napier University
Northern College of Education
University of Paisley
Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh
Robert Gordon University
Scottish Agricultural College
University of Saint Andrews
University of Sterling
University of Strathclyde

Higher Education Colleges

Bolton Institute of Higher Education
Cheltenham and Gloucestershire College of Higher Education
Chester College of Higher Education
Edgehill College of Higher Education
Roehampton Institute
Southampton Institute

Specialist Colleges

Askham Bryan College
Birmingham College of Food, Tourism and Creative Studies
Bishop Burton College
Bishop Grosseteste College
Central School of Speech and Drama
Cleveland College of art and Design
Cumbria College of Art and Design
Dartington College of Arts
Falmouth College of Arts
Herefordshire College of Art and Design
Kent Institute of Art and Design
King Alfred's Winchester
Leeds College of Art and Design
Leeds College of Music
Leeds Trinity and All Saints
Liverpool HOPE
Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts
The London Institute
Newman College of Higher Education
Northern School of Contemporary Dance
Norwich School of Art and Design

Oxfordshire School of Arts and Design
Plymouth College of Art and Design
Reading College and School arts and Design
College of Ripon and York St John
Rose Bruford College
Royal Agricultural College
College of St Mark and St John
St Martin's College
Lancaster: Ambleside, Carlisle
St Mary's, Strawberry Hill
United College, Theological College, Aberystwyth
Welsh College of Music and Drama
Westhill College
Wimbledon School of Art
Writtle College



Russell Group Universities

The Russell Group is a collaboration of twenty four UK universities that receive two-thirds of universities' research grant and contract funding in the United Kingdom. The Russell Group universities are committed to the highest levels of academic excellence in both teaching and research.

It was established in 1994 to represent the universities' interests to the Government, Parliament and other similar bodies. The group is chaired by Professor Evelyn Welch, of the University of Bristol.

The Russell Group universities are found in all four nations and in every major city of the UK. They operate globally, attracting international students and academic staff from many different countries, but have a strong role and influence within their regional and local community.

Students can choose from a wide range of internationally renowned courses – from medical, biological and physical sciences to business, social sciences and the humanities. More than half a million students are enrolled at Russell Group universities – one in five of all higher education students in the UK.

Through their outstanding research and teaching, links with businesses and a commitment to civic responsibility, Russell Group universities make an enormous impact on the economic, social and cultural wellbeing of the UK.

University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
King's College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool
London School of Economics
& Political Science
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
Queen's University Belfast
Queen Mary, London
University of Oxford
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick
University of York



THE RUSSELL GROUP



Academic Qualification Structure

The higher education qualifications awarded by universities and colleges in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are at five levels.

DOCTORATE (PhD) (3 Years)

An academic degree that indicates the highest level of academic achievement after 2 or 3 years of study after a master's degree. Usually paid to undertake.

MASTERS (MA/MSc) (1 Year)

Masters courses last at least one year (if taken full-time), and are taken by persons with Honours degrees. You can do a taught masters or a research masters.

HONORS DEGREE (BSc/BA) (3 Years)

Honours degrees form the largest group of higher education qualifications. Typical courses last for three years (if taken full-time) and lead to Bachelors degree with Honours, having a title such as Bachelor of Arts BA(Hons) or Bachelor of Science BSc(Hons)

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

The intermediate level includes ordinary (non-Honours) degrees, the Foundation degree, Diplomas of Higher Education and other higher diplomas and other higher diplomas.

CERTIFICATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION (1 Year)

A first step towards obtaining higher level qualifications, you must complete 120 credits of study at university (equivalent to finishing first year).

Admissions Tests

For entry onto some courses at university you must sit a test to gain entry onto the course. A full list of admissions tests, and the universities that require you to sit an admissions test can be found here:

<https://www.ucas.com/applying/before-you-apply/what-and-where-to-study/entry-requirements/admissions-tests>

REMEMBER! Not all universities require you to sit a test but it is YOUR responsibility to find out if the university you are applying to requires you to sit a test for the course you are applying for. It is also up to you to meet any deadlines set by individual universities, register for each test and organise sitting the test at an approved test centre.

Some of the most common admission tests can be found below:

UCAT: United Kingdom Clinical Aptitude Test

Courses required: You will need to sit this test if you are going to apply for medicine or dentistry courses.

More info: <https://www.ucat.ac.uk/>



TMUA: Test of Mathematics for University Admission

Courses required: You may need to sit this test if you are going to apply for mathematics, economics and computer science courses.

More info: <https://esat-tmua.ac.uk/about-the-tests/tmua-test/>



ESAT: Engineering and Science Admissions test

Courses required: ESAT is used by Imperial College London, University of Cambridge, and UCL for Engineering and Science based subjects.

More info: <https://esat-tmua.ac.uk/about-the-tests/esat-test/>



LNAT: Law National Admissions Test

Courses required: You may need to sit this test if you are going to apply for Law courses at specific universities. Not all universities require this for law.

More info: <https://lnat.ac.uk/>





APPLYING THROUGH UCAS

Essential Information:
School Number 15562

Buzzword for 2026/7 is:

HHSBUZZ

Students must enter this buzzword when they start their application for it to link to the school's UCAS dashboard.

Students will be shown how to do this during form and REACH.

Students know they need to create their account using a personal email address.

The cost of sending the application for the 2027 cycle is £34.50. This is paid at the point the application is sent off.

Understanding Entry Requirements



Full A Level	UCAS Tariff
A*	56
A	48
B	40
C	32
D	24
E	16

AS Level	UCAS Tariff
-	-
A	20
B	16
C	12
D	10
E	6

Universities will set entry requirements as **a points total, OR as specific grades** (usually in specific subjects), see below for an illustration:



Mathematics

University of Chester

Chester

BSc (Hons) · 3 years · Full-time · October 2026

UCAS Tariff: 112 points

To study maths at this university you need a total of 112 UCAS points, which can be obtained from getting 3 A levels at grades BBC or ACC or ABD etc.



Mathematics

University of Liverpool

Main Site

BSc (Hons) · 3 years · Full-time · September 2026

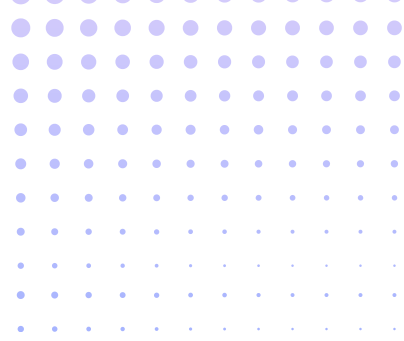
UCAS Tariff: N/A

To study maths at this university they do not accept a points total. When you click on the information you will see they require grades ABB, with a grade A in Mathematics being specified.



UCAS

Application Timeline



By 26th June 2026

Register account on UCAS and complete all basic information.



By 25th September 2026

Students need to have chosen the course they'd like to study and completed their first draft of their personal statement.



By **15th October 2026**

All applications for Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary, Oxford and Cambridge must be submitted.



By 23rd October 2026

For all other applications, the personal statements will need to be completed.



By **16th December 2026**

Internal school deadline for all remaining applications to be submitted.

Process for sending off the UCAS application

1. Students complete all of their basic information on the application. They have received a guidance document to help them do this.

2. Students upload their personal statement onto their UCAS application.

3. Selecting up to five courses on their UCAS application

4. When a student believes the application is complete they inform their form tutor during form time/REACH.

5. Their form tutor checks their application – they will inform the student of any changes/adaptions that need to be made.

6. The student makes the changes required. Then go back to step 4.

7. When the form tutor is satisfied the UCAS form has all been completed correctly they will email Mrs Birch for an appointment to 'send off'.

8. Mrs Birch will email the student with an appointment date and time (calendar invite). Mrs Birch will do the final checks on the form and then send it off.



Planning your Personal Statement

Things to know:

1. It's the hardest part of completing your application – make sure you allocate enough time to do it justice.
2. Think about any work experience, part-time jobs, or qualifications – e.g. Extended Project Qualification – you could include.
3. Our resources on ucas.com/personalstatement will help you.

1
Choose the subject you'd like to study



2
Review entry requirements



Look carefully at the information on the entry requirements tab in the search tool, and on the universities' and colleges' websites, to ensure you have the skills and qualifications they're looking for.

You can find courses starting the following year from May.



3

Attend events

Go to a UCAS exhibition or university open days to ask admissions tutors what they want to see in a personal statement. Remember to write down ideas!

UCAS exhibitions run from March to July (August to September in Scotland). Outside the UK, events are hosted by the British Council Education UK.

Three months before

4

Make a list



Make a list of what your chosen universities and colleges are looking for in a personal statement.

5

Write a draft

Write a first draft – refer back to the research you did about what to include.

Writing your personal statement (one month before)

6

Check it



Ask your parents, teacher, or careers adviser to check it for you and make any recommendations for how to improve it.

Three weeks before

Two weeks before

7

Make changes



Make any changes, and check your grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Check the length is no more than 4,000 characters or 47 lines of text (including blank lines).

8

Check again

Show your redrafted statement to your parents, teacher, or careers adviser for a final check.

9

Deadline

Copy and paste your final statement into Apply by the deadline.

10

Don't forget



Re-read it before you go for an interview – it may form the basis for their questions.



Personal Statement Structure

From 2026 entry, the personal statement will be structured into three scaffolded questions inside UCAS, rather than one continuous block. All answers combined must still be less than 4,000 characters (including spaces), and each question requires a minimum of 350 characters.

Question 1: Why do you want to study this course or subject?

Within this section we recommend students refer to the following:

Your motivations for studying this course(s): Have you been inspired by a key role model or moment in your life? Maybe it's a subject you love and want to pursue further. We're all driven by something and it's important to talk about how yours has led you to this course or subject area.

Your knowledge of this subject area and interests: Perhaps there's a particular subject area you've researched and can't wait to learn more about. A book or subject expert doing great things that have sparked your interest? Universities and colleges want to see you have done your research so they can be confident this is something you will enjoy and excel in. This is a great place to highlight super-curricular activities as evidence of curiosity and interest in the subject outside of the classroom.

Your future plans and why this is a good fit for you: If you already have a particular profession in mind you could talk about how you'll use this to launch your career. If you don't, think about what's important to you and your future, and how the knowledge gained from your chosen course(s) will help you achieve this.

Question 2: How have your qualifications and studies helped you to prepare for this course or subject?

How your studies or training relate to your chosen course(s) or subject area: This could be current or previous studies within a school, college, training provider, or even a short online university course – any form of formal education. The main thing here is to focus on what's most recent and relevant to your chosen course(s). If you are no longer in full-time education, use section three to talk about your experiences since leaving.

What relevant or transferable skills you have that make you a great candidate: Maybe there are a couple of subjects that have helped you develop a core set of skills required for your chosen course(s). Or, a particular module that helped you understand where your interests and strengths lie.

Any relevant educational achievements: Universities and colleges will see your grades elsewhere on your application so don't waste time talking about these. Consider accomplishments like winning a school or national competition, serving as a student ambassador or team captain, or landing the lead role in a play.

Question 3: What else have you done to prepare outside of education, and why are these experiences useful?

Examples of what you might talk about here are:

Work experience, employment, or volunteering: Whether it's in-person work experience at your local school or virtual work experience through Springpod or volunteering at a dog shelter, the key thing here is for you to reflect on your experiences and the skills gained relevant to your chosen course.

Personal life experiences or responsibilities: Is there a situation you've personally overcome that has influenced your decision? Are there responsibilities such as caring for a family member that has helped you develop essential qualities for the course like resilience and empathy?

Hobbies and any extracurricular or outreach activities: Think sports, Duke of Edinburgh, reading, music grades, community work, summer schools – any activities outside of your studies that help further showcase why you'd make a great student.

Achievements outside of school or college: This could be a position of responsibility such as captain for your local club, a musical achievement, competition you won, or a qualification you've attained outside of the classroom.

Post-education activities: If you're no longer in full-time education, it's a good idea to detail what you've been doing since and how this has equipped you with the skills and qualities for your desired course(s).



Personal Statement Contents

A Personal statement should include these general themes:

1. What you have done and how it is relevant:

This is where you show that you have an applied interest in the career you are applying for, and made effort independently to study/research further into the company/career/course.

Alternatively, say that you have done something that sparked your initial interest in pursuing your chosen course/career. If you say this, do not be vague. *Specify exactly what you did* that is relevant to the subject/career and say why you found it interesting. Make sure that what you are claiming to be interested in is covered in the university's teaching of the course or the job.

2. Background Knowledge:

Since you will be either at university or following a career to pursue a subject academically, the admissions tutors/personnel department want to see that you have an interest in doing just that, and that you know what it involves. They also want to be shown that you already have a grasp of the subject and that you are academically curious and eager to learn.

Unifrog offers MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), which students can sign up to, and attend online courses in their chosen field of study. These courses are delivered at degree level and provide invaluable insight into what the course at university will be like, and the topics likely to be studied.

Current affairs may also be a source of inspiration here. If there has been a news story relevant to your subject read a lot about it, mention that you have been following it with interest and point out what you have found to be the most engaging elements.

3. Reading (University Applications Only)

Discuss some of the books/articles you have been reading, and point out what you learnt from them and what you found interesting. The admissions tutors/personnel department are not interested in whether you found a book 'good' or 'bad', they want to know what issues it raised that you enjoyed thinking about.

In some cases it is a good idea to read several opinions on the same issue, you can then discuss your views from an authoritative angle which will suggest you have some academic vigour.

It is also a good idea to look on the university's website (or contact them) and find one of the introductory general texts to the subject or have a look at what their current areas of research are and discuss how these align with your interests.

4. Extra-Curricular Activities and the skills you have developed:

Unless you are extremely good at a sport (i.e. so that you could play for the university/company team) you should only mention it in passing. However, if you have been on tour with a sports team or won a competition you should include this information. Positions of authority in school suggest that you are conscientious. Include them if they sound good and whilst emphasizing your achievement within this role is important. If you have done something that very few others have done you will come across as interesting. You should also note, very briefly, what you got out of your activities and why you enjoyed them.

Exemplar personal statements can be found at:

Unifrog: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/series-personal-statements>

UCAS: <https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-university/writing-your-personal-statement/2026-personal-statement-guides>

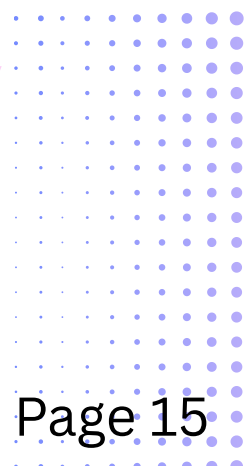


Unifrog is an **invaluable** tool which we use to support students with applications to university and with apprenticeships.

After logging in, students can use this platform to:

- Find out information on university courses in the UK, Europe, USA, Canada and Australia.
- Work on their personal statement and receive feedback direct from their form tutor (no sending emails back and forth).
- Access a huge library of exemplar personal statements.
- Find apprenticeships available and filter them by level, radius from home, closing date etc.
- Research careers and university subjects.
- Track their skills and join the talent pool where they can receive offers from universities and employers.
- Complete online courses to enhance their knowledge of the subject they want to study at university/do for a career through MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses)

Plus so much more!





Apprenticeships Explained

INTRODUCTION

If your child is interested in starting work and they are keen to learn some skills and gain qualifications, then an **apprenticeship** could be the right option for them.

- Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete and cover a wide range of industries, from engineering to accountancy, public relations to veterinary nursing.
- Apprenticeships are now available up to degree level and above. There are different entry requirements depending on the sector and job.
- Read a general guide to apprenticeships here (log in to Unifrog using your student account): <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/an-introduction-to-apprenticeships>
- Here is a guide specifically for parents on apprenticeships: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/for-parents-and-caregivers-what-are-apprenticeships>

APPRENTICESHIP BENEFITS

There are lots of benefits to doing an apprenticeship. You can learn while you earn and in a way that is best suited to you. As an apprentice you:

- earn a salary
- get paid holidays
- are paid while attending college
- receive training and gain qualifications
- can potentially progress to degree level

APPRENTICESHIPS CAN BE INVALUABLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE BECAUSE:

1. They provide access to real-world practical learning with up-to-date methods and technologies. For some jobs, for example in construction, engineering, hospitality and catering or office administration, real-world practical learning to exacting standards is the only way to learn the necessary skills.

2. They combine practical (on the job) learning with formal and theoretical learning in further education colleges or private training companies. This dual nature of apprenticeships means young people are able to gain a more expert grasp of their field. In addition, general education can be incorporated into apprenticeships so that gaps in literacy and numeracy skills can be filled.

3. They build character and employability skills. As well as providing valuable practical learning opportunities, the introduction to the practices and expectations of a profession or trade builds skills like learning to get on with others, working in a team, motivating oneself, using initiative and developing self-understanding. This fact is borne out by evidence that there is a wage premium for young people who undertake apprenticeships even if they leave the occupation for which they trained. In other words, apprenticeships build character and the employability skills that constitute the modern 'transferable skills' that employers repeatedly state are lacking in young people.



Levels of Apprenticeship

You can apply for different levels of apprenticeship

DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP

Level 6 or Level 7 (equivalent to Bachelor's or Master's degrees). As well as working on the job you study for a degree; you earn from day one and your tuition fees are paid by the employer.

HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP

Level 4 and above (equivalent to Foundation degrees and higher).

ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIP (CRAFT)

Level 3 which is equivalent to 2/3 A levels.

INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

Level 2, equivalent to 5 GCSEs.

TRAINEESHIP

Level 1 or Level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs or below). These last a maximum of 6 months; they are unpaid but you gain skills and qualifications.



Apprenticeships Application and Recruitment Process

Each company will have their own application system and there will be a variety of requirements specific to each different apprenticeship. The following list provides an indication of the variety of methods that may be required for an application. Application dates will vary between companies but most will open in Autumn and close by March 31st of the year of entry. Again this can vary from company to company therefore web-sites have to be checked regularly for these dates.

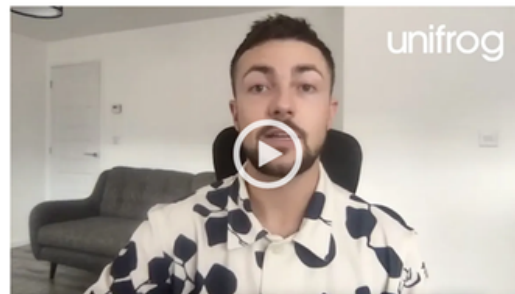
A guide on how to apply for an apprenticeship:

Log into your Unifrog student account, then click on this link to watch the video guide on the whole apprenticeship application process:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/featured/how-to-apply-for-an-apprenticeship>

How to apply for an apprenticeship
The complete step-by-step guide to getting on an apprenticeship

Share Like Back



General overview of the recruitment process:

Stage 1: For the majority of apprenticeships you will need to complete an online application form on the company's website. Usually as part of this you will need to upload a covering letter and a CV.

Stage 2: Your application will go through the company's screening process. It will check that you meet the academic requirements, your predicted grades, and look at the evidence you provided to support your application. Your overall application will be scored and only the top scoring applications will make it through to stage 3.

Stage 3: If you are shortlisted (based on your online application, cover letter and CV) you will usually be invited to complete an online assessment/s. Depending on the apprenticeship you've applied for the online assessment/s will likely be testing for your numerical reasoning, verbal reasoning, logical reasoning, situational judgement. Some companies will also require you to complete a psychometric test which measures behaviour and personality. For some applications you will need to go to the test centre to complete these tests.

Stage 4: Video interview/first interview. Your first 'face-to-face' with the company could be via a Teams call, or you need to record a short video introducing yourself and answering present questions.

Stage 5: Assessment centre. At the assessment centre the first part of the day will involve group work with team tasks. You will be there with other applicants and you will be set a challenge/task to complete together. You will be graded based on your ability to work with others, active listening skills and ability to contribute constructively and positively to the task/challenge.

Stage 6: Individual interview. Following the group tasks in the morning you will likely have an individual interview in the afternoon where you will be asked a series of questions.

Final: You will receive an offer, be placed on a reserve list or be rejected for the position.



Application Letter

Writing a winning cover letter:

We recommend reading this guide before drafting your first cover letter:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/how-to-write-a-winning-cover-letter>

General guidance:

Your apprenticeship cover letter is the introduction to your CV, flaunting your relevant qualities and emphasizing why you would be an excellent asset to the company.

Most people send cover letters in an email format with their CV attached. Companies might ask candidates to send a cover letter and CV as part of an application, or you might send a cover letter when speculatively applying for an apprenticeship.

Clearly divide your cover letter into paragraphs and end it "Yours sincerely" if it's being sent to a named person or if you haven't managed to find out a name then use: "Yours faithfully" followed by your name.

Letter Content

Paragraph 1—Use the first paragraph of your letter to explain why you are writing, to identify the apprenticeship you're interested in and to give them a unique reason why you think you'd be an asset to the company. Try to show enthusiasm and genuine interest in the apprenticeship and the company.

Paragraph 2—The next paragraph might outline why you're interested in the company, the apprenticeship and the industry. Try to come up with genuine and different reasons, not "I want to work for you because you're the best".

Paragraph 3— In your third paragraph, you might want to pick out the skills and qualities you have that would make you a great apprentice. Use the apprenticeship job description as a starting point, as, more often than not, it'll include a list of the qualities or competencies they are looking for. Back up your assertions with evidence. For example, if they are looking for an organised person who is good with numbers for a business apprenticeship, then make sure you show them how you have developed those skills.

Paragraph 4— In your letter address any formalities, such as saying when you're available for interview, or covering any practical issues they might ask about.

What general information should I put in my apprenticeship letter?

Qualities and Skills

An apprenticeship cover letter is a professional, formal letter and its content should reflect that. You want it to showcase your qualities and skills which are relevant to the apprenticeship. So before you do anything, make sure you've researched the company (their website is a good place to start) and the apprenticeship.

Company Details

What's different about the company? What are their values? Who are their customers? What does the apprenticeship involve? What do they look for in apprentices? You should also think about what attracts you to the company and the apprenticeship. **You need to tailor every cover letter to the company you are applying to!**

Structuring and formatting your letter

Even though you'll most likely be emailing your cover letter, it's important to abide by some letter writing rules. Try and address your covering letter to a named person (e.g. "Dear Clare Smith"). To do this, you'll need to contact the company and ask who is in charge of hiring apprentices. If you can't find out, then you might just have to settle for "Dear Sir/Madam" or similar. As with your CV, try using a free template from Canva or Word to make your cover letter stand out.

Writing a winning CV:

We recommend reading this guide before starting your CV:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/how-to-write-a-brilliant-cv>

What should a CV include?

- Your CV should contain your name and basic contact details.
- CVs aren't just a list of your achievements; they should be designed to sell yourself to a future employer, therefore the words you use in your apprenticeship CV are very important. You want to show your suitability for a job, which you can do, in part, by using positive verbs, lending your apprenticeship CV a proactive flavour.
- When talking about previous work experience or extracurricular activities, the use of passive statements to describe your roles and/or duties may disconnect you from them; in contrast, using active statements will show that you were personally instrumental in completing them.
- Use 'positive verbs'; words that you can use to demonstrate your personal contribution. For example, you might use words such as:
Negotiated/Supervised/Advised/Achieved/Coordinated/Developed/Demonstrated/Improved/Instigated/Designed/Developed/Established/Organised
- Ensure your CV looks appealing, and features elements of design to help you stand out. Templates with pre made designs can be found on Canva, Word and Unifrog. Some templates will also include a photograph. See examples from Canva.
- Next you should look at the essential and desirable criteria that the employer uses in the apprenticeship job description. If they say that they are looking for an "organised" and "efficient" apprentice, then you need to make sure you have used those specific words in your CV with examples (**use Point Evidence Explain –PEE**).
- As students enter the professional workplace, they may also want to consider setting up a LinkedIn account to support job applications:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/courses/featured/mastering-linkedin-kickstart-your-professional-journey>



Online Tests and Assessment Days

Here is a guide to assessment days:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/a-guide-to-assessment-days>

What is an assessment day?

When applying for certain jobs, like internships or graduate schemes, you could be invited to an assessment day (or centre). The event could be held at a company office, at a conference centre, at a hotel, or even online, and can last anywhere from a few hours to two days.

What happens on an assessment day?

The format of an assessment day can vary by company or organisation. You can expect to be given a series of exercises that test your ability to perform the role. Each exercise deals with one aspect of the job, like your ability to problem-solve or work with others. Instead of being nervous, you should use the day as an opportunity to show off your skills!

These tasks can include any of the following:

- **Situational judgement tests:** These are designed to find out how you'd behave in a work-related situation. You'll be given a scenario (e.g. a customer complaint) and asked to describe how you would deal with it.
- **Group exercises:** These measure your ability to work in a team, contribute to discussions, and delegate tasks to solve a problem. Assessors look for those who listen to others, share ideas, stay organised, and are positive team players.
- **In-tray exercises:** You'll be given a scenario and set of fictional documents which you'll use to answer questions and decide on a course of action.
- **Presentations:** You might be asked to deliver a presentation to the group. This will show assessors whether you're able to present in a well-structured, clear, and confident way. Find a guide here: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/how-to-master-public-speaking>
- **Psychometric tests:** The most common assessments are personality questionnaires, numerical reasoning tests, and verbal reasoning tests. These tend to be strictly timed (usually between 15 and 30 minutes) and multiple choice. DO NOT ASK YOUR PARENTS TO DO THE PSYCHOMETRIC TEST FOR YOU! Find a guide here: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/an-introduction-to-psychometric-tests>
- **Individual interviews:** Some assessment days include an interview where you're asked a series of skill-based and scenario-based questions. Find a guide here: <https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/how-to-ace-your-job-or-apprenticeship-interviews>

If you're invited to an assessment day, you'll likely receive an agenda so you know what to expect. Once you know what the day will look like, you can begin to prepare.



Preparing for Assessment Days

Here is a guide to assessment days:

<https://www.unifrog.org/student/know-how/direct/a-guide-to-assessment-days>

How can I prepare for an assessment day?

- **Get familiar with the role.** Take some time to understand the job description and the skills required to succeed in the role. Some organisations may have a set skill framework used to assess applicants, which can be found on their websites. To prepare for skill-based interview questions, use the [Skills tool](#) to log examples that you can use in answers.
- **Research the organisation.** Read their website, their social media profiles, and any reports or blog posts they've published to learn more about an organisation. You may uncover new reasons to be interested and motivated to join the team. Plus, you'll have things to talk about with current employees that you'll meet on the day.
- **Create an introduction.** Think about how you'll introduce yourself to both staff and other candidates in the introduction session and during tests. You don't need to make a strict script, but keep note of things you definitely want to include in that first introduction.
- **Practise.** Whether it's a specific skill (like speaking a language or using Excel spreadsheets) or just general preparation for the assessment day, remember to practise. Mock interviews or practice tests can be really helpful in getting you prepared. You can find practice tests online, and some organisations have their own. The more you practise, the more you'll feel prepared. Just remember to take time out too. Otherwise, you might burn out and not be at your best during the assessment day.

Things to remember on the day

- **Don't be shy.** If you have an opinion, share it. Try to be assertive during group exercises and build others up to show that you are competent and considerate.
- **If you make a mistake, don't sweat it.** It's far more effective to focus on the next task. Employers like to see that you can bounce back confidently from a simple mistake.
- **Remember to listen and listen well.** Assessors won't be impressed by candidates who talk over other people or are unnecessarily critical of their ideas.
- **Be friendly.** You're being assessed on your general fit for the company not just your aptitude for the role, so try to show that you can get on easily with a range of people.

Don't forget that you've been invited for this assessment because the company thinks you're a promising candidate. So be confident, remember your strengths, and try to enjoy yourself!



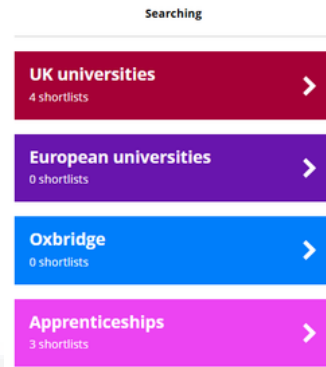
Using Unifrog to Search for Apprenticeships

Students can use Unifrog to search for all apprenticeship opportunities as they arise within a given radius, please watch the short video on the 'Apprenticeship Tool' here:

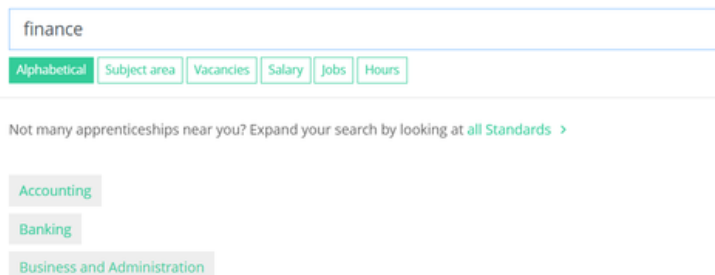
<https://www.unifrog.org/student/help/direct/the-apprenticeships-tool>

Step-by-step:

Go to your Unifrog homepage and scroll down until you see these boxes, click on Apprenticeships



2. Enter a key word, such as accounting, click all the tiles related to that career which you might also be interested in.



3. You will have entered your postcode, now select a radius of how far you are happy to travel for your apprenticeship.



How far do you want to travel?
Narrow down your search using the distance limits below.

* Your postcode CH5 3DN (change?)

* Choose radius

2 miles - 0 vacancies	5 miles - 0 vacancies	10 miles - 2 vacancies	20 miles - 8 vacancies
50 miles - 54 vacancies	100 miles - 162 vacancies	200 miles - 423 vacancies	
No Limit - 453 vacancies			

and 39 nationwide vacancies



next or go back



Using Unifrog to Search for Apprenticeships

4. Select the level of apprenticeship you'd like by clicking on the descriptor.

Degree apprenticeship is equivalent to a university degree (and is usually done in conjunction with an established university).

Higher is usually for degree equivalent qualifications e.g. HND/HNC.

Advanced is equivalent to A Levels. Intermediate is equivalent to GCSEs.

Levels (4):

Intermediate - Develop basic knowledge and skills for specific jobs. Formal qualifications are not usually required, though you might need English and Maths at GCSE level or to take equivalent functional skills training.

Advanced - Develop good knowledge and skills for specific jobs. You'll usually need to have a few GCSEs including English and Maths.

Higher - Develop high knowledge and skills for specific jobs. You'll usually need to have GCSEs including English and Maths, and you'll often need an A level or equivalent qualification that is relevant for the role.

Degree apprenticeship - Develop high skills for a specific job, while also getting a related Bachelor's or Master's degree. You'll usually need to have achieved good grades on A levels or equivalent qualifications that are relevant to the role.

5. You'll then be shown the apprenticeships available based on start date. Click on the ones you're interested in (you can select up to 10) and click next for more detailed information:

Rank ▾ Filter ▾

Starting very soon (0) Within 4 weeks	Starting soon (11) Within 1-3 months	Starting in a while (23) In 4+ months
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tax Assistant RSM Distance: 7 miles Advisory School Leaver Apprenticeship Programme BDO Nationwide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Analyst - Retail Banking - Degree Apprenticeship HSBC Distance: 6 miles Senior Relationship Management

6. Start planning which ones you'll be applying to, making a note of the closing dates.

Please go through your CV and covering letter with your form tutor to ensure it stands out!



Companies with Annual Apprenticeship Opportunities

Company	Focus Areas	Company	Focus Areas
Airbus	Logistics Aerospace Engineering Finance Human Resources Facilities	Laing O'Rourke	Engineering Construction Commercial Management Information Technology
Armstrong Watson	Accountancy & Finance	Jaguar Landrover	Engineering
Arqiva	Communications	KMPG	Accountancy & Finance
Bank of England	Operations Technology Statistics	Hendersons	Finance & Logistics
BBC	Journalism Digital and Engineering Production Business	Mazars	Accountancy & Finance
BDO	Finance	National Grid	Engineering
Boots	Finance ICT Logistics Human Resources Marketing	Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC)	Accountancy & Finance
Deloitte	Business & Finance	Read Construction	Engineering, Construction, Commercial Management, IT, Finance & more
DHL	Logistics	RSM	Accountancy & Finance
EY (Ernst & Young)	Accountancy & Finance	Ship Safe Training	Marine Engineering
Fujitsu	Business and IT	Virgin Media	Data
Grant Thornton	Accountancy & Finance	VISA	Technology & Business Finance

Through completing the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales qualification, learners will:

- develop, apply and be assessed on their skills of Planning and Organisation; Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving; Creativity and Innovation; and Personal Effectiveness (the 'Integral' Skills)
- be given opportunities to further develop their skills of Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Competence (the 'Embedded' Skills)
- develop an appreciation of the importance of skills development as a key aspect of life-long learning
- engage in active, creative, and learner-led opportunities
- enquire and think for themselves, plan, make choices and decisions, solve problems, and reflect on and evaluate these
- develop initiative, independence, and resilience work independently, take on responsibilities and work effectively with others.

COURSE OUTLINE

The Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales is comprised of three sections which are followed by all learners,

Global Community Project (25%)
Future Destinations Project (25%) and
Individual Project (50%).

Global Community Project

Non-exam Assessment (NEA): approximately 50 hours

25% of qualification

72 marks: 90 UMS

Learners will demonstrate application of the Integral Skills whilst considering complex global issues and participating in local community action (at least 15 hours) to promote citizenship in a sustainable world and Wales.

Future Destinations Project

Non-exam assessment (NEA): approximately 40 hours

25% of qualification

72 marks: 90 UMS

Learners will demonstrate application of the Integral Skills whilst exploring future destination goals for life, employability, and citizenship in a sustainable world and Wales.

Individual Project

Non-exam assessment (NEA): approximately 80 hours

50% of qualification

96 marks: 180 UMS

Learners will demonstrate application of the Integral Skills whilst planning, managing, and conducting an independent research project (extended written project or artefact).

This course is equivalent to an A level and is accepted by all universities and favoured by apprenticeship employers, such as Airbus.