

Parents' and Carers' Pack

Apprenticeship Information

Edition 19: May 2020
Covid-19 Special Edition



Learning at Home

Carolyn Savage, Head of Apprentice Engagement

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we continue to navigate our way through these unprecedented times, and with schools and colleges currently closed for the majority of students, we must all work together to find new ways to support young people to be able to pursue their dreams – whilst recognising that many systems and processes have changed significantly.

Although restrictions mean that teachers and careers advisers are unable to give face-to-face support, we know that many schools are using technology to reach students and offer them advice and guidance on their future choices.

To complement this, we know that many parents and carers are keen to offer more guidance and support at home. We have created this special edition of the Parents' Pack full of activities for you to work through with your child/children to help to prepare and support them for future opportunities. From tips on writing a CV and completing an application form, through to preparing for an interview – we hope that you find it useful.



Carolyn Savage
Head of Apprentice Engagement
Education and Skills Funding Agency part of DfE

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Mental health and wellbeing

Understanding the signs of anxiety

We all understand that the world has changed significantly as a result of Covid-19. Many individuals are struggling to adjust to new home routines and the social distancing restrictions that are in place. Anxiety levels are understandably high for many people. Many young people are feeling nervous about their futures and may be facing uncertainty in what they thought was going to be their 'next-step', as well as feeling anxious about exam results.

The current situation

Mental health and wellbeing is rightly very high on people's agenda currently. Finding ways to help your child to strive for good physical and mental wellbeing will help them to deal with stressful times and build their resilience.

Your child may be feeling anxious about moving on from school or college. If they had planned to secure an apprenticeship, or another job, they may also be feeling uncertain about the vacancies that are going to be available and the types of job roles that employers may be recruiting to.

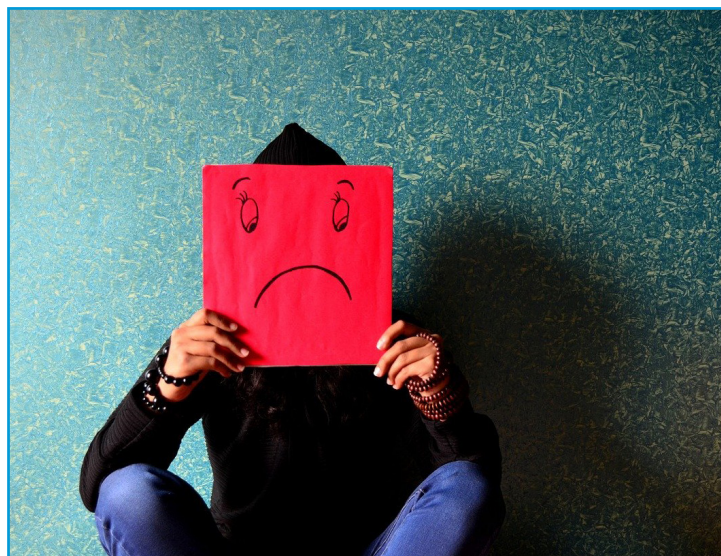
Providing space to talk about their options, discuss their concerns and worries and offering help to get them prepared, will support these emotions.

Recognising stress and anxiety

Stress and anxiety will impact most people at some point and can cause different symptoms and reactions. It is a feeling of unease or worry and can be mild or severe. Helping your child to be able to recognise the signs in themselves will make it easier for them to manage, now and in the future.

Signs and symptoms of anxiety include changes in thoughts and behaviours, and could include the following:

- Restlessness or edginess
- Sweating
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- A feeling of dread
- A feeling of being "on-edge"
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping
- Irritability



DASH for physical wellbeing

Physical wellbeing is extremely important for everyone. Following the principles of DASH (**Diet, Activity, Sleep and Hydration**) can be helpful in setting some goals to make small changes to your routine and diet that can have a really positive impact on your mental health and wellbeing too.

You can read more about DASH here:

<https://amazingapprenticeships.com/resource/wellbeing-webinar-four-handout>

It is important that if unexplained changes start to occur with your child, you talk to them about it and if needed, seek support.

There is some great advice on the NHS website:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health>

Who am I?

Thinking about your strengths

Help your child to recognise their strengths

It is really important that your child is able to recognise their own personal strengths. This can be a lot harder than you think, especially when they then need to think about how that strength relates to the job opportunity that they are looking at. Below, we have listed a range of different strengths that your child may feel that they have.

Step 1: Recognising your strengths

Together with your child, look at the words listed below. Have a discussion about each word and talk about if, and how, it relates to them.

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Able | <input type="checkbox"/> Decisive | <input type="checkbox"/> Gifted | <input type="checkbox"/> Organised |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate | <input type="checkbox"/> Dedicated | <input type="checkbox"/> Hardworking | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adaptable | <input type="checkbox"/> Dependable | <input type="checkbox"/> Helpful | <input type="checkbox"/> Perceptive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alert | <input type="checkbox"/> Desire to succeed | <input type="checkbox"/> Highly motivated | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ambitious | <input type="checkbox"/> Determined | <input type="checkbox"/> Honest | <input type="checkbox"/> Polite |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Analytical | <input type="checkbox"/> Diplomatic | <input type="checkbox"/> Imaginative | <input type="checkbox"/> Positive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articulate | <input type="checkbox"/> Diverse | <input type="checkbox"/> Impressive | <input type="checkbox"/> Practical |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assertive | <input type="checkbox"/> Drive | <input type="checkbox"/> Insightful | <input type="checkbox"/> Pro active |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Astute | <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic | <input type="checkbox"/> Inter personal skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Punctual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bright | <input type="checkbox"/> Educated | <input type="checkbox"/> Independent | <input type="checkbox"/> Rational |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capable | <input type="checkbox"/> Effective | <input type="checkbox"/> Innovative | <input type="checkbox"/> Reliable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Efficient | <input type="checkbox"/> Initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Resourceful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Energetic | <input type="checkbox"/> Intelligent | <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committed | <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy a challenge | <input type="checkbox"/> Intuitive | <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Common sense | <input type="checkbox"/> Enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> Keen | <input type="checkbox"/> Tactful |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast learner | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledgeable | <input type="checkbox"/> Team player |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer literate | <input type="checkbox"/> Fast worker | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Tenacious |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Consistent | <input type="checkbox"/> Flexible | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyal | <input type="checkbox"/> Thorough |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative | <input type="checkbox"/> Focused | <input type="checkbox"/> Mature | <input type="checkbox"/> Trustworthy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cope under pressure | <input type="checkbox"/> Friendly | <input type="checkbox"/> Methodical | <input type="checkbox"/> Versatile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative | <input type="checkbox"/> Good communicator | <input type="checkbox"/> Objective | <input type="checkbox"/> Willing |

Step 2: Your top 5

Once you have had a good chat about the words and they have hopefully identified a number of personal strengths, ask your child to pick their top 5 and to make some notes about times when they have demonstrated that strength that could be used on a CV or application form. They can then keep this safe to help them with future applications.

Word	Short example
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Linking your strengths to buzz words

Understanding buzz words and how to link them

Each company will have their own recruitment processes. Some may request a CV and covering letter, others may require an application form to be submitted. It is almost certain that any recruitment being carried out in the coming weeks and months will be online so that social distancing requirements are met, including telephone and online interviews and assessments.

Whatever process the employer is following, the details should be found in the job advertisement. Most vacancies will receive a number of applications from potential candidates. To help your child's application to stand out from others, following these simple 'buzz word' techniques can make a positive impression on the person reading them.

Step 1: Identify the buzz words from the job advert

With your child, look at the job advert and job description example on the right and see if you can identify all of the words that the employer has used to describe the characteristics or skills that they are seeking in an applicant.

Go through the advert and highlight or circle all of the buzz words. An example is provided for you in the 'Desired skills' paragraph of the extract on the right.

Requirements and prospects

Desired skills

We are looking for applications from individuals who have the following skills:

- You need to be confident and have the ability to work independently without the need for close supervision.
- Communication skills are vital in this role; successful applications will be well spoken with a clear and professional telephone manner.
- You must have good time management skills, you must be a punctual person and be on time for work and any meetings.

Qualifications required

No formal qualifications required.

Future prospects

Full time position for the right apprentice.

Things to consider

Can you travel there? Please check the links below www.traveline.info/ Or www.transportdirect.info

- This role involves liaising with both internal and external customers, you must be confident when dealing with people at all levels.
- This role may involve unsociable hours – you must have a flexible approach to your work.
- Travel costs will be incurred to get to work and to access the training.
- You must have a customer focused approach whilst handling a large volume of queries.

Step 2: Create a sentence to demonstrate the skill/attribute

Buzz word	Example
Confident	I am a very confident individual. While in 6th form, I was confident in showing prospective parents and students around the school, answering their questions and helping them to introduce them to teachers and other key staff.

CV Expectations

Things to consider when writing a CV

What is a CV?

The term CV is short for Curriculum Vitae which is Latin for 'the course of one's life'.

A CV is a short, written summary of your skills, achievements and experience. You use it in the first stage of applying for jobs. Employers often ask for a CV instead of an application form.

A CV is a clear way for all relevant information to be stored together and can be updated when required. Having an up to date CV will also help to make it easier if you need to transfer information to the employer's application form.

What should a CV look like?

There are lots of templates that can be found online that can be used when helping your child to write their CV. Encourage your child to use one that they feel comfortable with.

Good advice is provided on the National Careers Service website:
nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/get-a-job/cv-sections

Tailoring the CV to the job advert












Once your child has a standard CV that they are happy with, you can enhance it by tailoring it to the role that they are applying for. To do this, you can help your child to incorporate buzz words and phrases from the advert or job description into their CV.

Hobbies and interests

This section of a CV is optional, although make sure they remove the header if it is not going to be used. Writing about their hobbies or interests that are relevant to the role may support their application and they can show a little bit of their character.

Step 1: Identify skills and attributes

Think of all of the hobbies and interests that your child has and the skills and attributes that this may show to a future employer. Use the grid opposite for some ideas of where to start.

Hobby	Skills	
Art 	Creativity, eye for detail, techniques, passion, patience, idea development.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comedy 	Initiative, resilience, creativity, idea development, humour, confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cooking 	Creativity, attention to detail, patience, self-expression, multitasking, decision making.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dance 	Creativity, dedication, resilience, confidence, perseverance, motivation, discipline, self-belief.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drama 	Confidence, self-awareness, presentation skills, dedication, resilience, teamwork, communication skills, creativity.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gaming 	Communication skills, analytical, resourcefulness and adaptability, technical skills and problem-solving.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Make up, fashion 	Creativity, following trends, research, techniques, interpersonal skills, confidence, attention to detail.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Music 	Dedication, creativity, teamwork (if in a band/orchestra), perseverance, memory, listening, collaboration and confidence.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading 	Imagination, empathy, creativity and attentiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sports/fitness 	Motivation, communication, passion, dedication, teamwork, leadership, time-management and competitiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Volunteer work 	Motivation, passion, dedication, communication, interpersonal skills, networking, sense of community and empathy.	<input type="checkbox"/>

CV Expectations

Things to consider when writing a CV

Step 2: Other hobbies and interests

Does your child have a hobby or interest that isn't included in the list provided? If so, write it down and think of the skills that this shows a potential employer.

Hobby	Skills

Step 3: CV building

Discuss with your child any of the hobbies or interests that they have listed above and how they may support their CV. They can then pick the ones that would be most suitable for each CV or application that they send in the future.

Checklist when supporting your child to write a CV

- ☐ The layout, design and spacing of the words and paragraphs is consistent.
- ☐ The contact details are correct, including a professional email address.
- ☐ They have updated their answerphone message to something sensible if needed.
- ☐ The font is the same. The most common recommended fonts for writing a CV are Times New Roman, Arial, Verdana or Helvetica.
- ☐ The font size is point 11 or 12.
- ☐ The CV should be no more than 2 A4 pages.
- ☐ The headings should be bold and clear.
- ☐ The information should be organised and in inverse chronological (your most recent experience goes first).
- ☐ The sentences are short and use bullet points.
- ☐ They have referenced buzz words from the advert / job description into the CV.
- ☐ They do not need to list references on the CV, but make sure that it is recorded that they are available upon request. Try not to use family members as referees. A school teacher can usually be included, but it is a good idea to seek the permission of anyone that they would like to list as a referee before they submit the application.
- ☐ Proofread to make sure that they check the words, spelling and grammar on their CV are correct.
- ☐ Include hobbies or interests that they would be confident to talk about in an interview.
- ☐ The information must be true, remember they may be asked about it at an interview.

Employers top tips for applicants

What are the employers looking for?

We asked some of the country's biggest and best apprenticeship employers for the #1 tip they would give to young people applying, or considering applying, for roles.

Please remember that due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the employers listed may or may not be currently recruiting to apprenticeship vacancies within their companies. The hints and tips provided below are intended as general advice for recruitment under normal circumstances, and do not in any way suggest that they have current opportunities available.

Here's what they said:



IBM

We really don't mind what subjects you've studied. What we're looking for is your fit for the company – things like adaptability, communication, teamwork. You might be thinking that you don't know if you've got those particular attributes yet. But honestly, have a think back over your whole time at school or college, any work experience you've done, volunteering, sports teams... we don't mind if it happened last week or five years ago. We're just looking at you as an individual.



BENTLEY

Bentley

Don't forget work experience. Our Gold Standard Fair Train-accredited work experience programme offers over 150 places each year across our business. We aim to give as many young people as we can an insight into what it's like to work for an extraordinary business – and when it comes to applying for an apprenticeship, work experience at Bentley and elsewhere can only be a positive thing!



Arts Council England

Just remember that an interview is a two-way process – you are there to find out how suitable we are for you, as well as vice versa. We want to get to know you, and we are always looking for people with a genuine interest in arts and cultures – so ask questions and let your personality show.



Lloyds Banking Group

If you're interested in building the next generation of banking, developing your skills at the UK's largest digital bank and helping to develop cutting-edge technologies, we want to hear from you. Our biggest tip across our application process for LBG apprenticeships is... just be yourself! If you share our vision, are eager to learn and can help push us forward, then we want you!

Research, Research, Research

Where to start

Every company is different, from the roles they offer, their values and benefits and where in the country they are based. Finding your first full time job is a big commitment and it is important that your child takes time to research the company in detail to try to understand if it is going to be a good match for them.

In all of our conversations with employers around what young people can do to maximise their application chances, one thing keeps cropping up time and time again; employers love applicants who understand their business and who know why they want to work there.

Even doing some basic research about an employer can really help an application stand out. Here are some starting points that you can use with your child when researching apprenticeships.

Step 1: Working out what they like

Ask your child to make a short list of;

- What subjects they enjoy at school or college
- What extracurricular activities interests them
- What would they really like to do with their future



A quick list is a great starting point to see if there are links between subjects and their interests, and future career opportunities.

There are some amazing posters that can help to start this thinking by linking school subjects to apprenticeship job opportunities.



Download: www.amazingapprenticeships.com/resource/subject-poster-bundle/

Step 2: Speak to family and friends

Speaking to family and friends is also a great way to find out about different lines of work and what they may offer. The information that your child finds out can be a great place to start their research.

Work together to come up with 5 questions that they could ask their friends and family. Here are a few to get you started...

1. What do you love about where you work?
2. How did you get into your current job?
3. Are you doing what you always thought you would do? If not, why not?

Step 3. Researching companies

Researching different types of companies is a really important part of building a vision of the type of job role your child might like to have in the future. Many people have a big dream of wanting to work at a company that they recognise.

It is really easy to take a look at the company's website and see what opportunities they offer. Both you and your child may be surprised at the huge range of different job roles available. Additionally, you could start by looking at the employers featured on Vacancy Snapshot, which features some of the country's top apprenticeship employers: www.amazingapprenticeships.com/vacancies



While on the employer's website, take a look around at the information about the organisation and the sector. There will be lots of valuable information that can help your child to decide if the employer is right for them, as well as for information ahead of an interview or application to that employer.

Research, Research, Research

Where to start

What to look for

- An understanding of what the organisation does
- The company values; what does the organisation say about their employees, their stakeholders and their aims?
- Do their values stand out compared to other companies?
- What do they say about their apprenticeship programmes? Do they speak about progression, support and the value of apprentices to their business?
- What do their employees say about them? Have they got any quotes or testimonies from apprentices about what its like to work there?
- Get to know the history of the company. This can be invaluable ahead of an interview.
- What projects or organisations are they working on/with?
- Look at the vacancies page. Take a look at the kind of roles they offer throughout the year.
- Read the job descriptions in full. Gain an understanding of what they are looking for across their applicants.
- Does the vacancies page explain the recruitment process? Is there an option to sign up to be notified when new vacancies are live?



Step 4: Other considerations

Your child will also have other factors on their mind when it comes to choosing an employer they might like to work for, from how they would get there, the type of industry they would be in to what size a team they want to work in. It is important that they look into these questions when considering employers so that they know if the vacancy is suitable for them.

Help your child to start thinking about some of their preferences by considering some of the questions below:

TRAVEL

- How far away and how long are they prepared to travel?
- How will they get there?
- How much will traveling cost them?

STYLE OF WORK

- Do they want to be indoors or outdoors all day?
- Do they want a variation of practical and office-based work?
- Do they want to be customer facing?

HOURS

- Are they happy to work shift patterns?
- Would they prefer the same hours every day?

SIZE OF ORGANISATION

- Would they prefer to be in a larger or smaller organisation?
- What are the benefits of both?

What the employers say

Why research is so important

Take a look at what just a few leading apprenticeship employers had to say about the importance of researching into the company before you apply.

"There are certain qualities we look for in every individual who joins Specsavers. A natural curiosity is important – after all, if you're going to make a difference to our business, you've got to be genuinely interested in how that business works."

"If you really want to impress us at interview, we advise that you visit our website and our Facebook pages to gain a good understanding of the business. You could also visit a local store and get a feel for our displays and the designers that we work with to develop our frames."

 Specsavers

[amazingapprenticeships.com
/vacancies/employer/
specsavers](https://amazingapprenticeships.com/vacancies/employer/specsavers)

"RSPCA apprenticeships attract lots of applications. Make yours stand out from the crowd by understanding the breadth of the work of the RSPCA, our mission, vision and values. You can find a lot of information on our website, so be clear about why you want to study an apprenticeship with us. Maybe even visit an RSPCA centre if possible."



[amazingapprenticeships.com
/vacancies/employer/
RSPCA](https://amazingapprenticeships.com/vacancies/employer/RSPCA)

"In order to stand out from the crowd during your application, it is important to do as much research on our company and the roles you are applying for as possible. Learn more about our culture: mission vision & values and compare them to your needs and values. Identify why you want to work for The Coca-Cola Company and that way we can both find out if The Coca-Cola Company is right for you!"

 Coca-Cola
EUROPEAN PARTNERS

[amazingapprenticeships.com
/vacancies/employer/
coca-cola-european-partners](https://amazingapprenticeships.com/vacancies/employer/coca-cola-european-partners)



Preparing for the interview

Using the STAR method

Preparing for interview

Interviews can be a nerve-wracking experience for anyone, regardless of whether you have been to an interview, or if you have never had an interview before.

The STAR method is a helpful technique that can be used in an interview to help to answer a situational question, which are the types of questions that typically ask you to describe or explain a situation or task and how you responded to it.

These types of questions can sometimes be the most difficult to answer on the spot, particularly for a young person who might be interviewing for the first time and may struggle to recall examples under pressure.

We've shared some helpful tips below for how you can help your child to practise and prepare for these types of questions.

What is the STAR method?

The STAR method is broken down into 4 steps:

Situation	Describe the situation that you were in or a task that you needed to achieve
Task	Explain what the goal was or what needed to be done
Action	Describe the action you took to address or resolve the situation
Result	Describe the results or outcome of your action

To take this method a step further, you can add 'Reflection' at the end. This will provide an explanation on how the individual felt the situation was handled and if anything would be done differently.

Why use the STAR method?

The STAR method helps you to be concise and clear in your answers and provide real examples of strengths and attributes that the employer is looking for.

The employer will often ask these types of questions to get an understanding of how you might react to a situation or what your thinking is in your approach to a task, so this is an opportunity for those interviewing to share examples that demonstrate such strengths and attributes positively.



Preparing for the interview

Using the STAR method

Example of the STAR method

Describe a problem you had recently and how you solved it

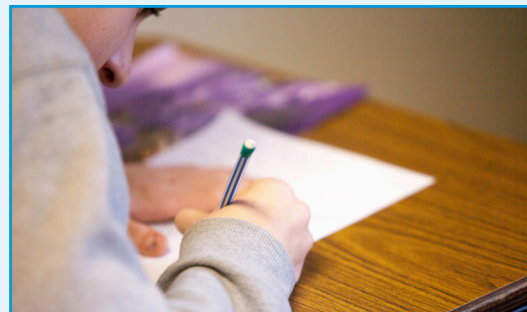
In my personal time, I play football and for the last year I have volunteered to run our social media accounts.

January was a particularly busy time for me with my A Level study and part time job, and I was concerned I would not be able to meet the weekly target of sharing 10 posts. I explained the situation to our coach and asked if a member of the team could help me for the first two weeks. I created a template that they could use with guidelines and provided 5 examples that they could learn from.

My teammate was very grateful and was able to quickly help in keeping the account going so we still met our target. It was also really positive in helping to teach someone else the process so we can ensure someone can help or cover in future situations.

Helping your child to practise

We have provided a list of 4 example interview questions for you to ask your child and to help them to start thinking about how they could respond using the STAR method. Using a piece of paper and a pen, ask them to note their response to each of the questions below:



1. Can you describe a stressful situation you have been in and how you handled it?
2. Tell me about a time when you performed well under pressure
3. Can you give me an example of a goal you met?
4. Can you give me an example of a goal you couldn't meet and how you handled it?

Top tips for using the STAR method

When helping your child to think of examples and form their answers, try to encourage them to think about the below:

- Describe a specific event or task that they were involved in
- Give enough description for the interviewer to understand, but concisely and clearly
- Keep the focus on them and what they did, as opposed to the team
- Don't be shy about their contribution, it is ok to take credit for their work
- Remember to link it back to the strengths and attributes the employer is looking for
- Make sure your answer includes positive results



Careers information

Staying connected

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the upcoming careers events or shows that were scheduled for this time of year have been cancelled.

However, the National Careers Service are available to continue to support your children with their careers questions at this time and so have set up a live Q&A session every Wednesday evening from 6pm – 9pm.

If you or your child have any questions about careers, employment, education or training, you can ask them via the National Careers Service's social media sites.



National Careers Service

Live Facebook & Twitter Q&A

Every Wednesday 6pm - 9pm

#AskNationalCareers

 **NationalCareersService**  **@NationalCareers**





National Careers Service contacts

Twitter: @NationalCareers

Facebook: National Careers Service

Follow the hashtag #AskNationalCareers on twitter or facebook for Wednesday evening Q&A sessions.

Telephone: You can also get in touch with them from 8am – 10pm throughout the week on 0800 100 900.

Interactive apprenticeship live broadcasts

Bringing a world of opportunity and experiences directly into the classroom

What is an interactive live broadcast?

Learn Live is an innovative, interactive, live online channel that brings a world of opportunity and experiences directly into the classroom, home or business. Each interactive Learn Live broadcast can be attended by an unlimited number of schools/colleges or individuals simply by logging into the channel.



What happens in a live broadcast?

The live broadcasts showcase an organisation's key messages, provide live video feeds, play and share video content, share information around applications and act as a repository of information that can be downloaded by teachers, students and parents. It has a secure, moderated chat facility that can be used with iPads, iPhones, Apple TV, PC/ laptop, Macs and Androids.

Students and teachers are encouraged to ask and answer questions during the broadcasts either verbally or by using the chat facility. Twitter is also used to capture questions and comments from students and teachers in real time during the live broadcasts which allows instant feedback to be given by the presenters from the organisations involved.



Interaction during the broadcasts is encouraged by the presenter asking questions on what the student audience has seen on screen. The students are all given an opportunity to answer the questions one at a time and the first correct answer is awarded a point. The answers are saved at the end of the broadcast for evaluation purposes and shared with stakeholders.

Who can access live broadcasts?

Learn Live technology is free to parents and doesn't require any additional equipment to be purchased to interact with the live broadcasts. All broadcasts can be viewed via a Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge browser on laptops, PCs or tablet devices.

All apprenticeship broadcasts on Learn Live are also recorded and available on the Amazing Apprenticeship website.

Find out more

To find out more about the live broadcasts, please visit amazingapprenticeships.com/live-broadcasts