



FEDERATION OF
**MASTER
BUILDERS**

A builder's guide to hiring your first apprentice

How to grow your business
and nurture new talent



Build with confidence

If you're looking to grow your construction business and invest in its future, hiring an apprentice could help you on your way. You'll be able to shape a talented new addition to your team, as well as gain valuable support and fresh perspectives.

This guide is packed with practical advice to help you navigate the apprentice hiring process. So, if you're ready to empower the next generation of construction professionals and take your business to the next level, let's get started.



7 reasons to hire an apprentice

1. To meet your business needs

Think about the skills and roles you need to fill and the specific apprenticeship programmes available to match those needs.

2. Government funding:

The UK government offers incentives and financial support to companies hiring apprentices, reducing the overall cost of training and recruitment.

3. Productivity & reduced costs:

Apprentices can contribute to company projects while learning, providing more help on site and potentially reducing overall labour costs.

4. Addressing the skills gap:

The construction industry faces a skills crisis due to a lack of young people entering the industry. Apprenticeships offer a chance to train people from scratch, moulding them into qualified and loyal employees who understand your specific company culture and practices.

5. Fresh perspectives & innovation:

Young apprentices bring new ideas and approaches to the table, sparking innovation and improvement within your established team.

6. Investing in your business's future:

By investing in their growth from the ground up, you can potentially identify and nurture the people who can rise up the ranks and become the future of your company.

7. Raising your profile:

Taking on an apprentice demonstrates your business's commitment to developing local talent and offering career opportunities. It reflects positively on your company's social responsibility and community engagement, which is attractive to future employees.

"The funding and grants from CITB are a great help towards the cost of hiring an apprentice, but the biggest reward is having someone you can trust and rely on to carry out the work to your professionalism and standards."

David Smallcombe
David Smallcombe Limited

Things to know before you start

Before you start looking for an apprentice, it's crucial to check if your business is ready – so it's a successful experience for both parties. Here are the essentials to consider:

Capacity and resources

Do you have a dedicated staff member who can mentor and provide on-the-job training? It needs to be someone who is patient and a clear communicator, with enough time to dedicate to the task.

Can you easily slot your apprentice into ongoing projects without overloading them or impacting the workflow? It's important to start with simpler tasks and gradually increase responsibility.

Financial readiness

Have you researched the funding that's available for apprenticeships, and do you have enough budget to cover any additional costs? You will be responsible for paying their salary, as well as for their tools, PPE and their end point assessment. However, there is government funding to help with this. In England this includes the following (further information for the Home Nations is available at <https://www.fmb.org.uk/resource/ultimate-guide-to-construction-apprenticeships.html>).

- **CITB Apprenticeship Grants:** If you are registered with CITB, you are eligible to receive a £11,000 CITB Apprenticeship Grant if your apprentice completes a 3-year programme.
- **Apprenticeship Levy:** Employers with payroll exceeding £3 million pay 0.5% into an Apprenticeship Levy which pays for the cost of funding their own employees. Up to 25% of this can be transferred to other employers if unused.
- **Co-investment funding:** If you're under the £3 million payroll threshold, you can access funding to cover 95% of training costs up to a capped amount.

- **Incentive payments:** In some cases the government offers an additional incentive payment up to £1,000 to employers who hire apprentices.

Your culture and values

Does your company encourage ongoing learning and development? Talk to your employees and assess if they are willing to be supportive mentors and role models for the apprentice. Fostering a collaborative and welcoming environment is crucial.

If you're investing time and money in training an apprentice, retaining them after qualification makes sense. Ask whether your company has clear career progression opportunities for the apprentice after they complete their training.

"People think that if you didn't do well at school you can go into a trade, but actually it's a career with progression and continued professional development. You could have a fantastic lifestyle and run your own business."

Pam Wilson
Kevin Wilson Master Builders

The legal requirements

When hiring an apprentice, it is essential to comply with certain legal requirements.

Apprenticeship agreement

You must have a written apprenticeship agreement outlining the terms and conditions of employment, including the specific role, training programme, and duration of the apprenticeship. There are two main ways to access an agreement template:

1. Training provider: Your chosen training provider may have their own apprenticeship agreement template that you can use. This template will be specific to the apprenticeship programme you are choosing and may include additional clauses that are not in the government template. It's important to check with your training provider to see if they have their own template and, if so, whether you are required to use it.

2. Government website: Download a free agreement template from the government's website, which you can adapt to your specific needs. Find it online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-agreement-template>.

Age and compulsory education

In the UK everyone under the age of 18 is legally required to be in education or training, and the minimum age for apprenticeships is 16. Apprentices can leave school from the last Friday in June if they turn 16 before the end of the summer holidays.



Apprenticeships must contain an inbuilt education component where part of the time is spent learning theory and skills at a college or training provider. Apprenticeships can be full-time or part-time. Full-time usually combines work with around 20 hours of study per week. Part-time combines fewer hours of each. Apprentices typically work towards gaining recognised qualifications such as NVQs or T Levels – equivalent to A Levels in terms of their value for further education or employment.

National minimum wage

You'll need to pay your apprentice at least the National Minimum Wage for apprentices, which varies depending on age and progression in the programme. You can find out the current rates and information about holiday entitlement on the gov.uk website at <https://www.gov.uk/become-apprentice/pay-and-conditions>

Employment Law Compliance

All employment law in the UK applies to apprentices, including health and safety regulations, working hours, and discrimination legislation.

Insurance

You'll need to make sure they are covered by the relevant insurance policies, including:

- 1. Employers' liability insurance:** You may already know that this is a **mandatory** legal requirement, which covers legal costs and compensation if an apprentice suffers an injury or illness due to work activities.
- 2. Public liability insurance:** This protects the business against claims from third parties (including members of the public) if they are injured or their property is damaged due to the actions of the apprentice during work.



3. Contractors' all risks insurance (CAR): This covers physical damage or loss to tools, equipment, and materials used by the apprentice on site.

4. Personal accident insurance: While not mandatory, this provides financial protection to the apprentice in case of an accident outside of work hours, potentially leading to lost income or medical expenses.

5. Motor fleet insurance (if applicable): If the apprentice is required to drive a company vehicle for work purposes, check with your fleet motor insurance provider to make sure they are covered.

Need further help with insurance?

Call FMB Insurance to talk about your requirements or to get a quote on **01353 652760**, or email fmbinsurance@fmb.org.uk.





“My top three tips for training an apprentice would be firstly, to make sure they are trained by somebody that is patient and might understand what it’s like from an apprentice’s point of view. I would also suggest having them on a trial period for a couple of weeks. That benefits both you and the apprentice – to see if they fit and if it’s what they expected. The third point is to make sure you look early enough, so if they don’t work out you’ve got some time to find the right candidate for you.”

Charlie Braidwood
David Smallcombe Limited

How to find an apprentice

Connecting with training providers with a view to hiring an apprentice can be done in a number of ways.

GOV.UK: The government's online portal helps to connect you with local training providers, selecting those that offer courses in the skills you need for your business.

Visit: <https://www.gov.uk/employers-find-apprenticeship-training>

CITB: For construction-specific training, CITB operates the New Entrant Support Team (NEST) to help employers with the pathway to hiring an apprentice. You can contact a New Entrant Employer Support Advisor through them. You can also register a vacancy online with the CITB to be matched with suitable applicants.

Visit: <https://www.citb.co.uk/courses-and-qualifications/citb-apprenticeships/take-on-an-apprentice/>



Colleges and Universities: Many colleges and universities offer construction-related apprenticeship programmes. You can search their websites or contact them directly to enquire about their offerings.

Networking and Local Resources: Attending industry events and conferences can be a way to network with training providers and other construction professionals. Talk to other construction companies in your area – they may be able to recommend training providers that have provided good experiences.

Support for your business

By taking the time to invest in an apprentice, you're not just gaining a valuable team member, you're contributing to the future of the construction industry. With dedication and support, your apprentice can become a highly skilled and loyal asset to your company.

Don't forget, if you're a member of the Federation of Master Builders, you can access other useful resources to help grow your business, including:

- Webinars and podcasts
- Online training
- Mentorship groups
- Downloadable guides
- Template documents and contracts
- Helplines

If you're not already a member of the FMB, call us on **0330 333 7777** to apply today, or visit **www.fmb.org.uk** to find out more.



Further resources:

FMB: Ultimate guide to apprenticeships
<https://www.fmb.org.uk/resource/ultimate-guide-to-construction-apprenticeships.html>

FMB: On-demand webinar about building your workforce through apprenticeship
<https://www.fmb.org.uk/resource/building-your-workforce-through-apprenticeships.html>

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE): Resources and information about apprenticeships, including legal requirements and best practices.
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/institute-for-apprenticeships-and-technical-education>

CITB: Guide to CITB apprenticeships
<https://www.citb.co.uk/courses-and-qualifications/citb-apprenticeships/>

GOV.UK – Pay and conditions for apprentices:
<https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>



With support and financial help from government incentives, taking on an apprentice can help your business to grow.



FEDERATION OF **MASTER BUILDERS**

Founded in 1941, the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) is the largest trade association in the UK construction industry representing the interests of micro, small and medium-sized building companies. The FMB is independent and non-profit making, lobbying for members' interests at both national and local level.

The FMB is a source of knowledge, professional advice, and support for its members, providing a range of modern and relevant business building services to help them succeed.

Please visit fmb.org.uk

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