

information for learners



Aim higher...
next steps to success for apprentices



aim higher...
www.learnandwork.org



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well done!

You have successfully completed or will soon complete your Advanced Apprenticeship. If you are thinking of continuing your learning to support your career then you are already aiming higher.

This guide has been produced to help you plan and take your next steps to success into higher learning.

Did you know... over 40% of students in higher education are studying part-time, so you can continue to earn while you learn?

the advantages of higher learning

With your Apprenticeship and higher level qualifications you can offer employers the best of both worlds. In you, they will have an employee with important practical skills and higher level qualifications that demonstrate your knowledge.

Today's workforce has to be talented, flexible and multi-skilled. Employers want people who can manage their own time. They want team players who have an up-to-the-minute understanding of their industry. Education and training strengthens your planning, organisational and management skills

Remember... people with higher level qualifications have a greater chance of well paid employment. On average, someone with a level 4 qualification will earn £200 per week more than someone with a level 3 qualification. That's over £10,000 extra every year!

new opportunities

By embarking on a part-time or full-time course you are opening yourself up to lots of new influences and opportunities. People from all walks of life enter into higher learning. Imagine what you can learn from them and the new friends you will make.



Apprenticeships equip you with the relevant skills and knowledge to help you climb the career ladder. There are hundreds of opportunities on offer at colleges and universities that can help you progress in your career and more and more Advanced Apprentices are now going on to obtain higher qualifications. You have a number of options:

foundation degree

These are new qualifications that lead to:

- ▶ FdA (Foundation Degree in Arts)
- ▶ FdSc (Foundation Degree in Science)
- ▶ FdEng (Foundation Degree in Engineering)

Foundation Degrees are a new class of degree, developed especially for those following the work-based learning route. They can be studied on a day release basis and can be topped up to a Bachelors degree with further study. For further information about Foundation Degrees have a look at

www.fdf.ac.uk

www.foundationdegree.org.uk

higher national certificate/diploma

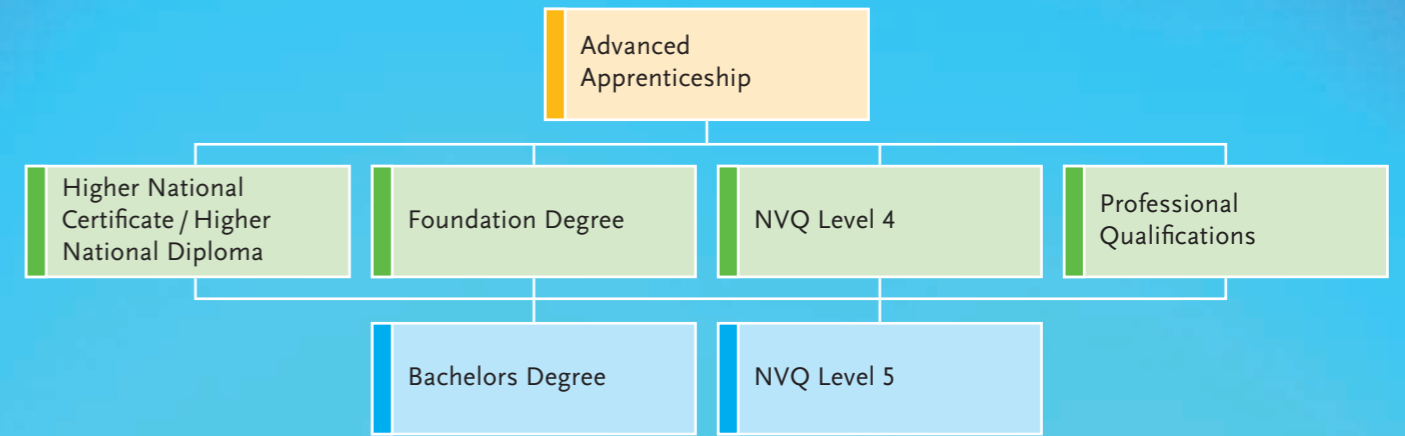
You can study for a HNC/D. This is a typical route for a number of skill areas including business and engineering. An HND will allow you to join a degree course to gain a Bachelors degree with one or two years extra study.

nvq level 4/5

These qualifications are a continuation of the level 3 NVQ completed as part of the Apprenticeship. NVQs at level 4 and 5 are commonly based around management roles and may be more applicable as your career progresses.

professional qualifications

These qualifications are common in the accountancy and insurance sectors. Gaining this type of qualification will enable you to gain membership to the relevant Association or Institute.



Kerri Vosper



After leaving school I worked in Woolworths where I completed a Foundation Modern Apprenticeship in Retail Operations. I then joined Grosvenor Facilities Management and started work with Bodmin Hospital as an administrative assistant and went on to complete an Advanced Apprenticeship. After gaining a CMI (Chartered Management Institute) Certificate and NVQ Level 3 in Supervisory Management, I am now working towards the CMI Level 5 Diploma in Management.

I chose to go on to higher learning in order to broaden my vocation and climb the career ladder in my organisation. I felt strongly that I could prove to myself that I was capable of completing NVQs and Diplomas – and to my employers that I was capable of doing more. In addition, I feel I have had great support from my managers, my colleagues and my tutors at Cornwall College. My employer, Grosvenor, has allowed me time at work to study, providing I have completed all my other duties.

My aim is to one day become Facilities Manager at Bodmin Hospital – or in a similar position if the opportunity arises in another of Grosvenor's sites.

'Further and higher education can be expensive but is also worth it. I have been lucky as Grosvenor has funded my education in all my work related courses so far. If you can find a company willing to do this then that's great.'

David Luxton



I have always had agriculture in my blood, both my parents are from farming families and I spent time on the farm from a young age. On leaving school I started an NVQ 2 in agriculture at Bicton College and I worked on a local mixed farm where I had the opportunity to learn the basics. I went on to do a National Diploma in Agriculture.

I found a job working on a farm with 110 dairy cows and 100 acres of arable, however, one cold, wet morning when I was scraping out the cows' cubicles I decided I was better than this so after working for 3 years I went back to Bicton to do my HND in Agriculture. Fortunately, because I had done the National Diploma I could go straight into the second and final year of the course. After leaving the farm and to fund my HND I worked for an agricultural contractor.

After my HND I went for an interview with Cornwall Farmers, they are a farmers' coop with 16 branches in Devon and Cornwall. They liked what they saw and offered me a

job as an understudy to a branch manager based in Torrington. Within two weeks of starting my job the local sales rep left and I was offered his job. I continue to grow the business – I am now one of the top reps in Devon!

'After my HND I went for an interview with Cornwall Farmers, they are a farmers' coop with 16 branches in Devon and Cornwall. They liked what they saw and offered me a job.'

Lorna Bailey



I left school with GCSEs at grades C and D, this was enough to get on to an NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration, which I studied at college on a full time basis. Within a week of completing the course, I gained employment with a small firm of builders. After a few months of working there I approached my employer to suggest that I work towards an NVQ Level 3 in Business Administration. College Training advised me that as I already had an NVQ 2, I could work towards an Advanced Apprenticeship and gain an NVQ Level 3 along with up to five key skills. After completing the Advanced Apprenticeship, I got employment with Cornwall College. Once settled in my job, my line manager approached me to ask if I would be interested in undertaking an NVQ level 2 in Advice and Guidance – and in fact I went on to do this course in a relatively short period.

I attended evening classes and within a year gained an NVQ Level 3 and the Chartered Management Institute Certificate followed by

the Chartered Management Institute Diploma. At the moment, I'm working towards an NVQ Level 3 in Advice and Guidance.

Seeing the teaching styles of different teachers has made me think that I too could teach. The Certificate in Education seems like the perfect course to get me on the teaching ladder so I am now thinking about doing a Certificate in Education. This will allow me to do my current job and study at the same time.

'I attended evening classes and within a year gained an NVQ Level 3 and the Chartered Management Institute Certificate followed by the Chartered Management Institute Diploma.'

Graeme Cooper



I left school at 17 with GCSE O level and CSE qualifications to work in the wood working industry. I enrolled on a government funded Timber Trades course as part of a youth training scheme. I gained a City and Guilds Furniture Crafts qualification, parts 1 and 2. The course involved a work placement and I was lucky enough to be taken on by the company as an apprentice joiner. As part of the apprenticeship I was required to go to college and gained City and Guilds qualifications, a Craft Certificate in Carpentry and Joinery (1 year block release) and an Advanced Craft Certificate in Joinery (1 year day release).

I was employed as a maintenance carpenter for several years but then put down my tools and took an office job working as an estimator. I then applied for a job as Trainee Building Control Officer at Sedgemoor District Council. The post did require a minimum qualification of HNC – but I applied anyway and was offered the job on the basis of my trade qualifications and work experience.

I was required to gain professional qualifications and so worked for an HNC in Construction at Somerset College of Art and Technology. I did this after completing a 1-year bridging course - a BTEC National Award in Construction.

'I was required to gain professional qualifications and so worked for an HNC in Construction at Somerset College of Art and Technology.'

universities

Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC)
www.cuc.ac.uk

Dartington College of Arts
www.dartington.ac.uk

University of Exeter
www.exeter.ac.uk

University of Exeter (Cornwall Campus)
www.exeter.ac.uk/cornwall

University College Falmouth
www.falmouth.ac.uk

The College of St Mark and St John (Marjon)
www.marjon.ac.uk

Open University
www.open.ac.uk

Peninsula Medical School
www.pms.ac.uk

University of Plymouth
www.plymouth.ac.uk

colleges offering the courses in cornwall

Cornwall College
www.cornwall.ac.uk

Truro College
www.trurocollege.ac.uk

Penwith College
www.penwith.ac.uk

colleges offering the courses in devon

Bicton College
www.bicton.ac.uk

City College Plymouth
www.cityplym.ac.uk

East Devon College
www.edc.ac.uk

Estover Community College
www.estover.ac.uk

Exeter College
www.exe-coll.ac.uk

North Devon College
www.ndevon.ac.uk

Plymouth College of Art and Design (PCAD)
www.pcad.ac.uk

South Devon College
www.southdevon.ac.uk



part time students

You may qualify for grants to cover all or part of your course fees and costs. You have to apply for support through your local authority.

course grant

You may be eligible for a non-repayable grant of up to £250 to meet the cost of books, travel, etc. The amount payable depends on household income and circumstances. You must be enrolled on the equivalent of at least 50% of a full time course.

fee grants

There are two different rates depending on the intensity of your course. Once again, household income and circumstances are important factors in calculating your entitlement. The table below should help you see what support you may be entitled to.

Percentage of a full time course studied	Maximum fee grant available	Maximum course grant available	Total maximum support
50% to 59% of an equivalent full-time course	£765	£250	£1,015
60% to 74% of an equivalent full-time course	£920	£250	£1,170
75% + of an equivalent full-time course	£1,150	£250	£1,400

The amount of support you will receive will depend on the intensity of your course and your personal circumstances. Some of the common criteria needed for receiving the full grant include: :

- ▶ Studying at least half a full time course.
- ▶ Single with an annual income of £15,345 a year or less.
- ▶ Receiving income-assessed benefits.
- ▶ If you have a partner and your combined income is below £17,344.
- ▶ £2000 of annual income is ignored for the eldest dependent child, making the income threshold £19,344 a year.
- ▶ For two or more dependent children, a further £1000 is ignored for each subsequent child. You will be entitled to receive part support if you are:
A single student earning between £15,345 and £23,145 a year.

For further information about student finance for full or part time higher education courses, go to www.studentsupportdirect.co.uk. This website provides you with guides and a PTG1 application form for part time study. www.gr8choice.org/how also provides information on aspects of part time study and finance.

* Information correct at time of going to press.
For up to date information look at www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport



The area covered by the Aimhigher Peninsula Programme (Cornwall, Devon and the West of Somerset) has a number of advice and guidance services to help you make the right choices about your future.

talk to your training provider

All Advanced Apprentices receive advice, guidance and support materials outlining possible opportunities for further study, including progression to higher education, as a standard part of their pre-exit and exit interview with their training provider.

email an adviser

This is a careers service for anyone living in the south west who wants to find out more about Higher Education. You may want to find out which course to study for your chosen career, which institutions offer the course you want or what funding is available to you. For example, the service provides:

- ▶ Information on Foundation Degrees, including frequently asked questions.
- ▶ Progression Routes.
- ▶ E-guidance.
- ▶ A link to graduate case studies.

To use this service log onto www.gradsouthwest.com/heguidance

contact the college

All FE colleges can advise about courses and careers.

You have three options when seeking information from a Further Education college:

- ▶ Go in person to student services.
- ▶ Phone to ask for advice and perhaps make an appointment.
- ▶ Look on the college website.

contact learndirect

Visit www.learndirect-advice.co.uk

You can also speak to an advisor who can give you tailored careers advice – either email, book a call back at a time to suit you or phone 0800 100 900.



www.aimhigher.ac.uk

Provides general advice about higher learning issues and useful links to other sites, such as financial support and advice and guidance.

www.learnandwork.org

This site provides information on courses, study support, funding, qualifications and more in the south west.

www.foundationdegrees.org.uk

This site provides more general information about Foundation Degrees, including information for employers.

<http://bursarymap.direct.gov.uk>

A bursary is non-repayable support available from a university or college which is available to a wide range of students. This site allows you to check what is on offer and by clicking on an institution takes you to their bursary information page, unless specified.

www.dfes.gov.uk/studentsupport

A guide to financial support available for students from the government.

www.hotcourses.co.uk

This site provides a search facility which lets you see what courses are available within a specific postcode.

www.tqi.ac.uk

This site gives information about the quality of teaching and learning in universities and colleges in the UK. There are results of student surveys which tell you what real students thought of their courses.

Keep this booklet handy, because if now is not the right time for you to take your Next Steps to Success, you might think about higher learning in the future.

We would like to thank Greater Manchester Learning Provider Network and Aimhigher Greater Manchester for the original idea and giving the Peninsula Programme permission to develop it.

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or for more information about the Aimhigher Peninsula
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