

Parents' and Carers' Pack

Apprenticeship Information

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Learning at Home

Carolyn Savage, Head of Apprentice Engagement

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach GCSE and A Level results day in August, we appreciate that it will feel a bit different for you and your child this year. It has been a challenging time for schools, students, you as parents and carers, and the school community, and we want to support you in helping your child to prepare for their next steps.

This month, we share with you some helpful tips for how to support your child on Results Day. The National Careers Service will also be available to support and have both a telephone helpline and online chat facility where their expert advisers will be happy to speak to you, or your son or daughter, about their options and give them lots of useful advice and guidance.

We also include advice from employers about what they are looking for and break down some of your questions about the role of training providers, the apprenticeship guarantee and other parents' thoughts on their child doing an apprenticeship.

Have a lovely summer.

Carolyn Savage
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Preparing for Results Day 2020

How you can prepare your child

It is an uncertain time for those who were due to take their exams this year and we appreciate that you and your child may be feeling anxious about your child's next steps.

We've included some helpful tips below for how you can be supporting your child in the lead up to Results Day.

1

STAY POSITIVE

Try to help them not to panic. There are lots of people working hard to ensure that young school leavers still have a range of options and opportunities available to them. There will be lots of help on the day and your positivity along the way will be a supportive reminder of this.

2

RE-LOOK AT ALL OF THEIR OPTIONS

Your child may now be a bit less certain of their plans for when they leave school. Explore and research the different options available to them again ahead of Results Day and help them to think about the pros and cons they might consider for each. Try to plan for different scenarios on Results Day. Look into what support or advice will be available to your child on the day.

3

OPPORTUNITIES WILL NOT BE BASED ON GRADES ALONE

Employers are looking for more than just grades when recruiting for their apprenticeship schemes. Help your child to be thinking about the different skills and attributes that they can be building on and ultimately demonstrate in their applications for apprenticeships or jobs in the future.

4

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH EMPLOYERS

If your child was in the middle of applying or has already had an offer through from an employer for an apprenticeship this year, they might be feeling anxious about whether this may change. Encourage them to get in touch with the employer and to stay up to date with their social media accounts to ensure they have a clear understanding of how the schemes will be impacted this year. Having the full information will help them to make a better decision about their next steps.

5

SPEAK WITH THE NATIONAL CAREERS SERVICE

The National Careers Service provide free, expert information and advice to students and families and will be able to help you and your child in understanding and considering all of the options open to your child.

Understanding the role of the training provider

The delivery of the apprenticeship qualification

A training provider has a vital part to play when it comes to supporting your child with their apprenticeship.

What is the role of the training provider?

The training provider provides the off-the-job training element of the apprenticeship. They will work with employers to ensure apprentices learn the necessary skills for the apprenticeship, assessing progress towards achieving their qualifications and supporting apprentices generally, both professionally and personally.

The training provider will work closely with the employer to ensure that the apprentice receives:

- A full induction programme
- A detailed training plan (including on-the-job training)
- Regular progress reviews
- Mentoring and support through the apprenticeship
- Observations and opportunities to practise off-the-job learning so that they can achieve their qualifications/requirements of the apprenticeship

This will all be detailed within a commitment statement that is part of the Apprenticeship Agreement. The apprentice, employer and provider will all sign to agree to this training plan.

Who are training providers?

There are lots of different organisations that are registered as training providers and could include:

- Independent training providers
- FE Colleges
- Universities
- Employer providers

Employer providers deliver the training in-house for the off-the-job training of their staff on an apprenticeship.



Who picks the training provider?

The employer will select which training provider they work with depending on a number of factors, such as the apprenticeship standard, the type of delivery and what is most suitable for their organisation.

How is the study time delivered?

The 20% off-the-job training time will be completed within the apprentices paid hours and equates to 1 day a week, although it is not always delivered in this way. When the training takes place will depend on the job commitment and needs of the business. Examples of different ways this can be delivered include:

- Once a week (day release)
- In blocks of a week or more at scheduled times (e.g. a week in September)
- Studying online
- A combination of the above

Can I contact a training provider directly?

Yes you can. Training providers operate across the country. Some will have training centres close to where you live and others will operate a remote delivery model, where they have staff delivering apprenticeships across the country.

FINDING AN LGBT+ INCLUSIVE EMPLOYER

Everyone should feel valued and accepted in the workplace. There are lots of employers doing wonderful things to celebrate and welcome LGBT+ individuals in their teams! Take a look at our 5 top tips below to help you to research LGBT+ friendly employers:

1 HAVE A LOOK AROUND THEIR WEBSITE

You can usually tell if an employer is proud to celebrate diversity as they will want you to know about it! Browse their website, do they have a separate section on diversity? Is LGBT+ included in their ethos or policies? Do they share information on support groups or societies they have for LGBT+ individuals?

2 CHECK OUT THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA

Look through their social media channels, particularly for smaller employers who may not have as much information on their websites. Do they support campaigns such as Pride or just give a general tone of inclusion and support?

3 WHAT DO THEIR EMPLOYEES SAY?

Does the organisation share case studies of LGBT+ employees? If you know a current employee, they might be able to give you an idea of how inclusive the employer is and the support they offer. You could also look up reviews that employees may have written about diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

4 WHAT DOES THE LGBT+ COMMUNITY SAY?

Websites such as Stonewall are a great place to start your research, as they publish a list of their 100+ inclusive employers. Don't forget other awards for diversity and inclusion, not all employers can feature in the top 100, but might still be brilliant!

5 VISIT THE EMPLOYER — HAVE A LOOK FOR YOURSELF

Challenge any stereotypes you may have about a sector or organisation by seeing it for yourself! Arrange a visit to get a feel for what the workplace is like. Smaller businesses who may not promote a lot on their website, could still be the perfect employer for you.

To find an apprenticeship visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) and search for apprenticeships

Apprentice perspective:

Life as an apprentice in lockdown

Meet Jordan, a Business and Administration apprentice at Sanctuary Group

Meet Jordan

Hello, my name is Jordan Leaman. I'm a Level 2 business and administration apprentice at Sanctuary Group in Worcester. Back when I was in high school, in the year 2012, I was diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome.

In 2013 I started at Heart of Worcestershire College for the next chapter in my academic journey. I had the challenge of settling into an environment that was new for me, this proved difficult, faced with anxiety and problems with my confidence, ultimately my development in these aspects has defined me and helped make me the person I am today.

During my first year of college I was elected as a course rep for IT and in 2017 I received a further education award. Computing has always been a passion for me, I always look to teach myself new techniques and skills that I can pick up and apply to my work-life. I also managed to achieve a C Grade in GCSE English, Level 2 Diploma in ITQ, and a certificate in employability and work skills, through an unpaid internship I did as part of the college's work placement course. I became worried because I hadn't managed to achieve a minimum of Level 2 in functional skills mathematics it would set me back.

"Something I like to remind myself is to always strive to achieve the best results, to the best of my ability, a trait that I look to apply in all my endeavours."

Having thought about university, I questioned if I would manage to cope with the workload and if it would send me into financial difficulties. I decided that the apprenticeship path was the best possible route. My biggest concern was struggling to find a job relevant to my skillset.

Between August and December 2018 was a rocky point for me, having lost my maternal grandparents. I was very close to my grandparents; they would always encourage me to have high aspirations and to not give up. I kept going and persevered with my aspirations.



Towards the end of 2018 I started to look for an apprenticeship. This is when I discovered the opportunity for a vacancy in the Energy Team at Sanctuary Group. I applied through Worcester Group Training Association; this was also my first interview for a paid job.

I like to think that my academic journey has been the story of someone who started out shy, reserved and not sure where he was going, to becoming someone confident, keen and sure of where he would like his future to go. Something I like to remind myself is to always strive to achieve the best results, to the best of my ability, a trait that I look to apply in all my endeavours.

Continuing to work through Lockdown.

My company have issued me with a company laptop to allow me to work from home, I am lucky to having already had the desk space and necessary audio equipment in place. This has meant I have had to adapt to working from one screen, which is difficult having Asperger syndrome where I become accustomed to following a routine.

Apprentice perspective:

Life as an apprentice in lockdown

Meet Jordan, a Business and Administration apprentice at Sanctuary Group

My advice for anyone in work during COVID-19, whether it's an apprenticeship or not, is to look after your wellbeing, and most importantly your mental health – set time aside to communicate with friends and family through technology, find hobbies you may not have had time to pick up before isolation. I also recommend taking screen-breaks from devices for 10-20 minutes every hour or two, and again most importantly and to follow the advice from the government and the NHS.

“As someone with Asperger syndrome it is difficult to not see friends physically, social communication plays a big part in my wellbeing and prevents me from having the feelings of facing challenges alone.”

As someone with Asperger syndrome it is difficult to not see friends physically, social communication plays a big part in my wellbeing and prevents me from having the feelings of facing challenges alone. However being in isolation nationally we are all facing this challenge together – and with the modern amenities we have today - such as technology, we can help each other through this difficult time and use technology to put a smile on the faces of our friends, family and acquaintances.

Finally, I would like to say that with strong commitment and dedication to succeed in our careers, success is down to our own development and willpower to persevere and to keep going with our aspirations. As they say, we are the architects of our own futures.



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Proud parents of an apprentice

Lesley and Barry Green are the parents of Fran Green, Business Administration apprentice

We caught up with Lesley and Barry to hear how they feel about Fran doing an apprenticeship and her career going forward.

How did you feel when Fran told you she was interested in doing an apprenticeship?

Lesley: University life held no interest to Fran, and an apprenticeship afforded a perfect opportunity to obtain an additional education qualification and valuable experience in the real world of work.

Did you know much about apprenticeships before Fran started hers?

Barry: Yes, but wasn't fully aware of the scope of available apprenticeships. I couldn't believe how many apprenticeships are out there.

Has your opinion changed since Fran has started her apprenticeship?

Both: Yes – we now see apprenticeships as a viable alternative to gain academic qualifications, whilst gaining experience in a variety of working environments.

Did you have any concerns about Fran doing an apprenticeship?

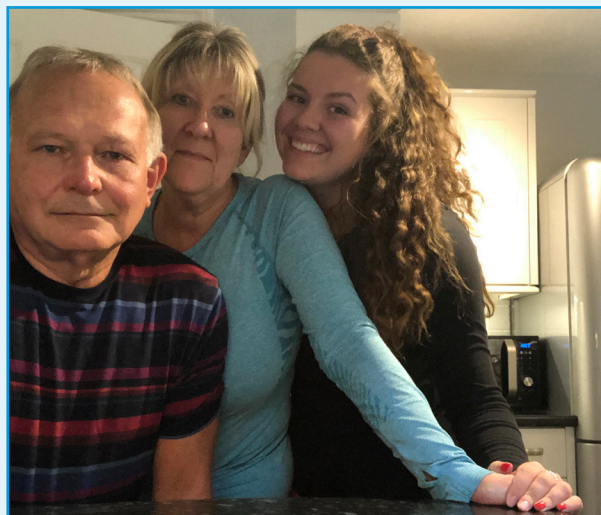
Barry: No, in fact less concerns than if she had chosen to attend university.

Is Fran enjoying her apprenticeship?

Lesley: Yes, Fran is loving her apprenticeship. She always comes home with different stories about her apprenticeship and the experiences she has gained. It is a pleasure to see her so happy.

Do you think it was the right decision for Fran?

Both: Absolutely!



What would you say to other parents who are concerned that an apprenticeship isn't as good as studying full-time at University?

Lesley: Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to obtain real skills in a real working environment, whilst gaining an academic qualification equal to that of a university qualification with no residual debt!

Fran is loving her apprenticeship. She always comes home with different stories about her apprenticeship and the experiences she has gained.

What would you say to other parents whose child might be considering doing an apprenticeship?

Barry: Apprenticeships offer a gateway to obtain real transferable working skills whilst obtaining additional academic qualifications. In many ways, apprenticeships offer an advantage over university qualifications which sometime offer minimal value in the workplace. Fran is gaining skills, qualifications, experience, getting paid a salary and isn't getting into debt. We couldn't be happier.

Levelling up with T Levels

Useful information about T Levels

What are T Levels?

In September 2020, the first T Level option will be delivered to students. They are a new qualification that is available following the completion of your child's GCSEs, providing an alternative route for gaining a recognised qualification that will support your child going on to an apprenticeship, higher education, or future employment.

T Levels are an equivalent level to A Levels, but with more of a focus on technical education. They are based on the same standards as apprenticeships and are designed with employers and training providers to ensure that the training is relatable to the industry.

Find out more about T Levels by visiting

<https://www.tlevels.gov.uk>

You can also search for T Levels available near you by using this helpful map

<https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/students/find>



National Careers Service Helpline

Expert advice for students during the exam results period



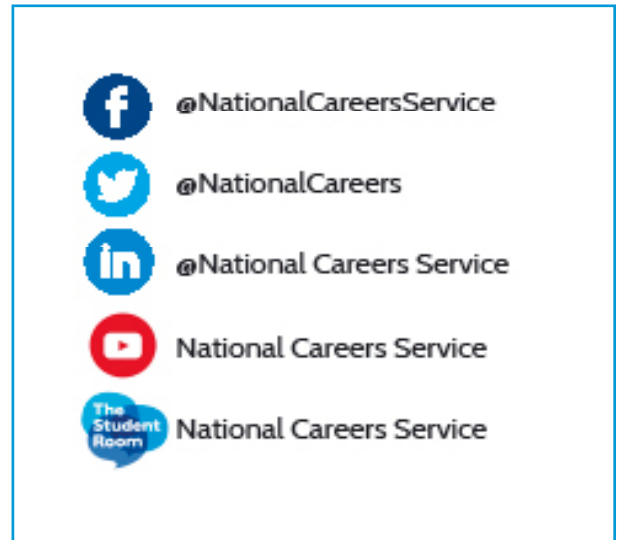
As in previous years, the National Careers Service will be delivering the Exam Results Helpline from A level results day, 13th August, until Friday 28th August. The helpline is available to young people and their parents/carers to help them with advice on their next steps. Whilst actual exams did not take place this year, young people will still receive their results and may subsequently need additional support.



The exam results helpline number is: 0800 100 900

The helpline, an option via the 0800 100 900 number, daily from 8am to 10pm, provides an opportunity to access high-quality information, advice and guidance from the day young people receive their A level and GCSE results. It enables them to access professional careers advisers during a critical decision-making period.

You can also use multiple social media channels to connect with the National Careers Service, see the image above for a full list of handles.



Top tips for virtual interviews

Support from the National Careers Service

The National Careers Service will be running a series of free webinars this month to support individuals in preparing for virtual interviews with employers.

Taking place every Tuesday in July from 10am – 10:40am, these 40 minute webinars will include practical tips on how to prepare in advance and interview confidently on the day.



To sign up, please follow this link: tinyurl.com/y7cbvhxz

Top Tips for Virtual Interviews Webinar



0800 100 900

nationalcareers.service.gov.uk