

Flexible apprenticeships to boost jobs in key sectors

New flexible apprenticeships will soon be available to create opportunities for more people to earn while they learn in industries that boost the economy.

Up to 1500 apprentices will be recruited on the government's new flexi-job apprenticeship scheme, which will allow people to complete short placements across sectors such as construction and creative during their apprenticeship, opening up a new paid training route to a career in these industries.

Some sectors with flexible employment patterns and short-term roles have previously found it harder to take on an apprentice. Apprenticeships are at least 12 months long, and apprentices need guaranteed employment and pay for that whole period. The new scheme will put an end to this by using agencies that can act as employers and place apprentices on projects in different companies.

Almost £5 million has been awarded by the government to support employers, including the BBC and NHS, to offer the flexi-job apprenticeship scheme and support recruitment of apprentices.

Now an apprentice hired by the BBC will be able to work with several production companies in short-term roles during their apprenticeship, while an apprentice working in construction could fulfil several contracts – such as working on both home refurbishments and bigger infrastructural projects – and earn while they learn.

The announcement, which coincides with National Apprenticeship Week, forms part of plans to increase apprenticeship numbers in key sectors such as healthcare, construction, and the creative industry.

Secretary of State for Education Nadhim Zahawi said:

“Gone are the days when apprenticeships are restricted by a one-size fits all approach.

“Through our dynamic post-16 reforms, we are investing directly in people, delivering prestigious and flexible apprenticeships which suits learners’ needs.

“New flexi-job apprenticeships will not only help to deliver the skilled workforce needed to support a diverse range of sectors to grow, but it will create even more exciting opportunities for people to secure a great career.”

Chancellor of the Exchequer Rishi Sunak said:

Apprenticeships are a cornerstone of our Plan for Jobs, providing people with an excellent route into some of the best careers and contributing to a high-skill, high-productivity economy.

I'm thrilled to see such exciting new opportunities being created in a wide range of industries thanks to our flexi-job apprenticeships – supporting more people to find the apprenticeship that is right for them.

Following a rigorous application process, [a total of 15 organisations have been approved by the government to establish Flexi-Job Apprenticeship Agencies](#). The agencies will recruit and employ apprentices and place them with host businesses to work on a range of exciting projects, so they gain the skills and experience in previously untapped industries, including film and television, healthcare, construction, and engineering.

Successful organisations include: the BBC, which has already launched its new BBC Apprentice Hub in Birmingham to offer the flexi-job apprenticeship scheme; ScreenSkills, which will work with partners Prime Video, Sky with APX Content Ventures, Banijay UK and Lime Pictures; as well as the NHS; and civil engineering specialists McGinley Ltd. All will offer people a unique opportunity to build experience across a range of sectors in the coming months.

BBC Director General Tim Davie said:

The importance of growing skills and introducing fresh, diverse talent has never been greater than it is today. It is the perfect time to be launching the BBC Apprentice Hub in Birmingham. We are working closely with local creative businesses to give apprentices from across the West Midlands the skills and experience they need to thrive in this exciting industry.

Seetha Kumar, CEO ScreenSkills, the industry-led skills body for UK screen, said:

We are delighted to be working with major industry partners Prime Video, Sky with APX Content Ventures, Banijay UK and Lime Pictures to create opportunities for people who have found it difficult to get into the exciting world of film and television. Our apprenticeships will address serious skills shortages – benefiting the UK's booming screen industries while opening up pathways, providing training and support and helping people earn as they learn on high-profile shows.

NHS North of England Care System Support' (NECS) spokesperson said:

We are delighted to be able to facilitate the flexi-job apprenticeship offer across the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care System. We are hugely excited by this scheme which complements our very ambitious NECS 100 programme (giving graduates and 6th form leavers their chance to find a career in the NHS). We look forward to applying that learning and experience to the Flexi-Job Apprenticeship offer and provide even more job and development opportunities to the communities we serve.

Samantha Allen, chief executive designate of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board, said:

We are delighted the Education and Skills Funding Agency have approved the flexi-job apprenticeship scheme application submitted by the North East and North Cumbria.

This will allow us to explore and implement innovative apprenticeship programmes to support the health and care system across the whole region. Developing our workforce of the future is a core priority and this will provide opportunities for local people to develop lifelong careers in health and care by gaining the skills, knowledge and experience to work across a number of settings. This scheme is testament to the strong partnerships that already exist in the North East and North Cumbria and we look forward to working with all stakeholder organisations as work gets underway to launch this exciting new apprenticeship programme.

Dermot McGinley, CEO of McGinley Support Services, said:

The flexi-job apprenticeship scheme will boost the workforce just when we need to create a legacy of future skills to deliver the UK's National Infrastructure Strategy. McGinley is delighted to be asked to help deliver those apprentices and support their development.

The first apprentices are expected to start their flexi-job apprenticeship placements from late February. The flexible apprenticeship scheme is just one of several steps the government has taken to support employers to offer more apprenticeship opportunities. These have included offering cash incentives for employers hiring new apprentices and making it easier than ever for large employers to transfer unused levy funds to smaller businesses – allowing more employers to benefit from the skills and productivity apprentices can bring to their business.

This week marks the 15th National Apprenticeship Week, a national celebration of apprenticeships and the impact they are having on individuals, businesses, and communities up and down the country.