

SCIENCE



Apprenticeships

TEACHER & CAREER ADVISOR RESOURCES





HOW MUCH DOES IT PAY?

National Minimum Wage for apprentices under the age of 19 or in the first year of their apprenticeship changes on a regular basis. The current hourly rate of pay is £7.55. For apprentices aged 19 and over who have completed the first year of their apprenticeship, the National Minimum Wage or National Living Wage applies, depending on their age. Apprentices are entitled to the apprentice rate if they're either aged under 19 or aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

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Many employers will offer much higher rates of pay (£18-£25k pa.) but it is important for students to understand before entering into an apprenticeship that rates of pay do vary significantly depending upon a number of factors.

Location: The cost of living can vary significantly depending on the region or city. In areas with a higher cost of living, apprenticeships might offer slightly higher wages to help apprentices cover their living expenses.

Apprenticeship Level: The level of apprenticeship can have a significant impact on wages. Higher-level apprenticeships (such as Level 5 and above) tend to offer higher wages compared to lower-level apprenticeships (such as Level 2 or 3).

Employer Policy: Each employer can set their own wage policies for apprenticeships. Some employers may choose to pay their apprentices more than the minimum required by law to attract and retain talented individuals.

Progression: Some employers may offer wage increases as apprentices progress through different stages of their apprenticeship. For example, wages might increase after completing the first year or upon achieving certain milestones.

It's important for students to research and understand the prevailing wage rates for their specific scientific focus and location. They should also explore opportunities with different employers to compare wage offers and benefits



A brief history of apprenticeship wages...

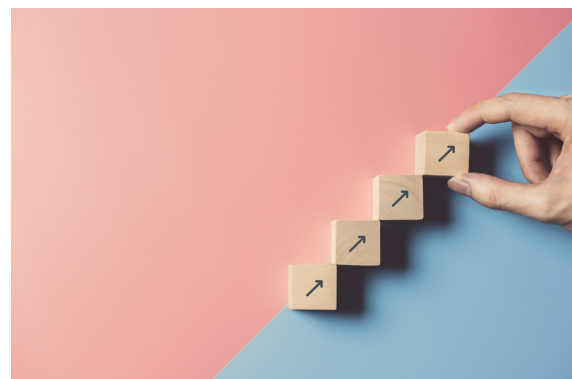
In years gone by, apprenticeship wages were often regarded as a nominal stipend, barely enough to cover basic expenses. The emphasis then was predominantly on learning rather than financial gain. Apprentices were often young individuals seeking an alternative route to career development, attracted by the prospect of gaining hands-on experience while refining their skills under the mentorship of seasoned professionals.

As the English economy emerged from the global financial crisis, a renewed focus on cultivating skilled workers began to take shape. It was during this period that apprenticeship wages started experiencing gradual increments. Industries such as construction, manufacturing, and science took modest steps toward recognising the value apprentices brought to their respective sectors. This shift was reflective of a broader change in mindset, where employers and policymakers began acknowledging the pivotal role apprenticeships can play in addressing the skills gap and boosting economic growth.

As the decade progressed, a more pronounced evolution unfolded. The UK government's commitment to apprenticeships was underscored by the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in 2017. This initiative

compelled larger employers to invest in apprenticeship programs, resulting in a renewed impetus to increase wages to attract and retain quality talent. The levy not only bolstered the number of apprenticeship opportunities but also catalysed a shift in the perception of apprenticeships from a supplemental learning experience to a robust career pathway.

The subsequent years have witnessed a surge in apprenticeship wages across industries. Sectors that historically offered lower wages, like retail and service, began to re-evaluate their compensation structures, recognising that a more competitive wage not only attracted diverse talent but also improved the overall quality of their apprenticeship programs. Industries that relied heavily on technological advancements, such as IT and engineering, experienced more substantial wage increases to align with the demand for specialised skills.



What is the Back the Future Campaign?

We are a collective of employers, intermediaries and apprenticeship training providers who believe we should be backing the UK's future talent pipeline by not paying apprentice minimum wages, but by providing decent and fair pay for all apprentices employed in the UK. We are committed to addressing social mobility issues by ensuring individuals are not put off applying for apprenticeships because pay is too low.

<https://www.apprenticedecentwagepledge.com/>