



## Department for Education

Hello and welcome to your apprenticeship

'Get In. Go Far'. That's the message you have seen in adverts across the country to boost high quality apprenticeships. And now, you have decided to join this growing movement of people who want to get the skills they need to get on in life. From Harlow to Hartlepool, from Blackburn to Bodmin, huge numbers of people are following their career dreams by starting an apprenticeship.

With an apprenticeship, you will gain the knowledge, the skills, and crucially, the industry experience necessary for a successful career. And even if you later decide to do a totally different job, the skills you have gained will give you a huge advantage.

Every apprentice counts. No matter who you are, or where you are from, or whatever you want to do, an apprenticeship will open up doors for you. And not just at work.

Apprenticeships are an opportunity to acquire skills and professional experience, but they have a much wider impact. You will gain confidence in your talents, approach new situations outside your comfort zone and, maybe, even unlock new dreams and aspirations.

When hiring an apprentice, an employer expects significant benefits for the business: fresh talent, increased productivity, a better-prepared workforce. But you should have high expectations, too, and make sure you get the best deal out of your apprenticeship.

You are entitled to an apprentice minimum wage (starting at £3.40 per hour, if you're under 18 or in your first year, increasing to £5.55 if you're over 18, and in line with the National Living Wage if you're over 25 and in your second year), a number of learning hours that should be agreed with the employer before starting, and regular assessments of your progress.

You can access all details about pay and much more in this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

I recently heard from Anna Schlautmann, an apprentice in Greater Manchester. She said: "I knew there were many benefits to gain from an apprenticeship despite some of my peers and teachers discouraging my choice. Although now they have seen the amount that I have achieved - meeting the Prime Minister at Downing Street, speaking in Parliament, contributing to business objectives and working abroad. I now get invited to my old college to promote apprenticeships to the students. Many of my peers wish they had done an apprenticeship."

It all shows that with an apprenticeship, you can truly do anything you want.

And get ready to hear much more about apprenticeships in National Apprenticeship Week 2017 which takes place between March 6-10 next year.

Thank you for your commitment to apprenticeships. Now – climb that ladder of opportunity!

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Robert Halfon MP