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Education & Skills
Funding Agency

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1. Improvements to the apprenticeship service

Continued improvements are being made to the apprenticeships service.

Finding end-point assessment organisations

End-point assessment organisations and their contact details are now displayed at the bottom of the web page when searching for an apprenticeship standard within [find apprenticeship training](#). Where an end-point assessment organisation is listed, employers can contact them about the service they offer and the costs involved.

This new feature has been added in response to employer feedback requesting it to be made easier to find the relevant end-point assessment organisation.

You can read more about [recruiting an apprentice](#).

Amending apprentice records

Following feedback from employers and training providers we have improved the process for amending apprentice records. We have also improved the on-screen prompts that are displayed when an employer stops, pauses or resumes an apprentice. Employers now have the ability to edit all the apprentice details, including the start date, before their training provider submits matching ILR data for an apprentice to ESFA for the first time.

This will reduce the number of steps needed when amending an apprentice record. Please note any changes that are made will need to be approved by both the employer and training provider.

New task list feature

Over the coming weeks you will be able to see a new task list feature on the account home page. This will display any activities needed to complete, with a link to where employers need to go to action a task. For example, a task will be displayed if/when employers need to sign an employer agreement. As we develop the service, more task notifications will be enabled, such as lists of apprentice cohorts to approve and changes to apprentice information.

Employers will still receive email notifications as usual if they have opted in to receive these.

If you have any queries about these changes or need any support, please call the National Contact Centre helpline on 08000 150 600.

2. Apprentice Minimum Wage increase from April 2018

The national minimum wage for apprentices will rise again in April 2018, from £3.50 to £3.70 an hour. This is a 5.7% increase, above UK inflation.

This rate applies to apprentices under 19 and those aged 19 or over who are in their first year. Apprentices must be paid at least the national minimum wage rate if they're an apprentice aged 19 or over and have completed their first year.

3. Launch of the higher and degree vacancy listing

The National Apprenticeship Service has launched a vacancies campaign with a new higher and degree apprenticeship listing for vacancies starting in 2018. It showcases thousands of quality vacancies from over 40 high profile employers. Individuals can apply for many of these apprenticeships and a place at university at the same time.

Over 3000 current and forthcoming higher and degree apprenticeships are featured from some of the UK's biggest employers. From The RAF to the BBC, Nestlé to Rolls Royce, Santander to Siemens, and Royal Mail to Transport for London. You can [download the listing](#) from GOV.UK complete with roles, salaries, locations, application links and more.

4. Apprenticeship Live broadcasts

Schools in England can now access the very latest apprenticeship information directly from employers and their apprentices - through a new [Apprenticeship Live broadcast](#) initiative.

The broadcasts give students, teachers and governors the chance to speak directly to apprenticeship employers and their apprentices live online. During the broadcasts they will hear about the latest opportunities on offer; the skills employers are looking for and how students can best prepare themselves for working life after school or college.

Thirteen employers have already signed up to deliver [Apprenticeship Live broadcasts](#).

5. Disability confident – offering an interview to disabled applicants

Vacancies on [find an apprenticeship](#) for employers who have committed to Disability Confident will now have the Disability Confident logo highlighted on their vacancies.

A Disability Confident employer will generally offer an interview to any applicant that declares they have a disability and meets the minimum criteria for the job as defined by the employer.

In certain recruitment situations such as high-volume, seasonal and high-peak times, the employer may wish to limit the overall numbers of interviews offered to both disabled people and non-disabled people.

For more details please visit the [Disability Confident](#) page on GOV.UK.

6. National Apprenticeship Awards 2017 – national finalists announced

We have announced the finalists in the National Apprenticeship Awards 2017. These finalists will find out if they have triumphed to become national winners at a ceremony in London on Thursday, 18 January.

Find out about national finalists by visiting [GOV.UK](#).

7. National Apprenticeship Week 2018 – theme announced

National Apprenticeship Week 2018 will take place from 5 to 9 March 2018. The theme for the week was announced at the Skills Show and is 'Apprenticeships Work'.

Please follow @Apprenticeships on Twitter; National Apprenticeship Service on LinkedIn and visit [GOV.UK](#) for more information on the theme and how you can support the week.

8. Skills Show 2017 success

The Skills Show, the nation's largest skills and careers event, took place from 16th to 18th November 2017 at the NEC Birmingham and welcomed nearly 80,000 visitors over 3 days.

There were 5,626 visitors to the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) stands – where young people, parents, teachers and careers advisers all spoke to NAS colleagues about apprenticeships and their benefits. Over 20 apprentices from ESFA, Glaxo Smith Kline, Bentley Motors, HMRC, Cheshire Fire &

Rescue Service, United Utilities, Motorpoint and HSBC were present on the NAS stands - speaking to visitors and contributing to careers talks.

The staffroom area of the Skills Show, an area dedicated to teachers, parents and careers advisers saw NAS staff speak with a further 509 teachers and careers advisers.

An Apprenticeship Ambassadors Network conference, where the Young Apprenticeship Ambassador Network was formally launched by Skills and Apprenticeships Minister Anne Milton, was attended by over 200 delegates and almost 300 employers attended the Large Employer Conferences – where Helen Grant MP addressed the audience.

Photos taken at the Skills Show can be found on the [National Apprenticeship Service Flickr site](#).

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