

Pay

How much an apprentice gets paid depends on:

- their age
- which year of their apprenticeship they are in

The rates in this advice are the legal minimum an employer must pay. An employer can choose to pay more.

Apprentices aged under 19

The National Minimum Wage rate for apprentices is £7.55 per hour (£8 from 1 April 2026). Employers must pay at least this rate to all apprentices who are under 19.

Apprentices aged 19 or over

For an apprentice who's aged 19 or over, how much they get paid depends on the year of the apprenticeship they're in.

First year

When someone aged 19 or over is in the first year of their apprenticeship, their employer can choose to pay them either:

- the apprentice rate of £7.55 (£8 from 1 April 2026)
- more than the apprentice rate

This includes:

- during the first year after an apprentice has changed employer, even if it's part of the same apprenticeship
- during the first year of a new apprenticeship agreement, even if it's with the same employer

Second year or later

In the second year of an apprenticeship, their employer must pay at least the minimum wage for the apprentice's age.

This is:

- age 19 or 20 – £10 per hour (£10.85 from 1 April 2026)
- age 21 or over – £12.21 per hour (£12.71 from 1 April 2026)

If an apprenticeship lasts longer than 2 years, these rates also apply to later years.

Employers can choose to pay more.

Example of starting a new agreement

Ali is 19 and is doing a 2-year apprenticeship. The employer must pay Ali at least the apprentice rate of £7.55 during the first year.

In the second year, Ali is 20. The employer must pay Ali at least the minimum wage rate for their age. This is currently £10.

At the end of the apprenticeship, Ali starts a higher level apprenticeship with the same employer. This lasts 2 years.

The employer must pay Ali at least the apprentice rate of £7.55 during the first year of the higher level apprenticeship. They must pay Ali at least the minimum wage rate for their age during the second year. Ali is now over 21, so this is currently £12.21.

Example of changing employer

Mo is 19 and is doing a 2-year apprenticeship. In the first year, the employer must pay Mo at least the apprenticeship rate of £7.55.

After 6 months, they move to a different part of the country. They complete the final 18 months of their apprenticeship with a different employer.

The new employer must pay Mo at least the apprenticeship rate for the first 12 months.

For the final 6 months, the new employer must pay Mo at least the minimum wage rate for their age.

Pay for learning or training

Employers must pay apprentices for any time they spend doing work-related learning or training.

This includes learning or training outside their normal working hours or away from their usual workplace. For example, online learning or training at home.

Check an apprentice is being paid the legal minimum

Apprentices can use the [National Minimum Wage and Living Wage calculator on GOV.UK](#).

Problems with pay

If an apprentice believes they have not been paid properly, they can raise this with their employer.

If this does not resolve the problem, the apprentice can start a formal process for non-payment of minimum wage.

[Find out what to do if an employer pays less than the minimum wage](#)

Contact the Acas helpline

If you have any questions about apprentices and pay, you can [contact the Acas helpline](#).

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