

Apprenticeships at Chelmsford College

What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a real, paid job where the apprentice learns and gains valuable, hands-on experience.

Apprenticeships are open to individuals aged 16+, who have been UK resident for three years or more.

Apprenticeships are suitable for people at any age and any level so you can hire someone new or upskill an existing employee, allowing you to grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

Apprenticeships range from level 2 to degree level. At Chelmsford College most of our courses are levels 2- 5.

Most of an apprentice's time is spent in the workplace, working alongside colleagues to learn new skills and gain experience of the workplace.

Apprenticeships are an exciting option for both employers and apprentices.

Benefits of an apprenticeship:

Hiring an apprentice is a productive and effective way to grow talent and develop a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce.

There are many benefits to offering an apprenticeship, which include:

- 92% of companies that have taken on apprentices believe this leads to a more motivated and satisfied workforce
- 86% said apprenticeships helped them develop skills relevant to their organisation
- 80% have seen a significant increase in employee retention

Source: <https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/employers/understanding-apprenticeship-benefits-and-funding>

Other benefits include:

- Improvements to products or service quality
- Creating a talent pipeline across your organisation
- Improving your company image

How the apprenticeship works:

Apprentices usually work and study between 30 – 40 hours per week.

At least 6 hours of the apprentice's contractual hours must be spent as "off the job" training.

Training for apprenticeships is delivered in two ways:

The training for some apprenticeships is on day release and held at Chelmsford College on the same day each week.

Other training is delivered in the workplace by our Work Based Tutors on a 1:1 basis either virtually or in person.

All apprentices are assigned a dedicated Work-Based Tutor who will support the apprentice to complete all the knowledge outcomes for the course, observe them in practice to meet the skills requirements and work with employers to ensure the apprentice is fully supported in the workplace.

Entry Requirements:

Most apprenticeships will ask for specific GCSE, A-level or BTEC Grades.

Most Level 3 and above apprenticeships require GCSE grade 4-9 / Functional Skills Level 2 in English and Maths.

Most Level 2 apprenticeships require GCSE grades 3 or above and if this has not been achieved at school, then the apprentice will need to follow a Functional Skills Maths or English programme of study as part of their apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships may also have specific requirements such as experience in a specific field and / or responsibility for leading a team.

The apprenticeship wage:

Apprentices must earn at least the minimum wage for apprentices, currently £8.00 per hour, and in most cases employers pay more. The minimum wage for apprentices is reviewed every April. The rate is applicable for apprentices of any age in their first year of apprenticeship.

The apprentice cannot be self-employed.

They must be paid for 52 weeks of the year and for their 6 hours spent on "off-the-job" training.

Apprenticeship Training Costs:

Levy Payers

The government introduced an apprenticeship levy for large employers (companies with a wage bill of over £3m per year) and all levy payers will have their own levy account which will pay for apprenticeship training.

Non-Levy Payers

For non-levy payers, the apprenticeship is 100% government funded if employers employ an apprentice under the age of 24 years.

If an employer employs an apprentice over the age of 24 they will need to contribute 5% towards the cost of training. We can tell you how much this is.

Employer Incentive Payment

There is a £1,000 grant (Employer Incentive Payment) for any employer who employs an apprentice aged 16-18.

Employers are also eligible for this payment if they recruit an apprentice aged 19 to 25 years old who has an education, health and care (EHC) plan or has been in the care of their local authority.

This grant is paid in 2 instalments over 13 months, with the employer receiving the payment after 120 days and 395 days.

Additional Employer Incentive (from October 2026):

From October 2026, additional funding will be available for non-levy paying small and medium-sized employers (SMEs).

Employers will receive £2,000 for every apprentice they hire aged 16–24.

There is an important timing requirement. The apprentice must have been employed by the organisation within a 3 month window of the apprenticeship start date. For example, if the apprenticeship begins on 1 October 2026, the apprentice must have started employment after 1 July 2026.

Apprenticeships we offer:

<https://www.chelmsford.ac.uk/courses/apprenticeships-view.asp>

Chelmsford College delivers the highest quality teaching and achieves great outcomes.

We support our students to progress in their chosen field and become excellent apprentices and valuable members of staff for their employer. The College's Work Based Tutors have a 'hands-on' approach with apprentices and guide them in the right direction to meet the needs of their employers.

Next Steps:

Please contact the Apprenticeship team if you wish to talk more about Apprenticeships.

For any help or advice, please contact 01245 256 611 for the Apprenticeship Team or e-mail apprenticeships@chelmsford.ac.uk