

The Creative and Media Apprenticeship Guide



What are creative apprenticeships?

Do you have a passion for creativity or dream of working in the media?
An apprenticeship could be a great way to get you started



'I have learnt a vast amount of new skills and also developed a number of existing skills. Every day I am learning something new, which is great as you are very quickly learning how things work in the broadcast industry. I am regularly assessed to ensure that my learning is still developing as it should. This ensures correct training plans are in place.'

Apprentice, Broadcast Service Operations, Sky*

'I handle several of the company's social media accounts. Instagram is the one which I am solely responsible for. I feel really appreciated in the company and I feel needed. I get involved with a lot of the projects in the team. I often get recognition and appreciation from colleagues and my manager and praised for things I've done well.'

Higher apprentice, Digital Marketing, The Juice Academy*

'The support I got from the Outreach Officer with Hijinx Theatre was excellent. He would check that I knew what was asked of me and that I was comfortable with things I was asked to do.'

Degree apprentice, Creative Writing and Support Work, Hijinx Theatre*

Apprenticeships combine work-based study with on-the-job training, and pay. Your employer will also pay for your training costs including tuition fees. So with the cost of university fees getting higher, an apprenticeship could be a different path to a creative or media role.

The creative industries are extremely wide-reaching, with areas such as film, fashion and TV all having armies of staff behind them.

As an apprentice in the creative industry you may find yourself learning a variety of skills from

how to engage users on social media to learning about stage lighting to developing new project-management expertise on cross-company projects.

A lot of creative apprenticeships are based around major cities such as London, Manchester and Bristol, so it might take you a bit more time if you're looking for something more regional.

What are advanced, higher or degree apprenticeships?

There are several levels of apprenticeship

available; an advanced apprenticeship is the equivalent to A-levels (level 3), whereas higher and degree apprenticeships are an alternative route to a degree without tuition fees.

See table (right) for education levels. Find out more at [which.co.uk/apprenticeships](https://www.which.co.uk/apprenticeships).

There are plenty of apprenticeships in different creative sectors at an advanced, higher or degree level. When searching for an apprenticeship check with the particular vacancy details to see what qualification you will gain at the end.

Apprenticeship	Level	Equivalent educational level
Advanced	3	2 A-level passes/ Level 3 Diploma/ International Baccalaureate
Higher	4, 5, 6 and 7	Foundation, bachelor's or master's degree
Degree	6 and 7	Bachelor's or master's degree

Creative and media options

Find out what areas you could work in, in this diverse field

Our guide covers three of the most popular creative apprenticeship sectors you might be aware of; digital media and marketing, journalism, and theatre and live events.

Digital media and digital marketing

Defining a digital media apprenticeship can be difficult because all online content can go under this umbrella. Some of the most familiar roles within this sector will be around social media, digital marketing, graphic design, web development, and digital design.

A social media and digital marketing apprenticeship could see you working in roles such as a social media assistant, social media analyst, digital marketing assistant or digital communications officer. Your tasks could include managing online communities, using the internet or social media for marketing campaigns, writing copy, creating websites, and managing blogs.

In all roles you'll be helping your business to promote and increase its presence through the internet and social media. These apprenticeships are generally at a higher apprenticeship level. Learn about this area in more detail in our digital, tech, and IT degree apprenticeship guide:

[which.co.uk/apprenticeships](https://www.which.co.uk/apprenticeships).

All industries are involved with digital to an extent, so the skills you're arming yourself with can apply to many different digital and creative teams beyond a typical design studio or newsroom, from working for retail companies to supermarkets and banks.

Journalism

Journalism apprenticeships are generally level 3 apprenticeships (or advanced apprenticeships –



this is the equivalent to A-levels.) They can represent a great way into journalism if this is where you want your career to go, with a good salary to match (Channel 4 offers £18,500 a year, and the BBC offers £20,800 a year outside of London, and £25,360 inside London).

The NCTJ (National Council for the Training of Journalists) also provides an 18-month level 3 junior journalism apprenticeship. You'll have to pay for this, though. It'll cost around £1,500 for registration, exam fees and certification.

Theatre and live events

You could be doing a range of roles within this sector: lighting or sound technician assistant, stage assistant or wardrobe assistant, to name a few.

Places like the National Theatre and Royal Opera House offer apprenticeship schemes in various backstage roles for two years. They're available throughout the year, so it's best to keep an eye on the particular venues that catch your attention. There are a number of apprenticeship levels, so always check the entry level.

'I'm a BBC digital journalist apprentice. My daily roles now include attending the morning news prospect meeting, sharing my ideas and developing others, applying a 'digital first' focus to news, sourcing and conducting research for stories, filming and interviewing, editing video and uploading it to social media and the BBC online pages, writing tight and engaging scripts and reviewing performance of digital material to further evolve the platform.'

Digital journalist apprentice, BBC*

Future prospects

How much could you earn and where could it lead?

What entry requirements will I need?

This varies from vacancy to vacancy but literacy and numeracy are important. If you haven't got good GCSE grades in maths and English, you may need to take a literacy and numeracy test. Typically, places will be looking for GCSE levels 4-6 (grades C/B) in English and maths.

But don't be put off! Employers are more interested in your skills, enthusiasm and commitment than your qualifications. They look for genuine interest in the apprentice role along with strong communication skills, creativity and the ability to work well as part of a team. A good imagination and a flair for English, art, music, or a similar creative subject can also help you succeed. Personal blogs could also help you stand out and show off your skills.

How much will I earn?

With numerous apprenticeships available in this sector, there are many levels of possible earnings. Apprentices have to be paid at least the National Apprenticeship Minimum Wage if they are under 19. If they're aged over 19 and in the first year of an apprenticeship, this works out at £3.70 an hour. For some apprenticeships in this sector you'll be earning around this level. After you've done a year, you must be paid at

TOP TIP

Research the apprenticeship you're interested in. Apprenticeships can be competitive, so you may have to undertake specific training for certain apprenticeships or gain work experience in that field to help your application

least National Minimum Wage for your age. However you could be earning from £16,000+ per year, depending on the role and company you work for. Always check the vacancy details first before you apply.

Companies you could work for

Several big-name companies offer creative apprenticeships. These include:

- Royal Shakespeare Company
- BBC
- The Times
- Sky
- Tesco
- Stagecoach Theatre Arts

How long will it take?

The length of role can completely differ. Some roles allow you to work part-time – if you do this, the length of role will be longer. Typically you will be looking at a year or two but some can take up to four years.

Future prospects and career expectations

When you've successfully completed your apprenticeship you get a certificate confirming your work-related skills and abilities. Your employer may offer you an ongoing role or you could use your experience to find another job or continue your learning.

Given the wide range of roles you can get in the creative and media industries, it's difficult to pinpoint a precise likely future salary. Generally, people in roles on the more technical side (such as developers or designers) will be drawing in the higher figures. The National Careers Service estimates a marketing executive earns between

£18,000 and £35,000, a newspaper journalist at between £15,000 and £50,000; and a web developer at between £20,000 and £50,000.

Application top tips and advice

Don't expect to be treated like the next J. K. Rowling. Creative apprenticeships can be long, difficult and with anti-social hours, and it can be difficult to climb the ladder. An apprenticeship is generally a structured programme that trains you while you learn, and it can last up to 4 years

If you're unsure about whether working in a creative industry is something you want to pursue, an internship or work experience might be more suited to you while you decide what you want to do.

An internship is less structured and can last anything from a few weeks to a few months, which might help you understand more about whether a job in the industry is for you. Bear in mind that internships don't necessarily have to pay you a wage.

How to apply

Application processes vary slightly from employer to employer. For the most competitive and prestigious opportunities, you will go through a rigorous recruitment process. Companies might have to select a handful of the best candidates from hundreds or thousands of applications. You will find that recruitment for degree apprenticeships has lots in common with graduate recruitment processes.

Although businesses recruit in different ways, many large firms share some common practices.

These include an:

- Online application
- Telephone interview
- Face-to-face interview(s)
- Assessment/task-driven activity

'My program is a very structured two-year programme, one year in each role, one day at the FRA (Fashion Retail Academy) every two weeks. This structure helps my team support me in my learning, as they understand where I am on the course.'

Apprentice, Fashion Buyer and Merchandiser, Tesco*

'Since starting my confidence has improved immensely, in talking to people, presenting and organising events. I am always being offered courses, days out to see other parts of BT, apprentice related evenings to better my own knowledge but also to pass on my skills.'

Degree apprentice, TV and Digital Media, BT*

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***With thanks to ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk for sharing reviews and apprentice experiences.**

TOP TIP

Find out about other degree apprenticeship in the specialist section on our website: which.co.uk/apprenticeships

