



GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITH APPRENTICESHIPS



With demand at an all time high it could be the ideal time for you to consider taking on an Apprentice to support you and grow your business. Labour is a concern shared by many and with an ageing workforce there are an estimated 66% of decorators set to retire in the next ten years.

Apprentices are vital for the future of the trade and need to learn from and work alongside those with knowledge, skills, and experience – you!

Providing industry-leading training courses to more than 11,000 painters and decorators – including many new joiners – since its launch in 2016, Dulux Academy is well-placed to offer best practice advice for taking on an apprentice. The following guide will answer your most frequently asked questions about apprentices and will highlight how mentoring an apprentice can benefit your business and help develop the next generation of painting and decorating professionals.

We know that finding out about taking on an Apprentice and what's involved can be difficult to navigate so this guide aims to provide you practical information, advice from others and links to find out more about what's involved.

If you're thinking of taking on an Apprentice and want to find out more this guide is for you!

This guide will take you through the journey of taking on an Apprentice from how to start right through to how you can actively play a part in developing their future.

WHAT IS AN APPRENTICESHIP?

An apprenticeship is designed for someone new to a trade or profession who wants to gain valuable on the job experience alongside a nationally recognised qualification.

Apprentices are a paid member of your team and released for off-the-job training at a learning provider or local college to complete their formal qualification learning in Painting & Decorating and if required functional skills in Maths and English.

WHO CAN BE AN APPRENTICE?

Apprentices are open to anyone who is over 16 and not in full time education. Generally, they tend to be for individuals who are starting out in their career, new to the trade or looking to upskill and gain a qualification.

Apprenticeships are delivered at a range of levels with differing criteria of previous knowledge or formal qualifications such as Maths & English for each one.

Painting and Decorating is currently at a Level 2 which is equivalent to GCSE level learning and is delivered over 3 years with a formal end point assessment.

HOW MUCH DO I PAY THEM?

You must pay your apprentices through the usual payroll process. Your apprentice's employment should normally be for 30 hours a week but may be longer.

Any apprentices you take on are entitled to the apprentice rate of £4.30 if they're either:

- aged under 19
- aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship

For example, an apprentice aged 21 in the first year of their apprenticeship is entitled to a minimum hourly rate of £4.30.

Apprentices are entitled to the minimum wage for their age if they are both:

- aged 19 or over
- have completed the first year of their apprenticeship

For example, an apprentice aged 21 who has completed the first year of their apprenticeship is entitled to a minimum hourly rate of £8.36. More information about wage rates can be found here

gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates

WHERE DO I FIND SOMEONE FROM?

There are many ways that you can go about finding an apprentice. Local colleges are a great place to start especially if you have one offering P&D qualifications. Advertising locally and on social media and letting your customers know you are looking for someone could lead to a recommendation. There are also a host of national job sites that you can post a vacancy on.

THE APPRENTICESHIP SERVICE

The Apprenticeship Service is a government online service that enables you to set-up and manage your apprentices. In England all apprentices need to be registered here and it's a great route to advertise an opportunity.

This is the main site that anyone looking for an Apprenticeship would look on. You will need to register and set-up an account and then you can post your vacancy and manage your funding.

The site also contains a host of useful information and case studies.

You can create an account here

[Create an apprenticeship service account](#)

WHAT TASKS CAN I GET THE APPRENTICE TO DO?

Any work you get your apprentice to carry out should be targeted around helping them gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to achieve their apprenticeship.

The tasks you give your apprentice should match their level of experience and the work you have on. They should be able to assist you on all elements of your work over time – you just need to be patient with them and remember you didn't know it all when you started out.

Giving them tasks to complete and feedback on them will really encourage them. You may also need to assist them in gaining work-based evidence for their formal learning.

DO I GET ANY FUNDING OR SUPPORT WITH THIS?

There are a number of funding incentives available to you when recruiting an apprentice.

CITB also offers further support for employers and apprentices including grants and apprenticeship accommodation and travel funding.

More information about what is available can be found here

citb.co.uk/levy-grants-and-funding/grants-funding/apprenticeship-grants/eng-land-apprenticeship-grants/



IT SEEMS LIKE A LOT OF HARD WORK TAKING ON AN APPRENTICE, HOW DO I BENEFIT?

Locally this can be great for your business, everyone has to start somewhere and you supporting the future workforce in your community can only be of benefit to them and your business.

There will have been someone over the years that taught and supported you and now it's your turn to give back and inspire someone maybe even to take over from you in the future!

ASK A PROFESSIONAL

Mike Poole of Mike Poole Decorators in Northampton has been mentoring apprentice painters and decorators since 2005 and was named Apprentice Mentor of the Year at the Dulux Select Decorators Awards 2021.

He shares his advice on best practice when working with apprentices and the benefits they can bring to your business.



CAN YOU TELL US HOW YOU STARTED WORKING WITH APPRENTICES?

I used to be an estate agent until I changed career, becoming a self-employed painter and decorator in 2004. I got my training at Tresham College and it was there that I identified a young person who I thought could help me with my business, and I took them on as an apprentice in 2005. I later did teaching at the college, where I was involved with assessing apprentices out on site.



WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO TAKE ON AN APPRENTICE IN THE FIRST PLACE?

I thought it would be good way to encourage young people coming into the industry, and it was a way of building up both their confidence and mine at the same time, and it helps to keep me feeling young myself. It also gives your job extra purpose as your helping to support the next generation, which gives you an extra sense of satisfaction.

HOW DO YOU GO ABOUT FINDING APPRENTICES?

We've grown a bit of a reputation for offering work placements, so we often hear from local people and traders who know someone who like some work experience at the business.

I'm an ambassador for schools and colleges in Bedford and Northampton, and keep in close contact with teachers to see if any students would like to work with us for their apprenticeship.

I recently attended a school in Bedford with one of my apprentices to demonstrate to A-Level students what we do and the tools we used, and then let them have a go at painting.

It helps to make it fun and shows them that there are places they can come to get that experience if they're interested in a decorating career.

I also advertise that we take on apprentices on the Bedford College and Northampton College websites, and I often go to career fairs where we promote this side of the business to young people who are interested in working in the trade.

WHAT DO YOU TEACH YOUR APPRENTICES, AND WHAT DO YOU LEARN FROM THEM IN RETURN?

It depends on the apprentice, but we try to teach them basics of painting and decorating and any practical skills to support their training. I also offer them advice and support on areas that maybe aren't covered as much by the colleges, such as how to run a business.

For example, one of our current apprentices, Max, is looking to go self-employed soon, so I've been showing him how to do quotes for jobs.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF TAKING ON AN APPRENTICE?

It's always good to have an extra pair of hands to help with jobs and it encourages efficiency within the business. It's also an opportunity for you to learn something new from them, as they'll be working using the latest techniques from college.

They're also really inquisitive and can help you think differently about certain things. I've had some interesting discussions recently with my apprentices about the type of products we use, for example, and it helps to open up your mind and keeps you up to date with the latest trends.

WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES OF TAKING ON AN APPRENTICE?

Teenagers will be teenagers, and some will be good and some not so good. I think to take on an apprentice, you need to be a certain person with tolerance and empathy who can put up with issues when they arise.

People who are new are going to make mistakes, so you need to have plenty of patience. It's important to offer people two or three chances before deciding that it's not quite working out. But there are some really great young people out there, and I've been fortunate enough to work with many of them.



WHAT WOULD BE YOUR TOP ADVICE FOR OTHER PAINTERS AND DECORATORS LOOKING TO TAKE ON THEIR OWN APPRENTICE?

For me, it's important to try and get a better understanding of the apprentices you're taking on from an early stage. We often hold mock job interviews with young people who are thinking about working with us, which helps us to know them better and helps them by building up their confidence and giving them a better understanding of our business.

I'd also advise getting involved with organisations who can offer you more support on this. I'm an ambassador for CITB and they are really good if you want to find apprentices or learn more about the financial support you can receive when taking on an apprentice.