



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**APPRENTICESHIPS.**

**A GENIUS DECISION.**

**APPLICATION ADVICE**

 **Prentisiaethau  
Apprenticeships**



UNDEB EwROPEAIDD  
EUROPEAN UNION



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

**Cronfa Gymdeithasol Ewrop  
European Social Fund**

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For more information on apprenticeships visit  
[gov.wales/apprenticeshipswales](https://gov.wales/apprenticeshipswales)  
or to speak to a careers adviser call **0800 028 4844**.



**/apprenticeshipscymru**



**@apprenticewales**

# TOP TIPS TO HELP YOU GET AN APPRENTICESHIP

## 1. DO YOUR RESEARCH

This is vital to ensure you're fully prepared to fill out an application form or send off your CV. Key things to study include the apprenticeship route, as well as the company you're applying to.

## 2. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF ANY JOBS OR CAREERS FAIRS IN YOUR AREA

Speak to local training providers and get a feel of the best fit for you and your future career.

## 3. FINE TUNE YOUR CV

Your CV is the gateway to securing employment. You need to show why your set of skills makes you suitable for the apprenticeship you're applying for.

## 4. WRITE A KILLER COVER LETTER

A covering letter is a basic outline of who you are, why you think you're suitable for the apprenticeship and why you want to work for that specific company. It is then the introduction to your CV. Your cover letter doesn't have to be very long, keep it sharp and short, remembering to match your skills and experience to the job description.

### **Include:**

- A formal address such as Dear Sir/Madam

**Use clear paragraphs such as:**

- Open the letter by explaining who you are and why you are writing. Identify the apprenticeship you're applying for and a unique reason why you think you'd be an asset to that company.
- Explain why you're interested in that sector and specifically that company. Detail why you think you'd be an asset, showing enthusiasm and genuine interest for the opportunity.
- Link back to you here – pick out all the skills and qualities that mean you'd be perfect for the apprenticeship and this company, using examples of when you've used them successfully. Refer back to the job description here to help pick out the ones the employer is really looking for.
- Thank the employer for their time for e.g. by stating 'Thank you for your consideration' or 'I look forward to hearing you soon.'
- Finish formally, with 'yours sincerely' if you know the name of the person you're sending it to, if not use 'yours faithfully'.

## **5. ASK SOMEONE TO PROOF-READ YOUR COVERING LETTER AND CV**

Don't forget to do this before sending anything off.

## **6. USE A SENSIBLE E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR GETTING IN TOUCH**

Use one that is personal to you as it will help a potential employer identify you from your CV.

## **7. CHECK YOUR ANSWERPHONE MESSAGES FREQUENTLY**

Don't miss out on that great career by missing a message from a potential employer, get back to them as soon as possible.

## 8. BE MINDFUL OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Employers will often do their research before interviewing or hiring.

## 9. PRACTICE YOUR INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

Preparation is the key to acing an interview.

- Review the job description, the key skills and qualities required and your application. Look at the company's website and try to get a feel for what they're passionate about, and why exactly you want an apprenticeship with them.
- Practice answering questions with a family member or friend. If you're at school you may even be able to organise a mock interview. You can find a list of common questions here:

[www.careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/interview-techniques/answer-interview-questions-with-real-life-examples](http://www.careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/interview-techniques/answer-interview-questions-with-real-life-examples)

- Focus on your skills and how they match to the apprenticeship. Remember the SET technique to help you:
  - S – Strengths; what are you good at, why would this be beneficial to the company? Make sure to link your skills to the job description here.**
  - E – Experience. What tasks have you done that are relevant to the role?**
  - T – Training. What training have you done that's relevant? How will this be beneficial?**
- Prepare some questions to ask the interviewer. Use this as a chance to show off the research you've done, ask about their long term goals, what opportunities they may have to develop your role in the company or can you tell me about a typical day in this job?
- Make a positive first impression, they really do count. Dress smartly, arrive early and remember to smile, you got an interview for a reason.

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**A CV IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO IMPRESS AN EMPLOYER,  
TO SELL YOUR SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE AND RELATE THESE  
TO THE APPRENTICESHIP ROLE OFFERED.**

# RECOGNISING YOUR STRENGTHS

Apprenticeships can be competitive: many people are keen to take advantage of the opportunity to get employed and gain a nationally recognised qualification at the same time. Writing a good CV gives you a chance to stand out from the crowd.

A CV is your opportunity to impress an employer, to sell your skills and experience and relate these to the apprenticeship role offered. We know, though, that writing a CV and cover letter can be tricky: knowing your own strengths and how to sell these is vital to success.

**Take a look at the strengths listed below and think about how they relate to you and your skills.**

- Able
- Accurate
- Adaptable
- Alert
- Ambitious
- Analytical
- Articulate
- Assertive
- Astute
- Bright
- Capable
- Calm
- Confident
- Committed
- Common sense
- Communication excellence
- Competent
- Computer literate
- Consistent
- Conscientious
- Cooperative
- Cope under pressure
- Creative
- Decisive
- Dedicated
- Dependable
- Desire to succeed
- Determined
- Diligent
- Diplomatic
- Diverse
- Driven
- Dynamic
- Educated
- Effective
- Efficient
- Energetic
- Enjoy a challenge
- Enthusiastic
- Eye for detail
- Fast learner
- Fast worker
- Flexible
- Focused
- Friendly
- Good communicator
- Gifted
- Hardworking
- Helpful
- Highly motivated
- Honest
- Imaginative
- Impressive
- Insightful
- Interpersonal skills
- Independent
- Innovative
- Initiative
- Intelligent
- Intuitive
- Keen
- Knowledgeable
- Leadership skills
- Loyal
- Mature
- Methodical
- Objective
- Organised
- Patient
- Perceptive
- Persistent
- Polite
- Positive
- Practical
- Proactive
- Professional
- Punctual
- Rational
- Reliable
- Resourceful
- Responsible
- Supportive
- Tactful
- Team player
- Tenacious
- Thorough
- Trustworthy
- Versatile
- Willing

# RECOGNISING YOUR STRENGTHS

Once you have identified some personal strengths pick out the ones you feel are your strongest, aim for at least five, and start to think about examples of when you've used or demonstrated these skills.

BUZZ WORD	EXAMPLE
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

A young woman with curly hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and a tan apron, is focused on measuring a long piece of wood on a workbench. She is holding a pink tape measure. The background shows a well-lit workshop with various tools and equipment.

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**HOBBIES ARE A FANTASTIC WAY TO START THINKING ABOUT YOUR SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES.**

# RELATING YOUR HOBBIES TO SKILLS

Hobbies are a fantastic way to start thinking about your skills and attributes. Use the list below to give you some ideas.



**Art:** Creativity, eye for detail, techniques, passion, patience, idea development. Comedy: Initiative, resilience, creativity, idea development, humour, confidence communication



**Cooking:** Creativity, attention to detail, patience, self-expression, multitasking, decision making.



**Dance:** Creativity, dedication, resilience, confidence, perseverance, motivation, discipline, self-belief.



**Drama:** Confidence, self-awareness, presentation skills, dedication, resilience, teamwork, communication skills, creativity.



**Gaming:** Communication skills, analytical, resourcefulness and adaptability, technical skills and problem-solving.



**Make up, fashion:** Creativity, following trends, research techniques, interpersonal skills, confidence, attention to detail.



**Music:** Dedication, creativity, teamwork (if in a band/orchestra), perseverance, memory, listening, collaboration, diligence, commitment and confidence.



**Reading:** Imagination, communication skills, empathy, creativity and attentiveness.



**Sports/ fitness:** Motivation, communication, passion, dedication, teamwork, leadership, time-management and competitiveness.



**Volunteer work:** Motivation, drive, passion, dedication, communication, interpersonal skills, networking, sense of community and empathy

A young man with a prosthetic left leg is working in a workshop. He is wearing safety glasses, a light-colored polo shirt, and a tan apron. He is leaning over a green workbench, focused on his task. The workshop is filled with various tools and equipment, including a workbench with a vise, a shelf with tools, and a large metal column. The floor is polished and has yellow safety lines. The lighting is bright, coming from overhead fixtures.

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**EMPLOYERS LOVE APPLICANTS WHO HAVE TAKEN THE TIME TO UNDERSTAND THEIR BUSINESS, WHO CAN DEMONSTRATE WHY THEY WANT TO WORK THERE AND THAT THEY ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT DOING SO.**

# THE POWER OF RESEARCH

In all of our conversations with employers about what people can do to maximise the success of their apprenticeship application one thing that crops up time and time again is the power of research.

Employers love applicants who have taken the time to understand their business, who can demonstrate why they want to work there and that they are passionate about doing so.

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

## **Step 1: Working out what you like**

Make a list of:

- What subjects you enjoy
- What extracurricular activities interest you
- What you'd really like to do with your future

## **Step 2: Speak to family and friends**

Speaking to family and friends is a great way to find out about different lines of work and what they may offer. Here are a few questions 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?

# THE POWER OF RESEARCH

## Step 3. Researching companies

Researching different types of companies is really important. Many people have a big dream of wanting to work at a company that they recognise. If this is true for you visit the company's website and start following them on social media to see what opportunities they offer and the kind of values they foster. You can also start looking at the employers featured on the Apprenticeship Vacancy Service.

### What to look for:

- An understanding of what the organisation does
- 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 it's 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 their vacancies page. Take a look at the kind of roles they offer throughout the year. Read the job descriptions in full, noting any consistent skills they're looking for.
- Does their vacancies page explain the recruitment process? Is there an option to sign up to be notified when new vacancies are live?
- Students can also visit the Skills Academy, which is a free employability training programme, focused on building skills and confidence to choose the right career and find a job, visit [www.careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/skills-to-succeed-academy](http://www.careerswales.gov.wales/getting-a-job/skills-to-succeed-academy)