



Your Rights as a Modern Apprentice



Background

What is a Modern Apprenticeship?

Modern Apprenticeships provide the chance to 'earn and learn' in a wide range of jobs and sectors and give you the chance to develop skills, experience and qualifications.

Modern Apprenticeships are open to people of all ages and are an exciting way of gaining skills and qualifications that will help to start a career without having to study full-time.

There are many job roles available for Modern Apprentices, ranging from accountancy to plumbing, business administration to engineering and wind turbine maintenance.

For those aged 16 to 19, and who do not yet have the skills or qualifications to start a Modern Apprenticeship, Skills Development Scotland's Employability Fund activity is one route that can provide assistance. This programme can help improve vocational and core skills, fill any knowledge gaps and boost your overall employability. Contact your local Skills Development Scotland centre or call the Skills Development Scotland helpline on 0845 8 502 502 to find out more about Employability Fund opportunities in your area.

Qualifications

What do apprenticeships offer?

The elements of Modern Apprenticeships can include:

- ✘ Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ), the industry-based vocational element or an equivalent competency-based qualification;
- ✘ Depending on industry, a technical certificate to show you understand the underpinning theory or knowledge;
- ✘ Core Skills – covering literacy, numeracy, Information Technology, problem solving and working with others, plus wider key and business skills as required by the sector.

What are Everyday Skills?

Everyday Skills support includes help with literacy, numeracy, basic IT skills and English language provision for those who do not have English as a first language. This can be arranged by Scottish Union Learning in collaboration with your trade union. Support for individuals who may have dyslexia can also be arranged, as well as dyslexia awareness-raising sessions for employees and employers.

Entitlements

What are you entitled to?

Modern Apprenticeships must include:

- ✘ A contract of employment;
- ✘ A full induction in the workplace;
- ✘ A negotiated training plan or agreement between yourself, the employer and the training provider;
- ✘ A fair wage (see section on 'How much do you get paid?');
- ✘ A safe working environment and protection from discrimination or bullying;
- ✘ Release from work to attend formal training;
- ✘ Provision of an appropriate range of experiences within the workplace to enable you to complete your qualifications;
- ✘ Access to support, guidance and mentoring;
- ✘ Quality training;
- ✘ Regular assessments and review of progress;
- ✘ Sufficient time away from your work station or desk to study in work time.

Joining Up

Joining a Trade Union

Unions negotiate fair pay and equal treatment in the workplace. Unions also tackle discrimination based on age, race, gender, sexuality and disability. Joining a union will help ensure that your Modern Apprenticeship is high quality and that you are properly supported while you are doing it. Unions negotiate with employers to make sure you get time off to study or train, ensure that you receive impartial information, advice and guidance, and that you are supported by a mentor. Your employer must give you the chance to join an appropriate union.

For more information about your rights at work, or about joining a union, visit www.thereisabetterway.org/join-a-union.



Benefits

What's in it for you?

- ✘ A chance to learn while you earn – to get real work experience;
- ✘ An opportunity to get industry recognised qualifications;
- ✘ The possibility of long-term employment with career progression prospects;
- ✘ A chance to learn from experienced workers in the sector.



I really enjoy helping to look after members in the workplace, and I have gained so much more than I ever thought possible through my Modern Apprenticeship. Now my priority is to try to get apprentices and the union to work more closely together.

Mark Lynch
Shop Steward, UCATT



Redundancy

What support is available?

If you are being threatened with redundancy, you should speak to your union.

Skills Development Scotland initiatives such as Adopt an Apprentice and Safeguard an Apprentice are open to employers to help ensure that Modern Apprentices can complete their programmes if threatened with redundancy or after being made redundant.

If redundancies are inevitable, a local Skills Development Scotland PACE adviser can help those at risk of losing their jobs to find new work. PACE advisers work closely with Jobcentre Plus and a range of other national and local partners to help those affected by redundancy secure new employment.

You can phone the free redundancy helpline on 0808 100 1855 and Skills Development Scotland will arrange for a local PACE adviser to call you back.

Age

I am over 25, can I undertake a Modern Apprenticeship?

Modern Apprentices over the age of 25 often have years of experience in the workplace. The opportunities for people of all ages to become Modern Apprentices are developing all the time. Modern Apprentices can be recruited from existing employees.

Modern Apprenticeships can make a big difference to the lives of workers. They can offer positive access to employment for young people and the opportunity for older workers to change or re-engage in their chosen career path.



Pay

How much do you get paid?

Like all employees, the amount paid to Modern Apprentices is negotiated with the employer. Pay rates vary between sectors, regions and between different employers. Your union can help in negotiating pay rates. There is a National Minimum Wage (NMW) in Britain, although unionised workplaces generally have negotiated pay rates well above that. Workers aged 16 upwards are covered by the NMW. Apprentices on a Higher Level Apprenticeship (Levels 4 and 5), and those aged 19+ who have completed their first year, must be paid at least the NMW for their age.

On 1st October 2010, an Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage was introduced. All apprentices in the United Kingdom must be paid at least the Apprenticeship National Minimum Wage. This Apprenticeship NMW applies to all those apprentices who were previously exempt from the NMW.

The National Minimum Wage is increased annually in October. For up-to-date information, visit www.scottishunionlearning.com/apprenticeships. If you think you are not being paid what you are entitled to, you should contact your union.

Employment

Your Terms and Conditions of Employment

All Modern Apprentices are employed and are therefore covered by the terms and conditions contained in their contract of employment and any relevant employment legislation.

You are entitled to a contract of employment in writing. Whilst in employment, you should receive the appropriate time off you need to be able to study or train.

Further Information

For more information about apprenticeships, visit www.scottishunionlearning.com/apprenticeships and www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk.



Scottish Union Learning

STUC Centre: 333 Woodlands Road • Glasgow G3 6NG
Tel: 0141 337 8111 Fax: 0141 337 8101

Email: learning@stuc.org.uk
www.scottishunionlearning.com/apprenticeships