

THE GUIDE TO SECURING A

# COMPETITIVE APPRENTICESHIP



# WHY DID WE CREATE THIS EBOOK?

## HOLLY HOBBS



‘I am passionate about making information about alternative routes to university & college more accessible to students.’

Holly finished her A-levels in May 2021 and was struggling to land herself an apprenticeship. After over 30 rejections later, she finally landed herself a role on Microsoft’s Degree Apprenticeship scheme! This apprenticeship changed her life & she wouldn’t be where she is today, without it. Over all her applications she was able to develop key strategies that eventually landed her the apprenticeship. This eBook is an overview of those.

# HOW TO USE THIS EBOOK EFFECTIVELY.

## ONE

***Schedule time aside to digest this eBook.***  
*It is important to devote time to prepare for the application process.*

## TWO

***Write down key points from each page.***  
*Or print out the eBook and highlight key points.*

## THREE

***Refer to the checklist (at end of eBook).***  
*Each time you apply for an apprenticeship. Keep on top of your game.*

## FOUR

***After reading refer to Interviews that Impress,***  
*and implement everything using the workbook.*

# INTRO TO APPRENTICESHIPS.

# APPRENTICESHIP LEVELS.

**Level 2**

Equivalent to GCSE's



**Level 3**

Equivalent to A-levels.



**Level 4**

Equivalent to a foundation degree.



**Level 5**

'Higher'



**Level 6**

'Degree Apprenticeship' - Equivalent to a Bachelors Degree.



**Level 7**

Equivalent to a Masters Degree.

# CONTENTS.

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# WHERE TO FIND APPRENTICESHIPS.

## USE WEBSITES

- [Gov find an apprenticeship service](#)
- [urfuture.io](#)
- [UCAS](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)

## GOOGLE SEARCH

Go straight to company career pages that you're interested in and see what they offer. Not all available apprenticeships will be shown on third-party websites. Or search A-Z companies in the UK and go through the list checking career pages to see what's on offer. Use the Gov find an apprenticeship service & our TikTok of course!

## USE LINKEDIN

Search for apprenticeships through the 'Jobs' tool. Change your account to 'Open to finding a new job'. This will be visible to recruiters and they can message you regarding any positions they have in mind that would suit you.

# HOW TO DECIDE ON YOUR COURSE.

## A USEFUL WEBSITE

[Institute for apprenticeships.](#)

This website shows 669 apprenticeship standards.

Use the 'apprenticeship search' tab.

Search key words related to your interests and click on each.

## USING IT

You can then read up on what each course entails and decide if they interest you. Most people just read job descriptions but actually the course is just important. For many of them, you're using your job to demonstrate you've learnt the skills inside each module, so you'll have to find projects that fit the curriculum.

## ASK & WATCH

Watch videos on different apprenticeships on our TikTok/IG channel. And another great channel is @urfuture. Another great way is to ask apprentices themselves what they do - you can do this by messaging them on LinkedIn.

# THE APPLICATION PROCESS.

\*Varies across each employer.

## Online application

You may have to attach your CV and some employers ask application questions. Personal Statements & Cover Letters are less commonly requested.

STEP  
**01**



STEP  
**02**

## Tests

You may be required to complete tests such as English, Maths, Situational or Psychometric etc depending on the role you apply for. You are often timed on these.

## Video Interview

Next, you will typically be invited for a video interview. You will have a set amount of time to complete it. There will be a set amount of time to speak and possibly a set amount of times that you can re-record your answer.

STEP  
**03**



## Assessment centre

This is normally the final stage. It could consist of interviews, group activities, research tasks or presentations. There will likely be an opportunity to ask their apprentices questions here too.



STEP  
**04**

## Job offer!

Well done. Time to celebrate!

STEP  
**05**

# CV TIPS.

Make sure your CV is **clear** and **concise**.  
Do not over write.

Try things out yourself.  
E.g. if you need marketing experience start your own social media page.  
Document your progress and add to your CV.

Start your sentences with verbs e.g. manages, delegates, solves. This is clear and immediately grabs attention.

If you don't have paid work experience, speak about things you were involved in at school/college or clubs.

No experience is invalid. It doesn't matter if it was for a day/week or it was with family, write it down!

Join Facebook groups to help you gain knowledge. For example, there are multiple marketing groups with tips in. Sometimes people offer opportunities for others to gain experience within these too.

Complete courses around your desired job sector. This makes you stand out as you are going above and beyond to educate yourself.

Make sure your CV is **tailored** to **each** application and sector you wish to go into. Use key words from each job description - but use some of your own too!

# CV TEMPLATE.



Click [here](#) to make yours.

YOUR NAME

Your town | Mobile number | Your email

## EDUCATION

Secondary School

School Name

GCSE

Dates

- A list of your subjects and grades.

College

College name

A level

Dates

- A list of your subjects and grades.

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## WORK EXPERIENCE

Company name

Location

Dates

*Job role title*

- Enhanced...

- Awarded...

- Resolved...

- Granted...

- Solved...

- Praise received from managers...

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## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Company name

Location

Dates

*Job role title*

- Managed...

- Delegated...

- Guided...

- Regulated...

- Covered...

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## HOBBIES, INTERESTS & ACHEIVEMENTS

Examples:

- Duke of Edinburgh

- Sports related

- Promotions



@howtogetanapprenticeship

# CV EXAMPLE



YOUR NAME

Your town | Mobile number | Your email

## EDUCATION

Secondary School

School Name

GCSE

Dates

- A list of your subjects and grades.

College

College name

A level

Dates

- Psychology - B, English - B, Business - B
- Throughout my time in education, I developed excellent essay and creative writing skills. I have used researching, planning, organising, essay writing, reviewing, referencing and time management skills to complete an English A Level piece of coursework consisting of 3,800 words.

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## WORK EXPERIENCE

Company name

Location

Dates

*Customer Assistant - Cashier*

- Enhances customer satisfaction by paying attention to detail and taking suggestions to the Store Manager based on customer feedback, for example prompting the re-organisation of the food bank donation point. Number of donations boosted as a result, helping the local community.
- Awarded a card and chocolates from my Store Manager and Management team in April 2020 congratulating me for the positive comments received from customers and thanking me for all my hard work delivering great customer service.
- Granted a further card and chocolates in March 2021 from a member of the leadership team for always taking it upon myself to complete the end-of-day tasks before the store closes to support the team leader.
- Resolving issues that customers have in a polite and efficient manner with the ability to maintain a calm demeanour when customers get frustrated, or things do not go as planned, helping those around me feel at ease.

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## LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Company name

Location

Dates

*Teamleader*

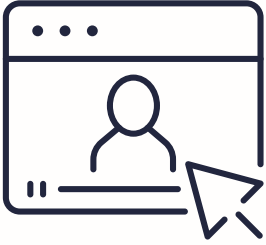
- Covering the Team Leader's breaks by supervising a team of up to 10 checkout staff.
- Regulating the 'I Don't Queue' number across the course of the shift to ensure the best possible service for customers is maintained.
- Guiding queues of customers to checkouts or assisting customers in finding products.
- Managing break times across the team.
- Delegating tasks to the team during quiet dips to keep them engaged with their work. Including putting unwanted items back, emptying the bins, collecting up all the baskets and trolleys.

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## HOBBIES, INTERESTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Examples:

- Since the age of 3 years old I was part of a dance school where I participated in yearly competitions and bi-annual performance shows at large theatre stages in London.
- I regularly read self development books and attend the gym to consistently improve on myself mentally and physically.
- Duke of Edinburgh
- L2 First aid for mental health



# COURSES TO ENHANCE YOUR CV.

<https://www.coursera.org/>

Free and paid courses at Beginner, Mixed, Intermediate and advanced levels.

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/>

Free and paid.  
Post on LinkedIn as a creditation.

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

Free and paid.

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

Free and paid.

Once you have completed a course, find a way to implement your new knowledge into your life. This could be by implementing marketing principles into a new social media account or leadership qualities into the netball team.

Write about this on your CV.

# HOW TO USE EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES TO CREATE A PORTFOLIO OF EXPERIENCE FOR YOUR CV

This could be your part-time job, work experience, projects at school/college etc

# 1

## ALWAYS LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES

For example, when something needs improving - escalate it with your team so you can make an impact.

E.g., a food bank donation point was not in a noticeable/accessible place for people so by speaking to the leader, it was moved and as a result the donations increased for the local food bank. Document this on your CV.

# 2

## GO ABOVE AND BEYOND

Go above and beyond to build strong relationships with team members. Offer to support people if they are in need of help.

Always be on the look out for ways you can make an impact within the team and go above and beyond for customers too. If you get recognition, document this on your CV.

# 3

## REFER TO OUR GUIDE BELOW

We have created a brief checklist for you to use during extra curricular activities. Utilise this to make sure you are gaining the most out of your job to help you with interviews and applications for apprenticeships.

# 4

## THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX

Gaining experience doesn't have to solely be through employment.

At college run for head boy/girl or organise events/trips (you could document this as managing a mini project).

Within your hobbies offer to volunteer and organise projects/events.

# THE EXPERIENCE CHECKLIST.

## HOW-TO DOCUMENT GAINING EXPERIENCE

Appraisals from team members

Positive customer feedback

Processes you have made easier

How you have been inclusive

A time when you provided brilliant customer service

When you pushed for something in a group although it was unpopular

Key skills you bring to the workplace

Used your judgement to find another way to do something

A time when you learnt from a mistake

When you displayed qualities such as resilience

A time when you led a group of colleagues/a project

What makes you a good team member

How you deal with certain situations e.g. upset customers

When you took a risk to get something done

An undesirable outcome that you had to rectify

Your greatest weakness that you are working on

# VIDEO INTERVIEW

## TIPS AND TRICKS

These are normally after the initial application stage, when an employer has read through or screened your application/CV meaning they can come through quite fast.

Complete them ASAP as there is normally a limited amount of time to do so and the employer will want efficient and proactive candidates that get the interview done, so keep this in mind.

**1**

Plan your answers to interview questions before you get invited to any interviews. Holly created a bank of questions & answers and rehearsed them before so she knew exactly what she wanted to talk about (you can see these in our Interviews that Impress E-book). This is important as you normally have to submit your video interview fast after being invited.

**2**

Don't think of these as an 'easy step'. You must prepare properly as although these interviews are only you talking to the camera, there is a possibility that you only get one attempt at each question. Also this is the first proper impression a recruiter gets from you - make it count!

**3**

Make sure you have properly researched the company. If a fact about them was easy to find, keep digging to find something not so easy, that way you will stand out from other candidates.

**4**

Search on google 'X video interview questions' (X being the company you have an interview with). There are lots of forums that have companies interview questions on and can help you prepare more efficiently.

# ASSESSMENT CENTRES

## Tips and tricks:

01

**Let your personality shine through** in interviews whilst remaining professional. Recruiters want to get to know **you**.

Holly showed the interviewer her crazy collection of self development books and white boards - it was quite amusing as there was so many! This was great as Holly and the hiring manager were able to laugh with each other and Holly also showed her desire to learn as well as her organisational abilities.

02

**Research the heck out of the company.**

Do not just research the generic 'values' etc. HOW are they putting these core values into place? What is the company currently doing for its external stakeholders? There are lots of things you could dive deep into. Ensure you show how you relate to the points you have researched, this illustrates how you would be a good fit to the company.

Holly went as far as knowing the name of the company's Key Accessibility Officer. This really impressed the hiring manager. Refer to page 12.

03

**Ask current apprentices for tips on LinkedIn.**

An apprentice gave Holly pointers on what to research which really paid off! The pointers were things that she would not have thought of otherwise. (Refer to page 13)

# ASSESSMENT CENTRES

## Tips and tricks#2:

04

### **Go above and beyond to stand out**

Some companies may require you to do a Power-Point presentation on a brief they have created. This may be provided before the interview meaning you will have time to prepare prior to the interview commencing. Alternatively, companies may provide a brief unexpectedly at the beginning of the interview and give you 30 minutes to prepare. This could be on things such as:

- Research tasks
- Creative tasks

For instance: you were given a brief the week before your assessment centre to present your campaign idea that showcases a new product launch at the company. The obvious idea would be to just create a PPT around this. However, to stand out you must think outside of the box. For example, you could create an example of the campaign you pitched in your presentation.

You could do this by creating a short 'TikTok style' social media campaign and attaching it to the end of your presentation with reasons as to why you did it.

This is likely to be something that not many others would include, making you stand out!

05

### **Put yourself in the hiring manager's shoes.**

This can be effective as you are almost referring to a 'mark scheme' just like you would in an exam to get the outcome you desire. Write down a list of things you think an interviewer would be looking for and prepare for each of the 'criteria' (this can be generic things such as 'Have they done the research on the company?' or niche to the company; 'Do their experiences and past decisions match with X value?'). More on this in our 'Interviews that Impress' E-book.

# HOW TO PROPERLY RESEARCH THE COMPANY.

When preparing for an apprenticeship interview, the chances are high that you are competing for a place with lots of other candidates. Integrating research into your answers at an interview is something that can really help you to stand out, so knowing how to do it properly is super important. Refer to Interviews that Impress for examples of this. Make notes and conduct your research along these lines for each interview you have.

## Know the basics.



The company's core values  
The products and services  
The company history  
What the job role you're interviewing for entails and what area of the business its in.



## Dig deeper.

What is the company currently doing for its stakeholders?  
What recent news have they released in the press?  
What have they recently announced on their social media?  
What do they use their social media profiles for?

## Ask for insights.



Tell their apprentices that you're preparing for an apprenticeship interview at their company and would like to know if there is anything they think you should research as you prep. (Refer to page 13).

# THE SECRET TO GAINING CONNECTIONS using LinkedIn



## Find current apprentices...

### Send them a message on LinkedIn:

Hi \_\_\_\_\_, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am reaching out to you today as I saw that you are an apprentice at \_\_\_\_\_. I am currently in the last stage of the hiring process at \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_ apprenticeship scheme and would appreciate any advice you have as I am moving onto the assessment centre stage. I would love to connect with you. Thanks in advance!

- The current apprentices have been in your position and went through the same process as you.
- Holly connected with current apprentices on LinkedIn. They gave her interesting pointers to research which made her stand out from the crowd.
- You could also implicitly mention that you had connected with employees within the business at the interview, showing that you are proactive.

### If you can get the interviewee's contact details, send them an email/message on linkedIn:

## After the interview...

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I hope this email finds you well.

I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I was interviewed by you today regarding the \_\_\_\_\_ apprenticeship scheme at \_\_\_\_\_pm/am.

I would like to follow on from this by thanking you for taking your time to interview me today.

It was a very interesting session and emphasised the excitement I have for this role. I am looking forward to hearing from you about the next steps.

If you have any further questions for me, please do not hesitate to get in touch. It was a pleasure to meet you today.

Best wishes,  
\_\_\_\_\_.

# CHECKLIST.

TO MONITOR YOUR PREP

- Take time to read this eBook thoroughly.
- Note any key points that stood out to you.
- Become clear on the type of apprenticeship you want.
- Use the part-time job checklist.
- Create your CV using our tips.
- Create a bank of answers to interview questions.
- Rehearse the questions in front of someone.
- Write down a list of apprenticeships you will apply for.
- Tick the list as you apply and tick again for next stages.
- Connect with apprentices at the company on LinkedIn.
- Find an outfit to wear for interviews.
- Write down what worked for you and what didn't.
- DM our instagram if you are struggling with a stage.
- Reward yourself for even getting through the 1st stage.
- Celebrate a successful application!
- Share your results on your socials.

‘Rejection will teach you more than success’

‘You only fail when you fall down and stay down’

‘What’s meant for you will not pass you by’



# Keep getting rejected?

Reframe your mindset!



‘Things worth having in life don’t come easy’



‘It’s not personal’



‘Rejection is just redirection’



# THANKS FOR READING

HEAD TO OUR [LINK TREE](#) TO APPLY  
FOR VACANCIES NOW



Share & tag us!



@howtogetanapprenticeship