



An easy guide to woodworking apprenticeships



For Employers in Wales

Apprentices are...

- "...people who work to our quality standards."
- "...our route to expanding the business."
- "...committed workers with the skills we need."
- "...familiar with our working methods and practices."
- "...the generation who'll take over as our tradesmen retire."

As BWF members know, apprentices

"...are *essential* to the future of our business."

This publication counts towards your CPD (cat.4):

CPD	30	mins
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The woodworking CPD programme

Background

The woodworking sector employs the highest ratio of apprentices in the construction sector. Apprenticeship reform opens up new opportunities for employing older apprentices and retraining individuals. This guide runs through the basics of hiring an apprentice for a BWF Member. The focus of the guide is trade skills, however, it is worth remembering that other core skills including administration and finance can be supported via apprenticeships.

What are the benefits of taking on an Apprentice?

- You can reduce costs by having highly trained staff
- Create a pool of talent and a skilled workforce
- Expand your business
- Nurture talent to improve your services
- Fill the skills gaps in your business
- Ensure they work to our working methods and practices
- Staff that work to our quality standards
- Give your business a creative boost
- Construct stronger business foundations
- Inspire the future generation

What age range can an Apprentice be?

Apprenticeships can be any age from 16 upwards. Anyone in Wales over the age of 16 can apply for an apprenticeship and benefit from the opportunities offered.

What is an Apprenticeship Agreement?

An Apprenticeship Agreement is an agreement between you the employer and your apprentice under which the apprentice undertakes to work for the employer. The agreement is a contract of service and states that it is entered into in connection with a qualifying Apprenticeship framework. It reflects that the Apprenticeship is primarily a job rather than training.

It normally includes;

- the length of the apprenticeship
- The training you will give them
- Their working conditions
- The qualifications that they are working towards

You can write your own agreement, or download one from

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-agreement-template>

Or use the agreement provided by your training provider.

What type of training will they receive?

Apprentices receive various types of training comprising a 'Framework' and must achieve all the set milestones to receive the full Framework award. The elements include:

- A knowledge-based technical certificate to underpin the practical skills
- A Vocational Qualification showing competence (usually NVQ Level 2 up to 4-5)
- Training in essential 'life' skills such as Communications and Application of Number (numeracy)

Frameworks Available Through the Apprenticeship Scheme:

Apprenticeship	Qualification	Studying	Applications (Examples)
Bench Joinery (Soon to be renamed Architectural Joinery)	Bench Joinery at NVQ Levels 2 & 3 (CSkills)	Produce setting out details for bench joinery products Mark out from setting out details for bench joinery products Manufacture bench joinery products Set up and use fixed and transportable machinery Manufacture shaped doors and frames Manufacture stairs with turns	Joinery Workshops, Furniture, Shopfitting Workshops
Site Carpentry & Joinery	Site Carpentry & Joinery at NVQ Levels 2 & 3 (CSkills)	Carry out first and second fixing operations Carry out first fix roofing and stairs Carry out first and second fixing double doors and mouldings Set up and use fixed and transportable machinery	Site work including shop fitting, 1 st & 2 nd fix sites, Joinery Workshops, Shopfitting Workshops
Wood Machining	Wood Machining at NVQ Levels 2 & 3 (CSkills)	Principles of machine manufactured joinery Setting and operating various fixed machines Setting and operating NC/CNC machines	Joinery Workshops, Shopfitting Workshops, Furniture, Kitchen Companies, Garden, Sheds, Timber Merchants
Shopfitting Joinery	Shopfitting at NVQ Levels 2 & 3 (CSkills)	Producing Components to specification and fitting on site, Frames, Shop Fronts & Frames, Doors, Sashes, Panelling, Cladding and Units, increasing in Complexity	Shopfitting Workshops, Working on Sites to Install Goods

On-the-job training is provided by your company, at your premises; off-the-job training is given at a college or training provider on day-release, week-release, or delivered by your apprenticeship training provider in the workplace.

Apprenticeships in Wales can be studied in English, Welsh or even bilingually, depending on the employer's needs.

Two levels of Apprenticeship are available in Wales:

- Foundation Apprenticeship (equivalent to 5 good GCSE passes);
- Apprenticeship (equivalent to 2 A-level passes)

They generally take between one and three years to complete.

How do I recruit an Apprentice?

If you wish to recruit an apprentice, [the Careers Wales website](#) offers a range of very helpful advice. Simply follow the apprenticeships link situated towards the bottom of the page in a box marked 'Prentisiaethau Apprenticeships'.

There is also a telephone number that you can call to gain advice 0800 028 4844. You can advertise vacancies for free and view and filter applicants. You will be able to review applications, sift for short-listing and invite candidates for interview, all within your own personal area of the system, the address is:

Another route to finding an apprentice is to contact CITB, they have a team of 17 Apprenticeship Officers and 2 shared Co-ordinators that will be able to guide you through the Apprenticeship route. If you are in scope (i.e. registered with CITB) CITB will help you by arranging training for your apprentice with a local college or your nearest training provider. They will help with paying all college or training provider examination fees, helping you complete the paperwork needed to claim grants and giving advice on expenses available to cover accommodation or travel costs, their address is:

<http://www.citb.co.uk/citb-apprenticeships/about-apprenticeships/>

You can visit their dedicated website to careers within the construction industry and register your vacancy, their address is: <http://www.citb.co.uk/bconstructive/> follow the link for employers.

You can also contact local colleges and schools to see if there is a potential student looking for an Apprenticeship placement. The BWF has a network of Centres of Excellence across the UK, which have been audited for quality apprenticeship training and have agreed to work with industry to provide excellence for joinery companies. You can see which colleges and training providers in the UK are accredited here: www.bwf.org.uk/training

The BWF [Wow I Made That](#) advice portal for aspiring woodworking apprentices also allows to promote your interest.

Once you have chosen your apprentice you will need a training provider

You can arrange to send your Apprentice to a local college or nearest training provider. They should be quality assured and approved to deliver training. They will help you through the paperwork process and assessment of the Apprentice.

Should you decide to use CITB, they will arrange this for you and help you with all the paperwork.

The BWF are also working with Centres of Excellence that can offer training, for further information please contact the BWF on 0844 209 2610

How much should I pay my Apprentice?

You must pay your Apprentice at least the Apprentice Minimum Wage, the most up to date information on this can be found on the following website:

<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

What is the Apprentice Levy

If you're an employer in the UK with a pay bill over £3 million each year, you must pay the apprenticeship levy from 6 April 2017. The levy is based on 0.5% of their class 1 secondary NIC. You can call the Apprenticeship Scot Service on 0800 783 6000 for further information.

[BWF Guidance on the Apprentice Levy is available here](#)

How much financial support is available for the training costs?

Whilst you as the employer pay your apprentices a wage, the Welsh Government and the European Social Fund pay for all of their training.

How much financial support is available for the me the employer?

Employer Grants from CITB Wales - Apprenticeship Grants

Grant Name	Amount Employer Can Claim
2-year apprenticeship to achieve NVQ 2	£6,000 max per apprentice
3-year apprenticeship to achieve NVQ 3 and inclusive of the 2-year grant	£10,250 max per apprentice

These rates are for full completion of the framework including NVQ outcomes

To qualify for the financial support, you need to be registered with CITB and meet the requirements, follow this link for further information:

<http://www.citb.co.uk/grant/grants-available-201617/apprenticeship-grant-england-wales/>

Are you thinking of qualifying existing staff?

Enabling existing staff to gain qualifications helps differentiate your company from competitors, demonstrating your commitment to training.

Renew, Refresh, Retain

Renewing the interest and commitment of existing staff comes through giving them opportunities to learn, qualify and pass their skills on to others. Refreshing skills is equally vital: one of the top three reasons for staff leaving is said to be lack of new learning opportunities.

CITB Wales offers a range of grants covering non-apprentice training & development, and technical, managerial and professional training, visit:

<http://www.citb.co.uk/local-information/wales/>

Retaining skilled people is as important as creating them. Research by the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development shows that employers who reward apprentices with the highest wages have the highest rates of retention.

Other Training Grants Available

Grant Name	Amount Employer Can Claim
NVQ Achievement Grant inclusive in 2/3-year apprenticeship grants, but can be obtained outside of apprenticeships e.g. OSAT	£400 per achievement
Craft Non-Apprentice Grant Level 2 VQ for achievement of NVQs not undertaken as part of a full apprenticeship framework	£3,525 per achievement
Craft Non-Apprentice Grant Level 3 VQ for achievement of NVQs not undertaken as part of a full apprenticeship framework	£2,625 per achievement
Day-rate Grants when part of a company training & development plan or under short-duration training	£25 per half day £50 per full day
Supplementary Payment available on top of all grants including apprenticeship grants for employers that pay a levy and on time to CITB	10% on top of any claimed grants

Terms and Conditions apply. These are the published CITB rates that are available under the 2016/17 Grants Scheme.

There are a host of other grants available to fund training through the grant scheme. For more information on claiming grants and full terms and conditions, please visit:

<http://www.citb.co.uk/levy-grant/grants-available-201617/>

or contact the BWF on 0844 209 2610.

About the Wood Industry Training Forum:

The BWF offers a range of training solutions and other services through the WITForum (Woodworking Industry Training Forum) that are tailored for the joinery industry.

With over [40 training services now available](#) through the Forum (from machining to management to timber training), there is no better place to get quality, comprehensive and tailored training solutions for the joinery industry. We work closely with the CITB and have expertise in helping you tap into the right funding stream to support your training.

Where to go next:

[Find a Course from the British Woodworking Federation](#)

[Find out more about the BWF Online Training Academy](#)

Woodworking careers: Wow! I made that!



The 'Wow I made that' campaign aims to provide information, advice and guidance to young people interested in a woodworking career in the joinery industry.

[Follow the campaign on Facebook.](#)

To support this campaign we have now also launched the Wow I Made that Websie -

www.wowimadethat.co.uk

Note: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of advice given, the BWF cannot accept liability for loss or damage arising from the use of the information supplied in this publication.