

## **Apprenticeships - Mythbusting**

*Based on some of the questions we received last year from applicants regarding our trade and site management apprenticeship schemes, we spoke to a few of our current apprentices at Taylor Wimpey to give you the answers directly from the horse mouth!*

1. What do you find most beneficial about doing an apprenticeship?
  - Learning a skill that makes you more employable. Also working in a team there are lots of problems on site that you can only solve by communicating with others.
  - Most beneficial part about doing an apprenticeship would be the qualifications at the end. The company will know the job you're applying for and exactly how to train you for it; being able to learn and put what you're learning into practice has definitely got to be the best way of learning.
  
2. What qualifications do I need to do a trade apprenticeships?
  - You need to pass in Maths and English; if the apprentice doesn't have this then their college will put them through the necessary courses
  
3. As a trade apprentice, what do you do on a day-to-day basis?
  - Laying bricks four days a week and spend one day in college (bricklayer)
  
4. What are the normal hours of work for an apprentice?
  - For me it's 8am-5pm, Monday to Friday
  
5. Who do you work with on a daily basis?
  - We have a team of bricklayers who I work with on a day-to-day basis, as well as staff from Taylor Wimpey who are on site if I ever need help.
  
6. How often do you go to college?
  - I go to college one day a week from 8am until 7pm
  
7. How do you find juggling work as an apprentice with your college studies?
  - Most courses will have a day release where you go into college for the day to either have a lesson or a day for doing work. Some courses may be distant learning like mine, but between work and college we have agreed that during work hours I am given 2 hours a week to get on with some coursework. So really there is no issue for me when it comes to course work and everyday work.
  
8. Do you often get treated differently as an apprentice?

- The only way I could say I get treated differently is that everyone wants to help me and are willing to give me as much information as possible to learn. When it comes down to doing the job I feel I am treated the same as everyone else and am given the same opportunities.
9. What does your career path look like?
- For me personally I feel like I am now set up for a lifetime. As a Site Management Apprentice there is so much room for progression and my aim will be work my way up through the company over the years. Also I am being trained to eventually become a manager, even if I didn't want to carry on in in the construction industry I will have gained the skills and qualifications as a manager.
  - My career to date has been 2 years on site as a bricklayer apprentice and then I'll be starting my site management apprenticeship which I hope to stay in and work my way up into management.
10. What training have you received during the apprenticeships so far?
- I have had health and safety training, brick laying training and other training relating to my trade I.e operating and maintaining a silo
  - Not only do you get all the training you'll need to qualify for the job you're doing, but you also have the opportunity for many additional training courses that may need further on in your career paths that are relevant to the job. So far I've completed first aid at work and COINS production training, which is a data based system used all across Taylor Wimpey. I have had many other courses lined up such as a scaffold course, tower Crain and CSCS
11. Can you leave school "early" if you are an apprentice?
- You can apply for an apprenticeship whilst still at school. To start your apprenticeship you need to be 16 years old or over.
12. Is it low-grade labour?
- Definitely not, apprenticeships will lead onto skilled jobs for those apprenticeships who complete their apprenticeships successfully
13. Is this just a blue-collar job?
- Not at all. Many of our skilled trades people go onto run their own companies in due course, learning people and management skills, all part of becoming an entrepreneur.
14. Can you do an apprenticeship instead of A-levels?
- Yes there three levels of apprenticeships, here are what each level is equivalent to:

- Intermediate- equivalent to 5 GCSE passes
  - Advanced- equivalent to 2 A level passes
  - Higher- can lead to NVQ Level 4 and above, or a foundation degree
15. What is the pay, is it just the minimum wage?
- You will be paid at least national minimum wage for apprentices. As you gain qualifications each year your pay will increase. Taylor Wimpey would also pay for relevant qualifications and training related to your role.
16. Where can I find out more about apprenticeships?
- [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)
  - <http://housebuildingcareers.org.uk>
  - <https://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/careers/starting-your-career/apprenticeships>
17. What areas would I cover under the Site Management Apprentice Scheme?

If you are looking to begin a career in site management or in one of the on-site trades, then Taylor Wimpey could be exactly what you're looking for in an employer.

We offer paid apprenticeships across site management, carpentry, bricklaying, plumbing and many more. Our apprenticeships are designed to give you the right balance between classroom learning and hands on experience ensuring you are best placed to be offered a permanent opportunity following your studies. Depending on the trade you opt for and your level of experience, an apprenticeship with Taylor Wimpey should be completed in 3-5 years and you would formally qualify with a level 2 or level 3 diploma in a construction related discipline.

### **Generic Apprenticeship stereotypes**

#### **1. Apprenticeships are only for people with bad grades**

Apprenticeships are simply an alternative route into employment. Those choosing apprenticeships are often ambitious and keen to learn and earn at the same time.

#### **2. I won't be able to afford it/I won't be paid**

Apprenticeships are paid for by the government and your employer. Apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage, currently at the rate of £2.73 per hour for those aged 16 to 18 and those aged 19 or over in their first year. From 1st October 2015, the rate is to rise to £3.30 per hour.

#### **4. Apprenticeships will negatively affect my future career prospects**

Employers increasingly value consider apprenticeships as a viable career route as it means applicants will have experience of the workplace and a qualification.

#### **5. I won't get a good qualification**

There are many types of apprenticeships, providing different levels of qualifications. For example NVQ Level 1 Bricklaying course at City of Bristol College.

#### **6. Apprenticeships are only available in cities**

Apprenticeships are available throughout the UK, in a variety of industries. Taylor Wimpey operates from 24 offices around Great Britain and 300 home building sites.

#### **7. If I do an apprenticeship I'll get stuck in the same industry**

Apprenticeships aren't just available in a variety of industries but different areas of the business too. Once you have completed an apprenticeship you can move into a different job.

#### **8. Apprenticeships are only for young people**

Apprenticeships are open to anyone over the age of 16. There is no upper age limit.

#### **9. I need experience to get an apprenticeship**

Apprenticeships provide the opportunity for young people to gain first-hand experience and to develop workplace skills. Employers recognise applicants won't necessarily have previous work experience.

#### **10. Businesses are not hiring apprentices**

The number of apprenticeships businesses are hiring has increased. The government recently unveiled 16,000 new apprenticeships.

### **11. University students have better career prospects**

Despite recent reports, the average retention rate for apprentices and school leavers among top employers currently sits at 91%. Apprentices report that many of their peer equivalents are struggling to get jobs, and with competition among graduates increasing, it does not look likely that this will be resolved soon. In fact, the success rate for getting on an apprenticeship is currently higher than a graduate position.

### **12. University grads earn more money than former apprentices**

Although graduates typically start work after university at a higher wage, this doesn't take into account the debt they have to repay. Apprentices begin earning the moment they step through the door of the programme and are entitled to at least the national minimum wage but are often paid more than this. Apprenticeships and school-leaver programmes must also be seen as an investment in future career opportunities and earnings. As skills develop, many employers tend to increase wages.

**Don't take careers advice as gospel:** Careers advisors are there to help you make these big decisions and to highlight the options available. However, just because they recommend a certain route doesn't mean you have to take it. Take your time to think about your options and talk to parents and teachers to discuss your future and what route might be best. Ask your older peers about their experiences, they're bound to have some words of wisdom up their sleeves.

The number of people doing apprenticeships is on the rise, and they help the economy as much as they benefit individuals. Over the next 10 years, 3.8 million people will complete an apprenticeship, contributing an estimated £3.4bn to the UK economy per year in productivity gains by 2022, according to the Centre for Economics and Business Research.

### **13. "I won't have a real job"**

Most apprenticeships are full-time like a regular job. The SFA (Skills Funding Agency) states that the number of hours worked must be at least 30 per week, just seven-and-a-half hours less than the 37.5 worked on regular contracts. This can be

reduced but only in exceptional circumstances. [Apprenticeships](#) must also last for a minimum of 12 months, and normally last between one and four years.

#### **14. "It's not a secure option"**

You'll need to check your individual contract but you should have the same rights as other employees, with a contract of employment and real opportunities for future progression.

#### **15. "I can't afford it"**

Unlike most ways of gaining formal training and practical experience, apprenticeships are paid for by the government and your employer, so they're great if university isn't an option financially.

#### **16. "I'll be badly paid"**

##### **Current rates**

These rates are for the National Living Wage and the National Minimum Wage from 1 April 2016.

<b>Year</b>	<b>25 and over</b>	<b>21 to 24</b>	<b>18 to 20</b>	<b>Under 18</b>	<b>Apprentice</b>
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April 2016 (current	£7.20	£6.70	£5.30	£3.87	£3.30
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#### **17. "It won't help my job prospects"**

Once you've completed your apprenticeship, your job prospects are good. Recent figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) show that more than a quarter of graduates were paid less than the £11.10 average for those on work-based training schemes last year. The figures show that 85% of people who complete an apprenticeship will stay in employment, and 64% of these stay with the same employer with which they did the course.

## **18. "I won't get a qualification"**

This is a common misconception, but in fact all apprenticeships must include an element of training. They should be designed to give you on- and off-the-job training, which will lead to some form of qualification.

In England, there are three levels of apprenticeships, which each lead to different levels of qualification:

- Intermediate – equivalent to 5 GCSE passes
- Advanced – equivalent to 2 A-level passes
- Higher – lead to NVQ level 4 and above or a foundation degree.

So depending on your scheme, you could end up with: a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ); a Functional Skills qualification; a technical certificate, such as a BTEC Higher National Certificate (HNC); a Higher National Diploma (HND) or a foundation degree.

## **19. " I can't because I'm a graduate"**

While you can't start an apprenticeship scheme if you're in full-time education, you can do one once you've graduated. But you won't be eligible for government funding, meaning your employer has to pay your training costs. It's worth checking with individual employers whether they consider graduates before applying, to make sure you're not wasting your time