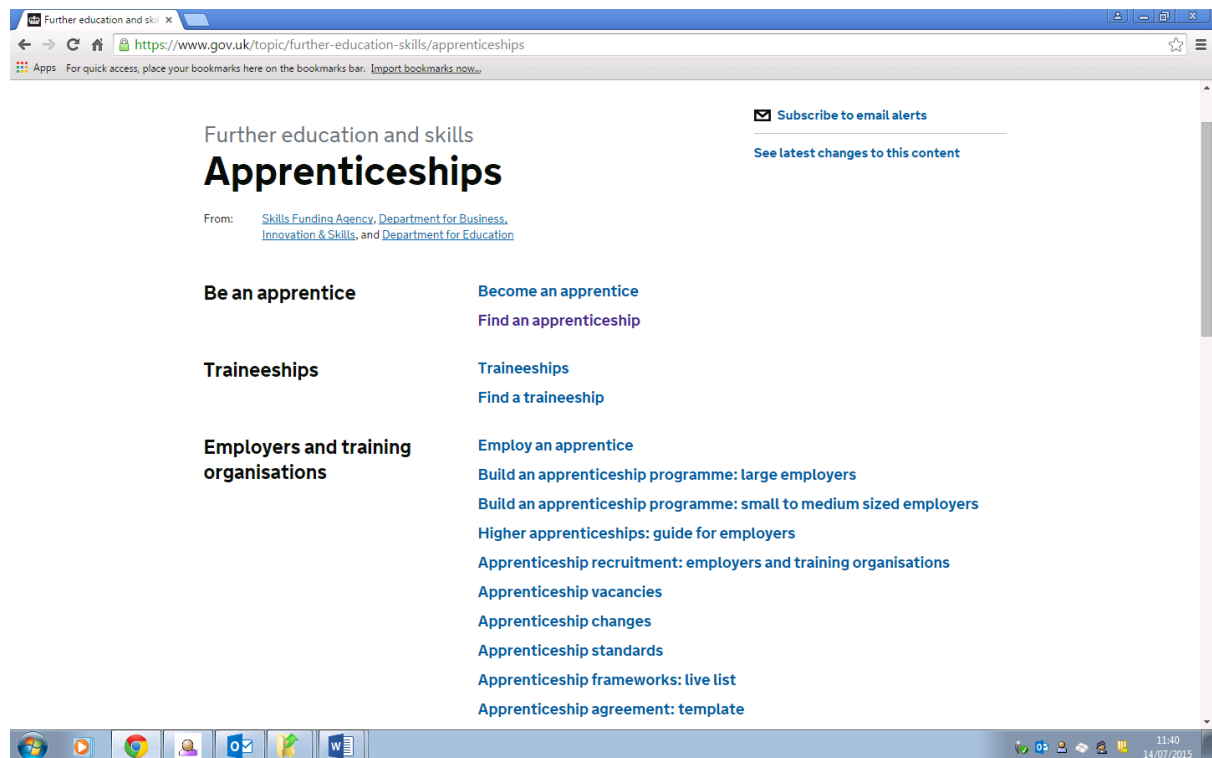


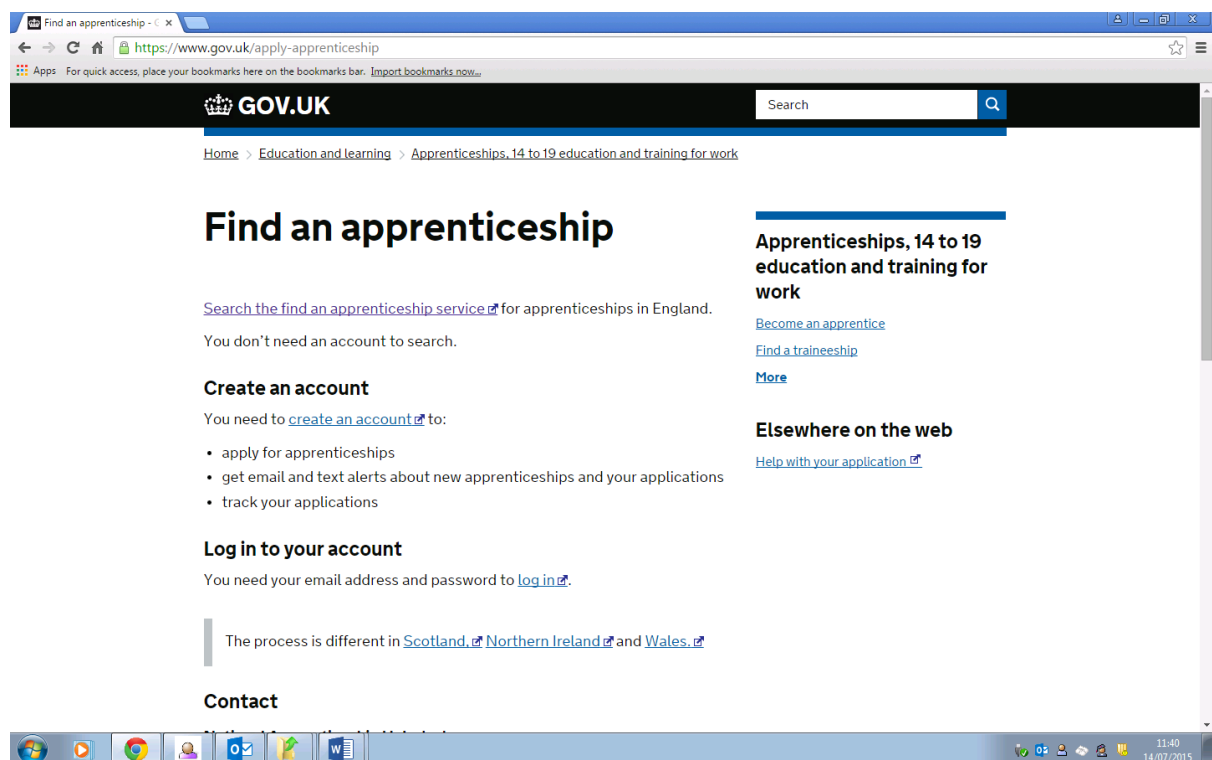
How to write a winning Apprenticeship application



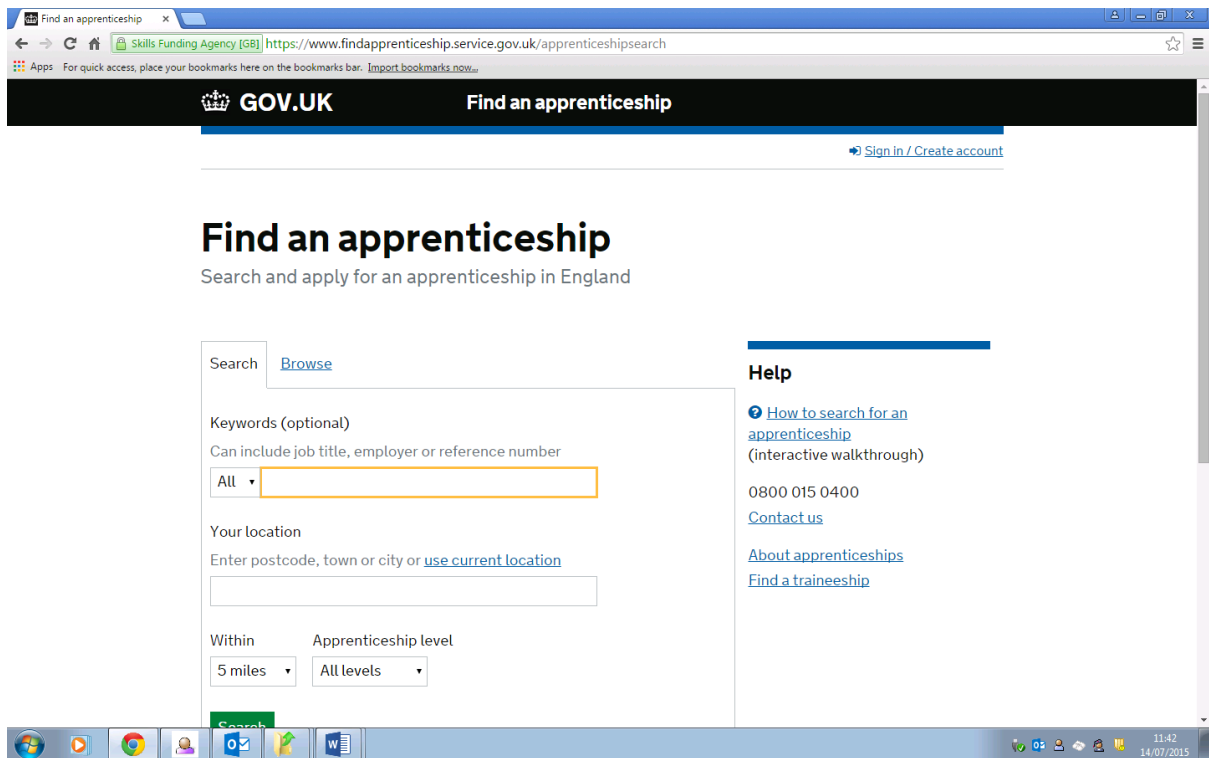
Go to: www.gov.uk/further-education-skills/apprenticeships



1. Select 'Find an Apprenticeship'



2. Select 'Search the Find an Apprenticeship Service'



3. Under Help – select ‘How to search for an Apprenticeship’ as this will guide you through the search page
4. Now let’s start searching for some available Apprenticeships. You do not need to create an account to search, but you will need one when you actually want to start applying from Easter onwards.

How to create an account

The screenshot shows the 'Find an apprenticeship' search page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the GOV.UK logo and the text 'Find an apprenticeship'. A link 'Sign in / Create account' is in the top right. The main heading is 'Find an apprenticeship' with the subtitle 'Search and apply for an apprenticeship in England'. Below this, there's a search section with a 'Search' button and a 'Browse' link. The search criteria include: 'Keywords (optional)' with a text input field; 'Can include job title, employer or reference number' with a dropdown menu set to 'All'; 'Your location' with a text input field containing 'Braintree (Essex)'; 'Within' with a dropdown menu set to '5 miles'; and 'Apprenticeship level' with a dropdown menu set to 'All levels'. On the right side, there's a 'Help' section with links: 'How to search for an apprenticeship (interactive walkthrough)', '0800 015 0400', 'Contact us', 'About apprenticeships', and 'Find a traineeship'. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 13:27 on 14/07/2015.

5. Create an account by selecting 'sign in/create account' in the top right corner

The screenshot shows the 'Sign in or Create an account' page. At the top, there's a navigation bar with the GOV.UK logo and the text 'Find an apprenticeship'. A link 'Sign in / Create account' is in the top right. The page is divided into two main sections: 'Sign in' and 'New to this service?'. The 'Sign in' section has fields for 'Email address' and 'Password', a link 'I can't access my account', and a green 'Sign in' button. The 'New to this service?' section has text explaining that new users must 'create an account' and lists benefits of creating an account: 'apply for an apprenticeship or traineeship', 'track your apprenticeship applications', and 'receive alerts about new apprenticeships'. A link 'Activate your account' is at the bottom of this section. At the bottom of the page, there are links 'Contact us' and 'Give feedback', and the Royal Coat of Arms. The Windows taskbar at the bottom shows the time as 13:29 on 14/07/2015.

6. Select 'create an account' on the right hand side under 'New to this Service'?

Create an account - Find - x logos of apprenticeships - x

Skills Funding Agency [G8] https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/register

For quick access, place your bookmarks here on the bookmarks bar. [Import bookmarks now...](#)

Create an account

Your details

First name

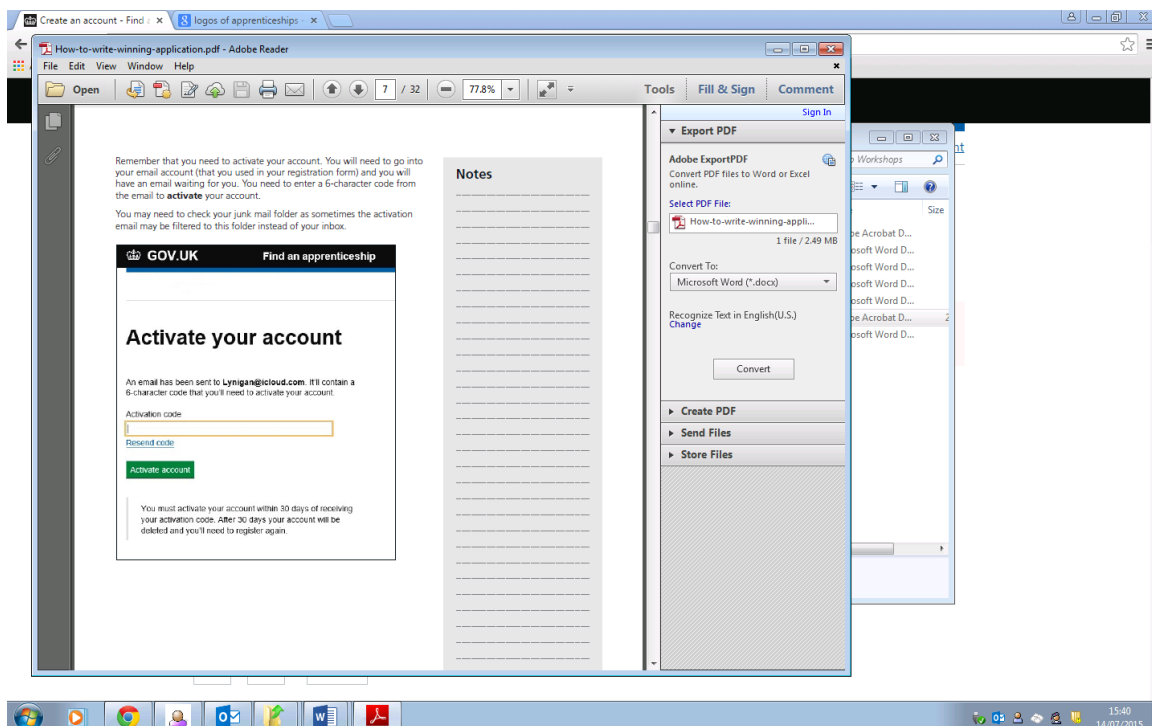
Last name

Date of birth
 Day Month Year

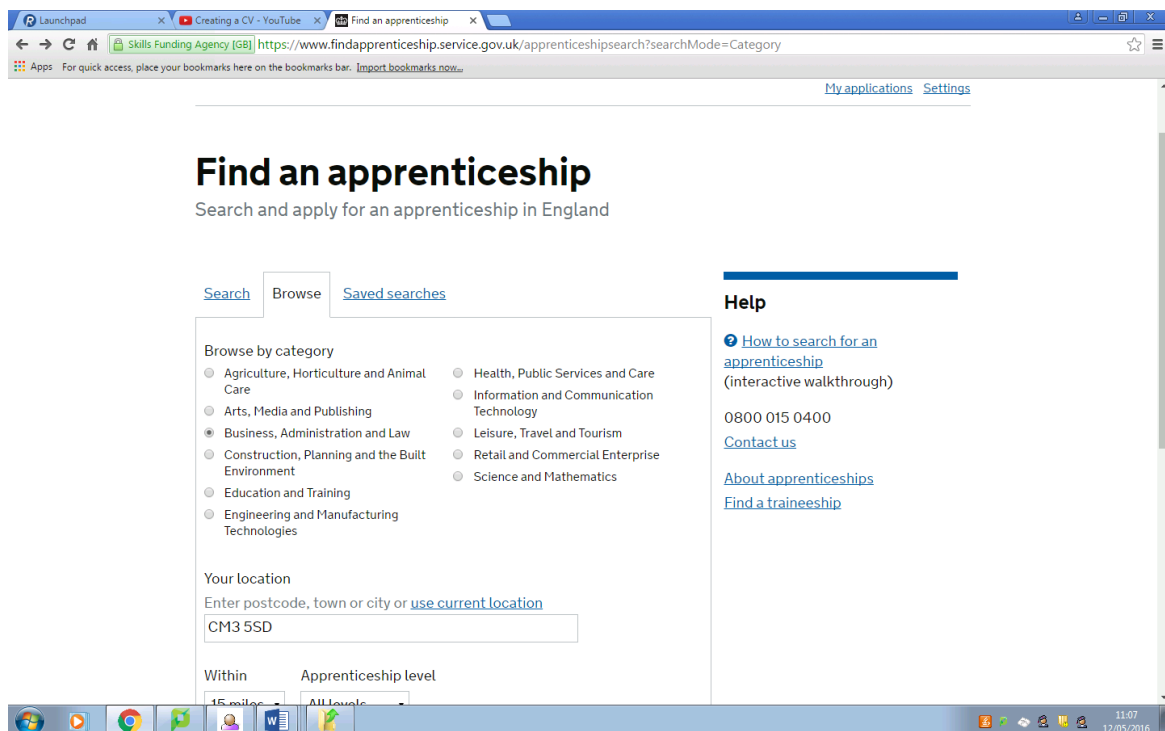
Contact details

Postcode
 For example, BN1 8NH

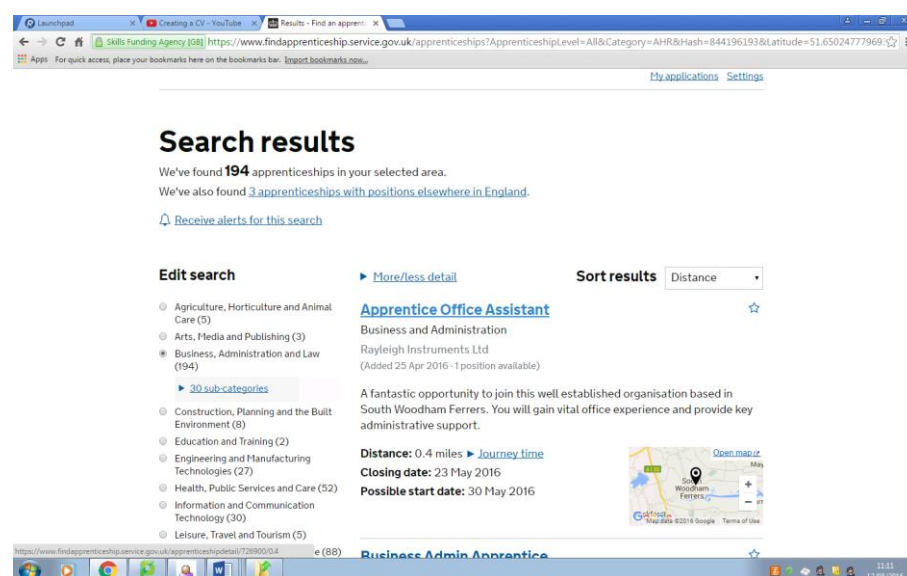
7. **Complete all the sections here. You will need a valid email address and a password.**
 (*Password requires upper and lowercase letters, a number and at least 8 characters)
8. **Select 'create account' at the bottom of this screen and you will be emailed an activation code.** (You will need to log in to your email account to retrieve this before continuing and you may need to check your junk email folder in case it goes in there)



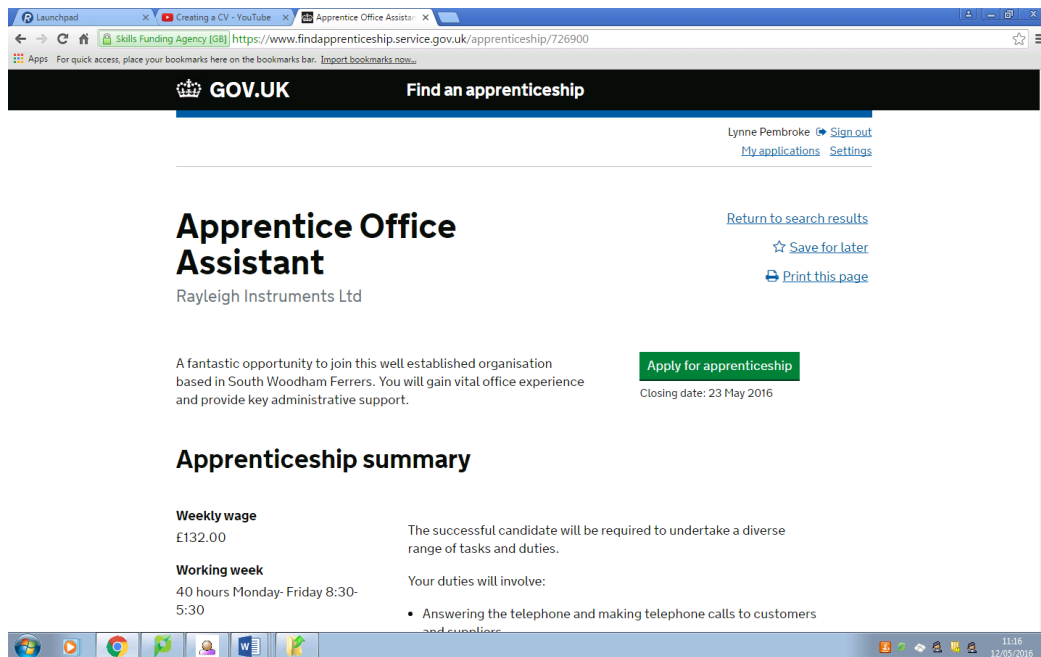
9. Enter the 6 character code in the box that says 'Activate your Account' then select the Activate Account button. You must activate your account within 30 days or you will have to start the process again.



10. You are now ready to search and apply for vacancies. You can search under categories by using the 'Browse' tab. Ensure you put at least a 15 mile radius in the 'within' box. This will then search for vacancies within a 15 mile radius of your home postcode and bring up a list of current vacancies.



11. Click on the job title to see further details.



12. You can apply by selecting the ‘Apply for Apprenticeship’ button (there is one at the top and bottom of the page). **This will then take you to the application form if the employer is using this service. Some employers advertise here but you will automatically be redirected to the employers own website to apply. This is likely to be very different to the application form that this guide has explained, although all of the advice given here should also help you when completing other applications.**

13. You will see that the details you put in when you started to create your account are automatically entered. If these are not correct they can be changed in ‘settings’.

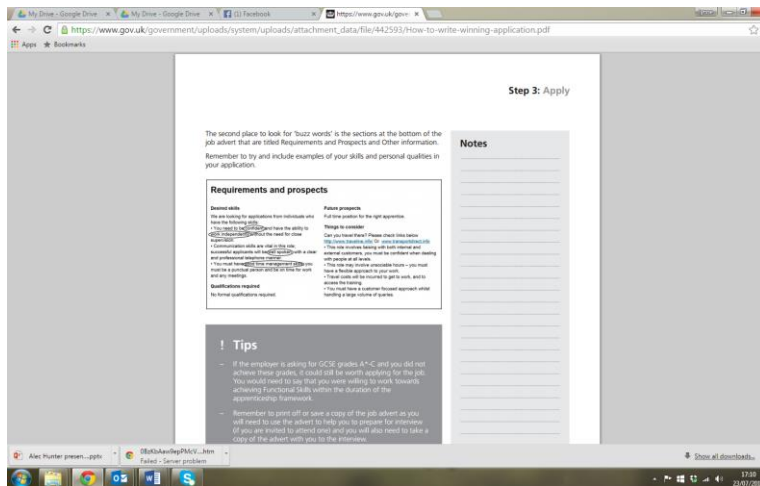
14. You will then need to add the following:

- **Your education details including the name of your secondary school plus dates you started and when you will finish**
- **Under qualifications click the ‘yes’ box which will then allow you to add any subjects you have already gained a qualification in and also any GCSE subjects you are currently taking.**
- **Use the drop down list to select the qualification and add the date you completed it or are due to complete it**
- **Type in the subject (don’t forget to use capital letters!)**
- **Add the grade achieved or are predicted to achieve by selecting the ‘predicted’ grades’ box, but remember to edit this once you have received your ‘actual’ grades. (You can include things like Duke of Edinburgh, Sport or Dance Awards, Asdan, St Johns Ambulance etc.)**
- **Ensure you press the ‘save this qualification’ button after each entry you make**
- **Continue by adding any work experience details (either paid or voluntary)**
- **Then add any training courses you may have attended**
- **You then need to answer three ‘about you’ questions which are:**

This is a very important part of the application form and you need to put in a lot of work to get this right. Remember to give examples of your strengths if you can. For example, if the employer asks for ‘Good communication skills’ then you need to tell them that you have ‘Good communication skills’ but also think about how you could evidence this. For example you could say something like:

[illegible]

8



2) What skills would you like to improve during this apprenticeship?

You only need to write a good paragraph of a few sentences that answer this question, but in a clever way and linked directly to the job that you are applying for. For example, if you were going for a job in the IT Industry you could say something like this: 'I would like to improve my knowledge and awareness of the latest programming techniques being used in the workplace which could then increase efficiency and decrease costs to the employer' Or if you were going for a job in hairdressing you could say something like this: 'I would like to improve my knowledge of the latest cutting and colouring techniques being used within the fashion industry and how these could be adapted to suit high street fashion trends'

3) What are your hobbies and interests?

Be careful about what you write in this section. You need to remember that the employer will use this section (and all of the application form) to start to create an impression of the kind of person that you are. It is quite likely that if you are invited for interview, that the employer will use this section to help to 'break-the-ice' and make you feel more comfortable in your interview. They might start by asking you something like 'I notice from your application form that you are interested in films. What was the last film that you saw and what did you like about it?'

There may also be additional questions from the employer and these must be answered if you want your application to be progressed

Use the same...

The only thing that they may change is to ask you two questions that are relevant to their job application. They will be displayed at the bottom of the application form and will look something like this:

Additional questions

What attracted you to this role?

What skills, attitudes and experience do you have that make you good for this role?

[Save and submit](#)

[Save draft](#)

You do need to answer these questions and you need to think about the job advert, the employer and what you can tell them that might make you stand out from other applicants.

You should research their company through the internet so that you can tell them something interesting about your future career plans in that industry.

Other typical 'Employer' questions that you might see could include:

- Why do you feel you are a suitable candidate for this role?
- Why are you interested in completing an apprenticeship?
- Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- What experience of dealing with customers do you have?

You do need to answer these questions and you need to think about the job advert, the employer and what you can tell them that might make you stand out from other applicants. You should research their company through the internet so that you can tell them something interesting about your future career plans in that industry. Other typical 'employer' questions that you might see could include: –

- ❖ Why do you feel you are a suitable candidate for this role?
- ❖ Why are you interested in completing an apprenticeship?
- ❖ Where do you see yourself in 5 years time?
- ❖ What experience of dealing with customers do you have?
- ❖ What qualities do you think are important in this job role?
- ❖ What do you think makes the difference between a good customer experience and an excellent one?

15. When you have completed all the sections you can then select 'save & continue'.

16. You will now see the completed application form and you need to check it to ensure it has the correct information and NO spelling or grammar mistakes! When you are happy it is correct you can press the 'submit application' button.

17. This information will now stay in the application form for any future jobs you apply for, but remember to update and change your application form each time, so that it is relevant to the job that you are applying for.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

18. Once your application is submitted it will be looked at after the closing date and if you are shortlisted you will be put forward for an interview, normally with the Training Provider first to undergo Literacy & Numeracy tests, followed by the Employer. If you are successful you will be notified and a start date agreed. If you are not shortlisted you will be informed and given feedback via your account which should help you with future applications.

19. If you wish to receive an alert whenever there is a new vacancy that matches any 'saved searches' go in to your 'settings' and tick the box for email/text alerts. You will still need to check the site regularly (at least weekly) to ensure you do not miss anything or to continue with any applications you have started but need to finish before the deadline date. You can also choose to receive other notifications in your account settings by ticking the relevant boxes.

WHAT THE SHORTLISTERS SAY

"A busy shortlisters is looking for a reason to reject you as much as to offer you a place. Don't give them an excuse to put you on the 'no' pile because of a poor application"

"Your application must be submitted on time and be free from errors. Weak applications are written in a hurry and are under-prepared"

"Good applicants have well written application forms where they have taken the time to give examples of their skills and have a good balance between academic achievement and enthusiasm for the job/industry that they are applying for"

"Your application needs to sell you, be engaging, show your interest and enthusiasm and give an insight into your personality. Avoid humour though, this is still a professional document"

"Avoid poor spelling, grammar and punctuation. This is critical if you want to be taken seriously in your application. Ask someone else with a good eye for detail to proofread your application before you submit it"

"When we shortlist, we do look to see if the applicant has the desired GCSE results that the employer is seeking. However, this isn't the only thing that we look at. If the applicant can demonstrate that they have taken the initiative to set up and undertake work experience to add to their skills then this is sometimes enough to get them through to interview"

Employers are looking for various qualities and characteristics in a potential employee. Use the following list of words to help you when describing yourself, whether in an application or at interview:

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

There are a variety of ways you can describe yourself and your strengths. Try using the following:

‘I am...’

- Skilled at...
- Excellent at...
- A skilful...
- Able to...
- Competent in...
- Very good at...
- Extremely good at...
- Talented at...
- Familiar with...
- Qualified to...

Interview Checklist

Do you know how to make a positive first impression at a job interview? Use this checklist to help prepare for your interview.

Prior to submitting an application:

- Ensure your voicemail message on your mobile phone is appropriate
- Make sure your email address is sensible and will represent you in a mature way
- Spell and grammar check your CV and ensure it is up to date

Prior to interview:

- Research the organisation and job that you are applying for
- Prepare at least 2 or 3 questions that show an interest in the job and organisation
- Work out how to get to the interview and how long the journey will take allowing enough time to arrive at least 15 minutes early
- Prepare answers to some typical interview questions e.g. 'why do you want this job?'
- Prepare examples of when you have used skills relevant to the job

Appearance:

- Take a bath or shower prior to interview
- Wear clean and ironed clothing
- Wear appropriate clothing and footwear – formal shoes, not trainers
- Wear matching socks
- Polish/clean your shoes
- Make sure your hands and fingernails are clean
- Wear conservative makeup, accessories and jewellery (including nail varnish)
- Brush your teeth
- Wear subtle perfume/aftershave
- Cover tattoos with long sleeves
- Remove facial piercings (one set of small earrings is fine)
- Remove chewing gum prior to interview

Body Language:

- Shake hands firmly
- Smile
- Sit when you are offered a seat
- Use good posture, sit up straight
- Be attentive, nod or take notes
- Make eye contact but avoid staring
- Avoid negative behaviour (yawning, crossing your arms, checking your watch, looking at your feet)
- Be composed (no fidgeting, playing with hair, tapping your feet)

Attitude:

- Be respectful
- Be positive and enthusiastic
- Be attentive
- Be knowledgeable about the company
- Use the interviewer's name
- Be professional and mature

Responsiveness:

- Bring a copy of your CV, the application form and the job advert with you
- Bring a pad and pen to take notes if necessary
- Switch off your phone or set to silent (turn off vibrate as this can still be heard)
- Be on time (even better – be early)
- Use interviewer's title and surname (address as Mr/Ms)
- Refer to the job advert/job description when answering questions
- Show enthusiasm
- Speak clearly, using proper grammar
- Avoid slang, swear words and suggestive language
- Answer questions clearly and concisely
- Focus on your strengths
- Avoid interrupting the interviewer

Closing the interview:

- Ask any questions about the organisation/job that you prepared prior to the interview
- Stand and shake hands
- Thank the interviewer for his/her time
- Emphasise your interest in the job
- Ask when a decision will be made

Final checklist:

Before you submit make sure you...

- ☐ Check the closing date for applications to be submitted
- ☐ Ask someone to read your application to check for spelling and grammar mistakes
- ☐ Include some examples of your skills, not just a list of strengths
- ☐ Check your application is relevant to the job advert and that you have used some of the 'buzzwords.'
- ☐ Save a copy of your application
- ☐ Print off a copy of the job advert and your application
- ☐ Check the location of the job that you have applied to. Check that you have answered all of the questions