

An Employer's Guide to Apprenticeships



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Why choose Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are designed to meet the needs of your business. The training is always relevant and it is tailored to the needs of your sector by people who genuinely understand what you do. They are designed by business for business. They are a mixture of on and off the job training which will enable you to get the workforce you want now and in the future.

Most apprentices attend College on a day-release basis, working towards a technical certificate which provides the under-pinning knowledge to the NVQ qualification being achieved in the work place. Key skills, including Communications, Application of Number and IT are also included in most apprenticeship programmes. Although the priority is for 16-24 year olds, apprenticeships are currently available to older individuals.

Apprenticeships can provide your business with the following benefits;

- Improved productivity and company performance. Apprenticeships equip young people with the skills and knowledge to do the job better
- Well trained and motivated staff. Because they are motivated they are keen to learn and this can rub off on other staff. By offering apprenticeships you will find it easier to recruit and retain the right people

- Help you to avoid skills shortages and allow you to invest in your business's future. By taking on an apprentice you acquire specialist skills that help you keep abreast of new technology
- Cost effective recruitment
- Relevant training
- Demonstrate your commitment to staff development
- Help meet the costs of training

Your apprentices will benefit in the following ways;

- Earn and learn at the same time
- Achieve a recognised qualification
- Receive excellent support, advice and guidance
- Nationally approved programmes of the highest quality

Invest in your
company's future



Why Choose City College Coventry?

City College Coventry has been providing apprenticeships for over ten years. Our success rates are the best in the region and our region's results are the best in the country!

Our work based learning provision achieved a grade 2 (good) at a recent Ofsted inspection. The Ofsted report said our;

“...responsiveness to the needs and interests of learners and employers is good.”

“Learners receive good advice and guidance.”

“Assessment is accurate and fair.”

Our Apprenticeship unit works closely with employers across all industry sectors where we offer apprenticeship programmes to ensure they are happy with our training and support. Don't just take our word for it. Some of the employers we have worked with past and present include;

Jaguar Landrover, Arriva, Travel West Midlands, Coventry University, Cassidys, Warwick Hospital, Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust, Connaught, Coventry City Council, First Group, Hall Brothers, Lak-lers builders, Trinity Motors, Toni & Guy Hairdressers, Halifax Property Services, University of Warwick and ABC nurseries.

What City College Coventry, can offer its apprentices;

- Excellent impartial advice and guidance to ensure that the right learning path is chosen

- Additional support in the gaining of English and Maths qualifications
- An individually designed learning plan to develop their skills and knowledge
- A personal tutor that will support the apprentice throughout their time at college
- Careers advice
- A confidential counselling service
- Advice on financial support
- Additional learning opportunities for when the apprenticeship has finished

The college's equality of opportunity was rated by Ofsted inspectors as 'good' and given a grade 2 at a recent inspection. They described the specialist resources as good and the staff as well qualified.

We offer apprenticeships in the following areas;

- Accountancy (New)
- Administration
- Construction Crafts
- Children's Care, Learning & Development
- Electrical Installation (New)
- Engineering
- Hairdressing
- Light Vehicle
- Plumbing
- Public Service Vehicles



General Information

Entry Requirements

Entry requirements will differ between apprenticeship programmes depending on the programme that is being studied.

Attendance

Attendance is usually one day per week.

What apprentices study

Apprentices will normally study an NVQ in the area related to their work at either Level 2 or Level 3 depending on whether they are an apprentice or an advanced apprentice. They will also undertake a technical certificate. Some apprentices undertake Key Skills in Application of Number, Communication and I.T. depending on their programme of study.

Assessment

Assessment methods may differ between different programmes but are likely to involve a combination of assessment at college and in the work place.

Our Accountancy and Electrical Installation apprenticeship programmes are new for 2008/09 and are already proving popular with local and regional employers. If you or your potential apprentices require course information related to the specifics of the entry requirements, modules of what is studied and assessment information please contact our Course Information team on 0800 600 212 for further details or log on to our website www.covcollege.ac.uk

If you would like to find out more about how City College Coventry can help improve your business with an apprentice please call Diane Grover, Apprenticeship Manager on (024) 7679 1111 for further details or email d.grover@covcollege.ac.uk

National Apprenticeship Contracts

Public Service Vehicles

Applications to be an apprentice in Public Service Vehicles come to the college from as far afield as the Isle of Arran and Cornwall.

They attend college on a block release basis while completing practical skills in the workplace where they live.

While many of our customers are from large, national organisations a growing number of our apprentices are also employed in the Coventry, Warwickshire and West Midlands areas.



On Board with Apprenticeships



National Express West Midlands (formerly Travel West Midlands) is one such company who has a regular in-take of apprentices each year.

National Express see the apprenticeship route as an important one into entering into the industry. They have around fifteen apprentices on programme each year across their eleven bus depots in the Midlands which service 1800 vehicles. Each depot is responsible for the maintenance of around 140 vehicles. With an ageing workforce (aged on average at 45 years old) it has never been more important for National Express to ensure that young people with the right skills are employed and trained to avoid future skills gaps. Not that they seem to have any problems recruiting, Nick Sorrill, Engineering Support Manager for Training and responsible for apprentices across the West Midlands said, "Our apprenticeships are really popular. We no longer have to advertise we are able to attract people just through word of mouth."

"Although it is a predominantly male workforce we have three female apprentices one in our stores, a body maker and an electrician. All of our apprentices are trained to the level where they can hit the ground running and be a fully competent member of the team."

Apprentices engaged on the programme go to college in blocks for one to two weeks every few months. Those who live close enough travel to and from college on a daily basis. However, those living further away are able to stay in host accommodation in Coventry close to the college.

Nick said, "Staying in digs is good in many ways. There is the obvious social side for the apprentices meeting up with others in the same boat but also because the college days are demanding with long hours they understand what it is like to be a responsible adult."

Frances Mullally, Engineering Manager at Yardley Wood Bus Depot, whose father was also employed by the bus company said, "With apprenticeships you get the best of both worlds. Work gives them the opportunity to have a break from education and enables them to practice their skills in the workplace and the college side gives them a break from work and gives them the chance to compare notes with other apprentices."



Inam Ul-Hussain, is just beginning the third year of his apprenticeship as a fitter. He said, "I am really enjoying my apprenticeship, it's brilliant. I was really interested in lorries as a kid but when the opportunity came up here to work with buses I jumped at the chance. I haven't looked back. I want to gain as much experience as I can and improve my practical skills."

National Express is proud of their track record with apprentices and the retention of employees in general as there are very few leavers. Frances said, "You can't buy that kind of loyalty. This company is very family oriented. We have some people working here whose children, wives and other relatives are also employed, as well as their parents and grandparents before them."

Apprenticeships are recognised at every level of the business with even the Director of Engineering Standards being an ex-apprentice.

Nick Sorrill said, "We have been working with City College Coventry for around 10 years on the delivering of apprenticeship programmes and are really happy with the impact they have had on our business and how they have enabled individuals to progress with their careers."

Our Pledge

When Apprentices join a programme with City College Coventry they sign a pledge between themselves and their employer which confirms both parties' commitment to the training programme ahead. Each March we celebrate this commitment with a Pledge Ceremony where employers and apprentices are invited along to formally receive their pledges.



Our Current Apprenticeship Programmes

Accountancy

This course is part of an education and training scheme designed by the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) to provide highly skilled support staff in the fields of finance and accountancy.

The scheme consists of three stages:

1. **Foundation Stage**
Level 2 Apprenticeship
2. **Intermediate Stage**
Level 3 Apprenticeship
3. **Technician Stage**

For those persons already employed in a Finance/Accounts role, entry to the scheme would normally be at Foundation Stage.



Administration

The Apprenticeship in Administration is designed for young people who wish to pursue a career in office work and want to become skilled across a broad range of administrative procedures. An apprenticeship usually takes between one and two years to complete, depending on the needs of the employer and apprentice, and is a mixture of day-release and in-company training.

Shonel Taylor-Smith, aged 19, is one such apprentice currently working through her NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration. She is employed by Morgan Est plc part of the Morgan Sindall Group who is a major UK provider of infrastructure services across the public and private sectors. The business specialises in the design and delivery of complex civil engineering projects and utilities services to the defence, water, gas energy and transport sectors.

She began her employment in September 2007 within reception at Morgan Est plc where the apprenticeship programme was built into the job she applied for. Her talents were soon recognised and as she expressed an interest in financial matters Shonel moved to work in the finance department where she is currently working as Cash Book Assistant. Her line manager, Bob Hodges, Financial Accountant and Treasury Manager, believes that employing an apprentice has been both beneficial to the company and the individual.

He said "Shonel is an excellent worker. At Morgan Est plc she has the opportunity to learn a number of different disciplines and has taken opportunities to network with colleagues of all different ages and experiences. She makes the most of her time here and has learned a lot from others."

morgan=est



On the benefit of apprentices to Morgan Est plc Bob said "We have found having a bright apprentice a real benefit to our organisation. We believe given the right opportunities within the company young people are able learn about how a busy office works, how to follow procedures and protocols and develop a good career. We encourage all of our staff to have a voice within the organisation and embrace any individual's involvement and ideas."

Shonel who travels into City College Coventry one day a week enjoys what she learns at college. She said

"I find my college course really useful. I have learned a lot about how to use Microsoft Office applications, Key Skills such as application of number and communication and how business organisations work."

Construction Crafts

The Apprenticeship in Construction is designed for young people who are interested in working in the construction industry. The apprenticeship covers all aspects of the trade and is a structured training programme negotiated with the employer. An apprenticeship usually takes between two to four years to complete, depending on the abilities of the employer and the apprentice to cover the work based competencies. The young person would normally attend college two days a week with the remaining time spent with the company.



Treading the Boards of the Royal Shakespeare Company

After a recommendation from its president HRH Prince Charles that its set building staff were all approaching retirement, the Royal Shakespeare Theatre decided that recruiting an apprentice carpenter was the way to go. Enter Ben Morris who impressed the RSC so much with his maturity and enthusiasm at interview that they did not hesitate taking him on.

Ben 20, undertook GCSEs and then A Levels but in the second year of his A Level programme he decided that he didn't want to go on to university but to follow a more practical route. He is currently working with twelve world class carpenters, with whom Ben says 'it's an honour to work. I am getting to learn from the best set designers in the world, getting paid and having support with my training from City College Coventry. The programme has helped improve my confidence and is helping me to reach where I want to get to.'

Derek Bromley, Ben's Assessor at City College Coventry said, "The RSC is a wonderful place to work and Ben is in a unique position to learn some traditional skills from some outstanding carpenters."

To date Ben has worked on sets for 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'The Taming of the Shrew.'

Children's Care, Learning & Development

The Apprenticeship is appropriate for those with an interest in or already working with young children. The Advanced Apprenticeship at Level 3 offers a work-based route with part-time attendance at college to gain the necessary skills and knowledge to develop their career in this field.

The Railway Children

The Railway Children is a traditional nursery based in Canley Coventry accommodating up to thirty six children from 3 months to pre-school age. It is unique in its practice of traditional child care principles such as babies taking their naps in old fashioned Silver Cross prams outside throughout the year, the use of Terry Towelling nappies and all staff adorning 1950's smock uniforms. The nursery has been operating for sixteen years and serves the local community and employees of local businesses and students and from nearby Warwick University.

Julie Clarke who has ten years experience in caring for children and babies in Warwickshire has been nursery manager there for three months. She employs two apprentices within the business and thinks the programme works very well. She said, "Apprenticeships are a common route for employees to progress into childcare careers. I am very pleased with progress that our apprentices have made. They have been able to complete their programme relatively quickly due to the fact that working in a busy nursery gives them the opportunity to accrue a great deal of evidence to meet all the required criteria."

"With the girls going to college one day a week there is added value to their practical experience as they learn about the process behind what they do at work everyday and learn about how children develop."

Zoe Capok 18 of Canley has had links with the nursery since she was a child herself. She always envisaged going into child care as she had spent a lot of time baby sitting and loved being around children.

"I really enjoyed my apprenticeship. At college they teach you best practice which is great. I am going to go onto my Level 3 qualification when I have decided which mode of study is best for me. I have worked at the Railway Children for just over a year but I love it here so much I can see myself being here for a very long time."





Hairdressing

The Apprenticeship in Hairdressing is designed for young people who wish to gain a professionally recognised qualification in order to practise hairdressing. An Apprenticeship usually takes between two to four years to complete and is a mixture of day-release and in-company training.

College Apprentices mean Business

Two of City College Coventry's ex hairdressing apprentices joined forces three years ago to open hairdressing business Re-Vibe in Tile Hill, Coventry. Rachel Sheen and Emma McKinney met when working at another hairdressing salon together as Stylist and junior stylist respectively.

Rachel said, "I had always wanted more than I had. Opening a salon was a dream I wanted to make come true. Emma and I got on really well and she wanted the same things as me so going into business together seemed like the natural step."

Re-Vibe opened in 2005, and having had some support from Women in Business and the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (LEGI) now employ six members of staff and is a thriving small business seeing over one hundred clients a week.

Emma McKinney won Apprentice of the Year when she was at the college seven years ago and now employs two apprentices of her own.

Emma said, "Being an apprentice is an ideal start to a career in hairdressing. At college you learn the theory and get an opportunity to practice your skills and within the salon environment you learn how the business works from the most basic tasks like sweeping the floor and hair washing through to colouring and cutting and eventually you build up your own client base."

Clare Gatehouse and Sian Lindsay are both progressing through their apprenticeship training while working at Re-Vibe. Clare is a junior stylist and been training for two years. An ambitious girl herself she is set to enter a National Hairdressing Federation competition later in the year and her bosses have high hopes for success.

Sian is just starting her second year of training at City College and admits she always wanted to be a hairdresser. "I was interested in hairdressing when I was at school and worked at the salon on a Saturday. I have really enjoyed my training so far. Going to college has helped teach me some basic techniques and it has enabled me to meet and compare notes with other hairdressers."

Apprenticeships are the key way to enter the hairdressing profession and neither Emma or Rachel hesitated in employing apprentices. "We can see the benefits to learning on the job and going to college one day a week. We would certainly take on other apprentices should the business warrant it."

Light Vehicle

The apprenticeship in light vehicle is designed for young people who are interested in working within the retail motor industry in vehicle maintenance and repair. An apprenticeship usually takes between two to four years to complete, depending on the needs of the employer and the apprentice.

Plumbing

The apprenticeship in plumbing is designed for young people who are interested in working in the plumbing industry. The apprenticeship covers all aspects of the trade and is a structured training programme negotiated with the employer. An apprenticeship usually takes between two to four years to complete, depending on the ability of the learner and the needs of the employer. The young person would normally attend college one day a week with the remaining time spent with the company.

Plumbing Success

Andy Holt employed by T Stratton & Sons won the prestigious British Plumbing Employers Council (BPEC) West Midlands Lead Championship last year. The apprentice triumphed over thirteen other colleges which were taking part. The BPEC Championship is a nationally recognised award which showcases the talents of lead workers.

Simon Stafford employed by Bob Mansfield Heating & Plumbing Ltd, won the national Heating and Ventilating Contractors' Association (HVCA) Craft Trainee of the Year Award in a formal ceremony which took place at the Houses of Parliament in June 2008.

Simon was nominated for the award by his employer Bob Mansfield. Bob said, 'I had no hesitation nominating Simon for this award. He is a talented engineer and deserves his achievement.'

In the last eighteen months, former college student Raynor Stanley, employed by Bob Mansfield Plumbing and Heating picked up four prestigious awards for his achievements. In 2006 Raynor became the Learning and Skills Council Apprentice of the Year, two months later in won the Summit Skills Award for best Plumbing and Heating student and the Endeavour Trophy at the City of Coventry Freeman's Guild Apprentice of the Year Awards.

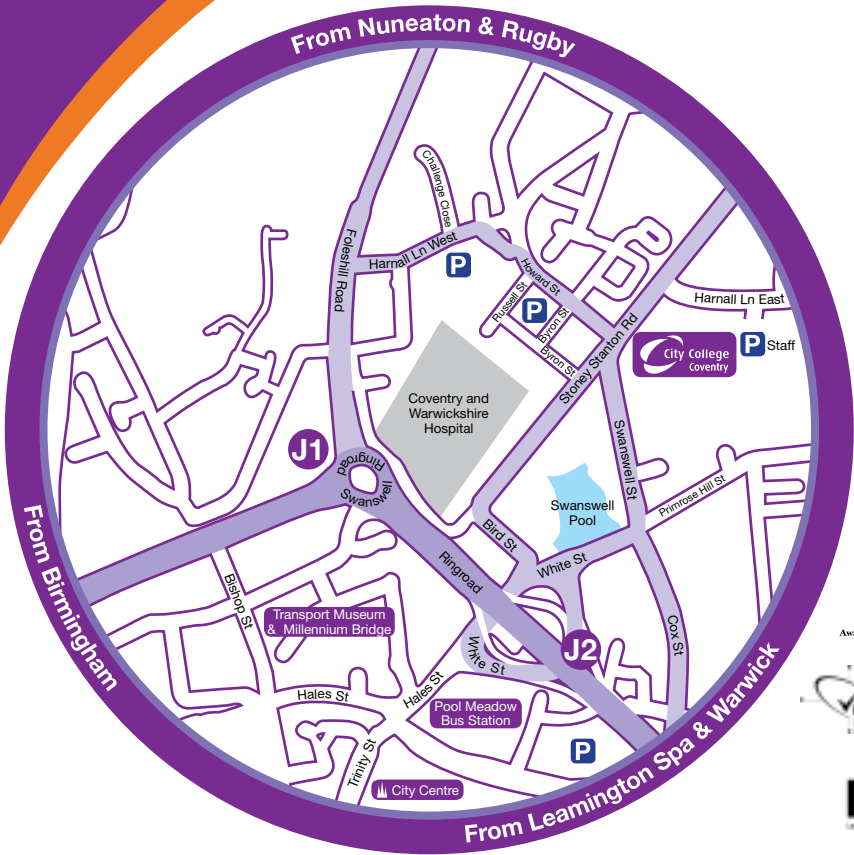
Bob Mansfield his employer commended Raynor's achievements. 'Raynor is a credit to the company and the college. He is meticulous and 100% reliable. He always has a smile on his face and it's a pleasure to work with him.'

Raynor proud of his record endeavours humbly added, 'You can only achieve what I have achieved with the backing of a good boss. Bob has encouraged me at every turn which gave me the confidence to push myself further.'

Contact

If you are interested in finding out how an apprentice can benefit your organisation please contact Diane Grover, Apprenticeship Manager on (024) 7679 1111 or d.grover@covcollege.ac.uk





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