How to take your first steps towards a career in IT
Earn while you learn
The fast track to industry-standard qualifications

www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentice
Do you want a job in a fast-paced, fast-growing, exciting industry with excellent salary and career prospects? Then an apprenticeship is for you.

What is a Firebrand Apprenticeship?
An apprenticeship is a real paid job, in an IT-related business where you learn on the job and all your training is provided through Firebrands’ Accelerated Learning technique.

- We find you the job
- You get valuable work experience
- You earn while you learn
- You get real industry-standard qualifications
- You work in a fast-paced fast-growing industry

The Firebrand Apprenticeship course lasts for a year, and during that time Firebrand will give you five weeks of intensive training backed up with continual assessment while you’re in work.

At the end of the course, after passing your exams (and we have every confidence in you passing them all because we only take on the best), you will be ready to work in an industry where starting salaries for apprentices are around £15-20,000 and you will be able to work in any of the following jobs:

- Support Technician
- Website Administrator
- Helpdesk Professional
- Software/ Web Developer
- Desktop Support Engineer
- Network Planner
- Database Administrator
- Network Engineer
- Software Tester
- Mobile and Windows app Developer

Average student debt over three years

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<td>2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>£26,958</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>£27,594</td>
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<tr>
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<td>£28,358</td>
</tr>
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<td>2013</td>
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Contact us on 0800 081 6022 or email apprentice@firebrandtraining.co.uk

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Why start an apprenticeship?

So why choose an apprenticeship?
According to Government figures almost one million 16-24 year olds are currently unemployed, and of those that continue into further education most will end up leaving with nearly £44,000 of debt. But there is an alternative, and that’s an apprenticeship. An apprenticeship shouldn’t be thought of as something you do because you’re not going to university; it’s not a glorified internship. It’s a real job where you get access to training and experience that will give you a great advantage in the job market. Plus you’ll get paid a guaranteed wage while you are learning.

Why university is not the answer
According to Government figures the average student debt in England after three years at University is set to surpass an eye-watering £44,000 – it’s even more if you go to university in London – and it’s a debt you’ll be paying off for years to come. That’s if you can get a job at the end of your studies. In a survey of recent computer science students* fewer than two thirds were in full-time employment six months after their courses finished, and of those in work only 50% were in IT – 12% were working in shops, restaurants and bars.

Compare that to an apprenticeship
In 2012 more than 520,000 apprenticeship courses were taken up in the UK and this number has risen every year for the last five years. Compare that to 2012’s university admissions of 120,194 (down from 133,357 in 2011). Unlike a university course, as an apprentice you will receive a wage throughout your training. The average national wage for an apprentice is around £170 a week and we recommend that your employer increases this as you pass your exams. In addition, you get paid holidays – around 20 days plus bank holidays – and sick pay.

While you’re not guaranteed a job at the end of your 12 months apprenticeship, a recent survey** shows more than four out of five (81%) of apprentices are still working for their employer a year after the course finishes and nearly half (42%) had received a promotion after completing their apprenticeship.

The benefits of a Firebrand Apprenticeship are:

- higher rates of employment
- higher levels of job satisfaction
- higher than average starting salaries
- a regular wage

So apply now and don’t delay.
But don’t just listen to us. Here’s what Dragon’s Den investor Peter Jones says about apprentices:

“Throughout my career, some of my best hires have been people who have bypassed the traditional route of university and learned their skills through apprenticeship schemes or alternative education courses. They have come to the workplace with a solid understanding of the real world and a steely determination to succeed. Those are the characteristics we need in order to build an entrepreneurial Britain.”

And here’s what one apprentice said about their ICT course and how it prepared them for their current career:

“Doing the apprenticeship definitely made it possible for me to get my job. It has helped me to get into jobs that are better paid and a bit more exciting. If I hadn’t done it, I would probably just be working in a pub or something, but now I am a Regional Account Executive with a company car, phone and laptop, and seriously thinking about taking my present boss’s post when he leaves.” Anonymous

What you need to apply
If you’re aged between 16 and 18 and have 5 GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English Language, Maths and ICT, or equivalent qualifications, and you have an interest in IT then you can apply to be a Firebrand Apprenticeship.

Your next steps
Step 1 Fill in our website application form (www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentice)
Step 2 Talk to our team and choose an IT course that’s relevant to you
Step 3 Take the job interview
Step 4 Agree an individual learning plan with the business and your Firebrand assessor
Step 5 Start your new career in IT

Five great reasons to consider a Firebrand Apprenticeship

You earn while you learn
Apprentices have to be paid a minimum of £2.60 an hour, but typically you earn a lot more than this, and starting salaries after you qualify are around £15,000 to £20,000, with salary rises of around £3,477 a year after that.

Great prospects
IT is a growing industry; where other industries have shrunk during the recession the IT industry has continued to grow and it’s hungry for trained professionals.

Over the next two years there will be a shortfall of 700,000 trained IT staff in Europe and that shortfall is pushing wages higher.

It’s a real job with all the benefits
You are not just on a training course, nor are you an intern, this is a real job, with a real business, giving a year’s worth of valuable work experience. Because it’s a real job you also qualify for all the standard benefits, such as holiday – 20+ days plus bank holidays – and sick pay.

We find you the job
No more searching through job websites, the job centre and local papers. Just provide us with your details and we’ll match you to an IT job near you.

Industry-standard qualifications
The courses and exams you take on the Firebrand Apprenticeship are industry-recognised and are in demand throughout Europe.

* The ONS estimates that over the next five years employment of IT staff is forecast to grow by an average of 2.5% per year, a rate more than three times higher than predicted UK employment growth.
Firebrand Apprenticeship courses run throughout the year but they fill up fast, so it’s better to apply sooner rather than later.

Entry to the course is dependent on a job offer and unfortunately we can’t predict the supply of jobs. However, we work with more than 30,000 Microsoft Partner businesses, and between them they employ over 500,000 people in the UK. The good news is that they are always on the lookout for new recruits who have the ‘right stuff’, so you won’t have to wait too long.

All courses run for 52 weeks. So we should be able to accommodate you no matter when you apply. However, while we’re busy all year round, our busiest times are obviously in August and September after school and college courses have finished and potential apprentices have got their head together after 10 years of education. So you may have to wait a little longer if you apply during the late summer and early autumn period for us to find an available job.

**Recognised qualifications**

Firebrand is a Microsoft Gold training partner and all of our apprenticeship courses have been developed in conjunction with Microsoft and are monitored and tested by the Government, Microsoft and City & Guilds. The course you take will lead to an official Microsoft qualification. There is currently three courses to choose from: Support Developer IT sales

These will qualify you for any of the following job roles:

- Support Technician
- Website Administrator
- Helpdesk Professional
- Software Web Developer
- Desktop Support Engineer
- Network Planner
- Database Administrator
- Network Engineer
- Software Tester
- Mobile and Windows app Developer

**The qualifications**

During your year-long course you will receive training leading to industry-recognised qualifications including:

- City & Guilds – Level 3 Diploma – IT, Software, Web and Telecoms Professionals
- City & Guilds – Level 3 Diploma – ICT Systems & Principles
- Microsoft Technology Associate (MTA) – Operating Systems Fundamentals
- MTA Networking Fundamentals
- MTA Security Fundamentals
- MTA Windows Server Administration Fundamentals
- MTA Server Administration Fundamentals
- CompTIA Strata Fundamentals of IT Technology

**Your training courses**

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- MTA Server Administration Fundamentals
- CompTIA Strata Fundamentals of IT Technology

**Agree job description with Firebrand**

**Job advertised and candidates shortlisted by Firebrand**

**Apprentice chosen and start date agreed**

**Agree on Individual Learning Plan for apprentice**

**Week 1**

- Apprentice with Firebrand for training, week 1

**Week 2**

- Apprentice learns on the job. Visits from Firebrand on weeks 3, 6, 9

**Week 3**

- Apprentice with Firebrand for training, week 2

**Week 4**

- Apprentice learns on the job. Visit from Firebrand on week 13 and quarterly assessment

**Week 5**

- Apprentice with Firebrand for 3 more weeks of training and 3 more assessments. Site visits on weeks 19, 22, 27, 30, 36, 40, 45, 49

**Last week of apprenticeship**

**The training centre courses:**

- **Week 1**
  - Module 102 – Health and Safety in ICT
  - Module 186 – CompTIA Strata Fundamentals of IT Technology + Exam
  - Module 243 – Configuring Windows 7 Portfolio

- **Week 2**
  - Module 070-680 Training for Configuring Windows 7
  - MTA - Operating Systems Fundamentals (optional)
  - Module 228-528 - Maintaining Equipment & Systems Assignment + Exam

- **Week 3**
  - Module 254 - MTA Networking Fundamentals
  - Module 361-661 Install, Configure and Integrate Networking HW & SW Assignments + Exam
  - Module 307 Security of ICT Systems

- **Week 4**
  - Module 254 - MTA Security Fundamentals
  - Module 040 - Principles of System and Data Security
  - Module 308 - Software Installation and Upgrade
  - Module 301 - Customer Care in ICT

- **Week 5**
  - MTA Windows Server Administration Fundamentals
  - Optional MTA Server Administration Fundamentals
  - Exam

Complete any outstanding assignments/rework

**Contact us on 0800 081 6022 or email apprentice@firebrandtraining.co.uk**

www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentice
Preparing for an apprenticeship

Preparing yourself for an apprenticeship

There are many stressful things in life and starting a job – particularly your very first job – is one of the major stresses. Which is where we can help. We don’t just train you, we prepare you for your career ahead, and we do that from the very first moment through to long after your apprenticeship course is completed.

Before and during

Once you’re accepted on to the Firebrand Apprenticeship scheme and before you start your course we will work with you to make sure you have every chance of getting a job. We’ll analyse your current skills and experience and help you to choose the right sort of career path, be it Network Support, IT support, Network Technician, Mobile app Developer, or IT security. We can help you with producing your CV and covering letters, and provide hints and tips to help you prepare for your interview.

We are not just there to provide your training

Before you start your induction week at your new job we will sit down with you and your employer and create a structure that sets out what you will be learning and what’s expected of you on a monthly basis for the twelve months ahead. Additionally, we’ll use a special VARK (visual, aural read/write kinesthetic) Learning Styles Questionnaire to find out more about how you learn best, so we can tailor your learning and you’ll get the maximum out of your training.

We will come to see you at the business every three weeks to see how you are progressing with your training, and we’ll conduct quarterly assessments so you can see how you are progressing. We’ll also be available via email if you need help with your training or you feel you are struggling with something at work.

We’ll create an Individual Learning Plan, which lays out your achievements and sets targets for learning in and out of the workplace. We will also create an Individual Learning Record, so you know which courses you’ve completed and which you’re scheduled to take next.

And afterwards?

Firebrand has trained more than 30,000 people over the last 10 years for jobs in every field of IT, from security through to technical support. We currently run over 165 courses, including courses on Agile, Lean Six Sigma, and PRINCE2 methodologies, ethical hacking, network security, Windows and Windows Server and IT support, through to courses using Microsoft, Cisco, Oracle, Linux, SAP, Autodesk, Google, VMware and Sun systems and software. So, if you need a course to take you further up the job ladder we can do it and we do it faster. Our intensive courses typically last 3-5 days – including the exam – and we’re so confident you’ll pass your exams first time, we promise that if you fail you can take the course again for free.

Preparing yourself for an apprenticeship

The Firebrand Apprenticeship course requires you to have passed a minimum of five GCSEs at A*-C but our training needs you to get to a slightly higher level grade to be able to get the most out of the training provided.

If you want to build your numeracy and literacy skills, why not watch some of the videos and try the tests on the following websites.

BBC Skillswise Maths and English for IT:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/topic/it-and-office

BBC Skillswise Maths:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/maths

BBC Skillswise English:
http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/english

Brain Games: http://www.braingames.org.uk/

Move On Test your skills:
http://www.move-on.org.uk/testyourskills.asp

Additionally, to prepare yourself for the IT course you should familiarise yourself with the CompTIA A+ and Microsoft Certified Technology Specialist (MCTS) courses. For more information take a look at our apprentice webpages: www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentices

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way to enhance your CV and develop essential personal skills and competencies in areas such as time management, negotiation and planning, along with developing communication and scheduling skills and goal-setting abilities. Look at:

vInspired: http://vinspired.com/

Do-It: http://www.do-it.org.uk/wanttovolunteer

£3,477

The expected difference in average annual wage increase by 2020 for an apprentice completing a Level 3 apprenticeship vs someone who does no training

City & Guilds (2012)

The economic value of apprenticeships

www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentice

Contact us on 0800 081 6022 or email apprentice@firebrandtraining.co.uk
Success stories

Working as an apprentice is fun and very rewarding. Here are just a few comments from work diaries of our current apprentices.

Even if I don’t get offered a job by the organisation I’m working for at the moment, I’ll have loads and loads of different opportunities.

Elizabeth MacKenzie

The instructor makes lessons interesting, treats us like adults and respects us.

Louise Holness

I like the learning part of an apprenticeship; I’d hate to go into a job and not learn anything new or learn things repetitively. An apprenticeship eases you into full-time work.

Dylan Moss

Loved it! Don’t want to leave. Enjoyed all of it, learned some great things.

Timothy Rabson

I feel that this has started to become the most rewarding educational experience I have had.

Sami Rahman

Support is provided at every step. I couldn’t ask for more.

Dylan Moss

Our surveys/statistics show that having a recognised industry-standard Microsoft Certification can help IT apprentices jump-ahead of the competition when it comes to applying for a job in the IT industry.

Dominic Gill, Apprenticeship Manager, Business Consultant to Microsoft UK

To read more about what it’s like on a Firebrand Apprentice course read Tom Davis’ Tech Apprentice blog: www.techapprentice.co.uk

Your questions answered

What is an apprenticeship?
An apprenticeship is a real job with training where you learn real marketable skills and gain industry-recognised qualifications. Generally, apprenticeships are open to anyone over 16 and under 24 and not in full-time education; they typically last 12 months or more.

What does a Firebrand Apprenticeship involve?
This is a real job and requires commitment: hard work and good time-keeping. During your course you will be learning on the job and spend five weeks in total at the Firebrand residential training centre. You will also be expected to do additional preparation for coursework and exams in the evening and at weekends.

How long does it take?
Apprenticeship courses last 12 months and can be started at any time during the year, although most start during August to October.

How much do I get paid?
We recommend a starting salary of £150-£200 per week, and any expenses such as travel, etc. We also recommend that your salary be reviewed as you pass exams or complete courses and take on extra responsibility.

How many hours a week will I work?
A 35-hour week (typically 9-5 with an hour for lunch) is normal.

Do I get a holiday?
Yes, while you are learning on the job you will need to prepare for exams and will be required to do some additional reading and writing outside your work hours. But you will still have plenty of time to go out and enjoy yourself spending your hard-earned wages.

Where is the training centre?
The training is held at our residential training centre at Wyboston Lakes in Bedfordshire. You will be at the training centre for six consecutive days, and are expected to arrive August to October.

Will there be homework?
Yes, while you are learning on the job you will need to prepare for exams and will be required to do some additional reading and writing outside your work hours.

I’ve seen The Apprentice, will I be fired if I’m not right?
An apprenticeship is nothing like the TV programme. You are trained all through your course and we constantly assess your progress with your employer. We will work with your employer to sort out any problems. However, in the unlikely event that you and your employer aren’t able to resolve any problems, they do have the right to terminate your employment.

* Apprentice Pay and Conditions – TUC/Unionlearn 2011

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Contact us

To talk to us about the Firebrand Apprenticeship scheme and how it can set you off on a career in IT, or to get more information, please

call: 0800 081 6022

e-mail: apprentice@firebrandtraining.co.uk

visit: www.firebrandtraining.co.uk/apprentice

Recommend a friend

Do you have a friend who might want to be an apprentice? Get them to sign up for an apprenticeship course and get a chance to win a £20 iTunes voucher. If they start a Firebrand Apprentice course you could receive up to £150 in iTunes vouchers. To apply, visit our apprentice website and click on ‘Recommend a friend’.