

Uni or a Degree Apprenticeship?

The parent's guide to doing both and choosing well

EduStrategy · @EduStrategyCaroline · uniplan.me

What a degree apprenticeship actually is

A full bachelor's degree and a paid job at the same time. The employer and government cover the tuition, so there's no student debt, your child earns a salary throughout (often £20,000 or more, the average is around £24,500) and they split their week roughly 80% at work and 20% studying. Same degree at the end, plus years of real experience.

The catch

- They're fiercely competitive and often oversubscribed. The application is more like landing a graduate job than getting a uni offer.
- Fewer subjects and employers to choose from than the full UCAS list.
- Less of the traditional campus experience.
- A job at the end is common but not guaranteed.
- You're tied to an employer and a location.

Yes, you can apply for both at once

University and apprenticeships are separate systems and applying to both is smart because it keeps every door open.

	University (UCAS)	Degree apprenticeship
Cost	Tuition fees, taken as a loan	Employer pays, no debt
Money	You pay to study	You earn a salary
Deadline	One clear deadline in autumn	Employer-led, scattered across the year
Application	UCAS form + personal statement	CV, interviews, assessment centres
Experience	Study first	Study plus full-time work

Where to find them

- [Find an Apprenticeship \(gov.uk\)](https://findanapprenticeship.gov.uk) , the official government database
- [UCAS apprenticeships](#)
- [RateMyApprenticeship](#)
- [Amazing Apprenticeships](#)
- The career pages of big employers in finance, tech, engineering, law and accountancy

Staying organised is the whole game

Because the two run on different clocks, you have to track both.

- Start early. Some apprenticeships open in the autumn of Year 13 and close fast.
- Keep a simple deadline tracker. Every employer sets its own.
- Prep the extras apprenticeships need, a CV, interviews and assessment centres.
- Don't miss the UCAS deadline while chasing apprenticeships. Run them in parallel.

Making the decision

Keep both alive as long as you can and decide as late as possible. One thing to watch, apprenticeship offers run on the employer's timeline, not the exam board's, so an offer might need a yes before results day. Stay on top of the dates and you keep the choice in your hands.

Want help deciding?

An EduStrategy 1:1 or report weighs university against a degree apprenticeship for your child specifically, with the data behind it. Book a 1:1 or request a report.

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