



UK Government

**HIGHERiN**

# BECOME A TOP APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYER

Tips And Advice



**Apprentice  
Front of House  
Mitchells & Butlers**

*Innovative company, supporting its people to be the best version of themselves.*



**BAE SYSTEMS** Apprentice  
Pipe Fabricator  
BAE Systems

*Awesome so far. Great culture, great colleagues, tons of opportunities to learn and grow.*



**Specsavers** Apprentice  
Optical Assistant  
Specsavers

*It is a great program that is very fascinating. The more I learn, the more I want to learn. It also helps that I am surround by a great team that is very supportive.*



Welcome to the official Top Apprenticeship Employer Rankings for 2026. After a successful first year, the collaboration between Higherin and the Government continues to grow and evolve. The Top Apprenticeship Employers is a unified rankings system that celebrates England's outstanding apprenticeship employers in 2026.

**This pack will provide you with everything you need to support your entry.**



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## WHAT MAKES A TOP APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYER?




The rankings recognise England's leading apprenticeship employers for their overall commitment to employing apprentices. Their creation of new apprenticeships, the diversity of their apprentices, the achievement rate of their apprentices and their apprentices experience.

Taking these factors into account, the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers and Top 50 SME Apprenticeship Employers rankings will be calculated based on a weighted algorithm that has been determined by the partner organisations.

# ENTRY CRITERIA




## THE TOP 100 APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYERS

**For employers with:**

-  250+ employees
-  10+ apprentices
-  10+ reviews

## THE TOP 50 SME APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYERS

**For employers with:**

-  Between 10 and 249 employees
-  3+ apprentices
-  1+ reviews



A man with grey hair is looking at a large digital screen. The screen displays a list of companies and their sectors. The list is organized into columns. The first column contains company names, and the second column contains their sectors. The man is pointing at the screen with his right hand.

## HOW DO I ENTER?

To become a Top Apprenticeship Employer, you'll need to:

- **Encourage reviews from your apprentices on [Higherin.com](https://www.higher.in) NOW!** Further information is provided in this pack to support with this process.
- **Nominate your company to become a Top Apprenticeship Employer via the [entry form on the microsite](#).** The entry form will go live late February/early March and close 1st May 2026 (see next slide for tips!)

## HOW DO I ENTER?

Here are some top tips to help you fill in the [entry form](#) on the microsite:

- **Read through the questions in advance.** We recommend that you organise your required information in a separate document before submitting it via the form.
- Note the reporting period. The form requires data for **1st April 2025 to 31st March 2026**. We've shared this early so you can arrange data collection, but we don't expect you to complete these sections until after the period ends.
- Check your [eligibility](#). Assemble your information and ensure you meet the criteria before you begin.
- **Time to get started!** Time to get started! The deadline for completing the Entry Form is 1st May 2026.



**TOP 50 SME A  
EMPLOY**

Officially ranked in the Top

**RANK COMPANY NAME**

1	MCFT
2	Smaller Guide
3	WDS
4	FW-M Solutions for Business LLP
5	Fortbury Gardens Day Nursery
6	Zenops
7	Lionel Kennedy Group
	James Cowper Keston
	Lost Than Zero Barber
	ALES Group Limited
	Intellect UK Ltd
	Lyons & Arnold
	SJ Roberts Construction Ltd

# WHY SHOULD YOU ENCOURAGE APPRENTICE REVIEWS?

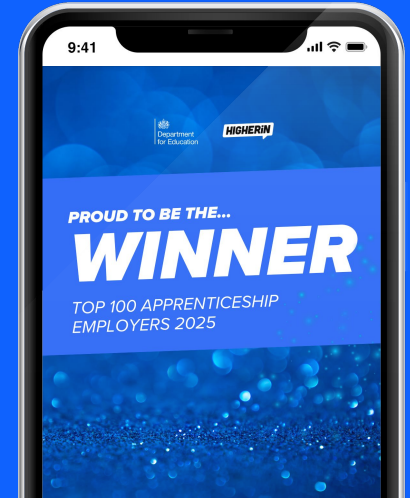
**Quality Over Quantity:** Attract informed candidates who understand your expectations, reducing drop-outs during the hiring process.

**Celebrate Excellence:** Give your apprentices a platform to champion your brand and help you win industry-leading awards.

**Diversity & Inclusion:** Reviews show prospective candidates from all backgrounds that they belong at your company, helping you meet D&I goals through real representation.

**Peer-to-Peer Influence:** Reach 16-24 year olds where they look for advice—from people just like them.

**Benchmark Success:** See how your schemes stack up against competitors with transparent, unbiased data.





# I'VE NEVER HAD TO GET APPRENTICE REVIEWS ON HIGHERIN BEFORE...

## WHAT DO I DO?

1. **Guide your apprentices** – Direct your apprentices to the Higherin website, where they can create a free account and **complete a review**. No need for you to create a company profile - the creation of a review will automatically generate a profile if you don't already have one.
2. **Encourage participation** – Explain why reviews are important, remind them their feedback is anonymous, and consider using incentives or dedicated review sessions.
3. **Don't miss the deadline** - Remember that the deadline for your apprentices to leave reviews on Higherin.com is **1st May 2026**.

A photograph of two women in a social setting, possibly a conference or networking event. The woman on the left is wearing a colorful patterned jacket and is pointing at a smartphone held by the woman on the right. The woman on the right has blonde hair and is wearing a pink shirt and a lanyard with a badge that reads 'Kate Harris, Wiggins Group'. In the background, another person with glasses is partially visible. The scene is set in a room with white draped curtains and a table with a white tablecloth and glassware in the foreground.

## WHO CAN LEAVE APPRENTICE REVIEWS?

Anyone on a formal apprenticeship scheme, whether they are a school leaver or an up skiller

Your cohort can be in any year of their scheme and can re-review for each year of their scheme.

So if they submitted a review last year, **they can submit a new review this year.**

# HINTS & TIPS FOR ENCOURAGING REVIEWS

## Start Early

Reach out to apprentices from January, and set your cohort a deadline to complete their review by.

You can start encouraging as soon as they've completed at least 50% of their year. Remember that the 1st May deadline will come quickly!

## Incentives

Why not offer an incentive! Some companies offer vouchers or run a prize draw for anyone who has submitted a review.

To help the cause, Higherin also plants a tree for every review submitted. Last year alone, your apprentices helped us plant 10,000 trees!

## Submit Early

Submit your entry form early - that way our team can keep track of how close you are to reaching 100% of your cohort leaving a review.

The Higherin team can send you regular updates about how you are getting on.

## Send Reminders

On average, people need to be asked **three times** before they submit a review.

By starting to encourage reviews early, you'll be able to send 2-3 reminder comms asking your cohort to review without sounding naggy!

# REVIEW ENCOURAGEMENT ADVICE FROM EMPLOYERS

## Create Dedicated Time

Consider create a dedicated time and space for reviews in the office, such as a “Review over a brew” session.

You can even make reviews a standard step in your end-of-programme process, ensuring a consistent and reliable mixture of responses.

## Share The Responsibility

Divide the outreach among your team and involve line managers in the process. Encourage your CEO and senior leaders to read the anonymous reviews on Higherin, and communicate this to your apprentices.

Knowing that leadership uses their feedback to drive improvements is a powerful incentive to participate.

## Integrate With Surveys

Align the Higherin reviews with your existing internal surveys. Position it as a key feedback tool for the company; this feels more integrated and less like a separate, time-consuming task for the apprentices.



# EMAIL TEMPLATE

Feel free to use this copy  
and share it with your  
Apprentices in order to boost  
those review numbers!



BASED ON  
STUDENT  
REVIEWS!

Subject line:

## Share your experience and submit a review on Higherin!

We hope you are enjoying/have enjoyed your time with us. **We value your feedback** and would really appreciate if you could rate and review your experiences with us on **Higherin**.

Writing your review couldn't be easier - you'll find some useful tips along the way to help you. It should only take you a few minutes!

Your anonymous review will be published on **Higherin** and will provide young people following in your footsteps with a unique insight into your role, giving you the chance to provide open and honest feedback, and you can shout about the fact that you have worked for a **Top Apprentice Employer!**

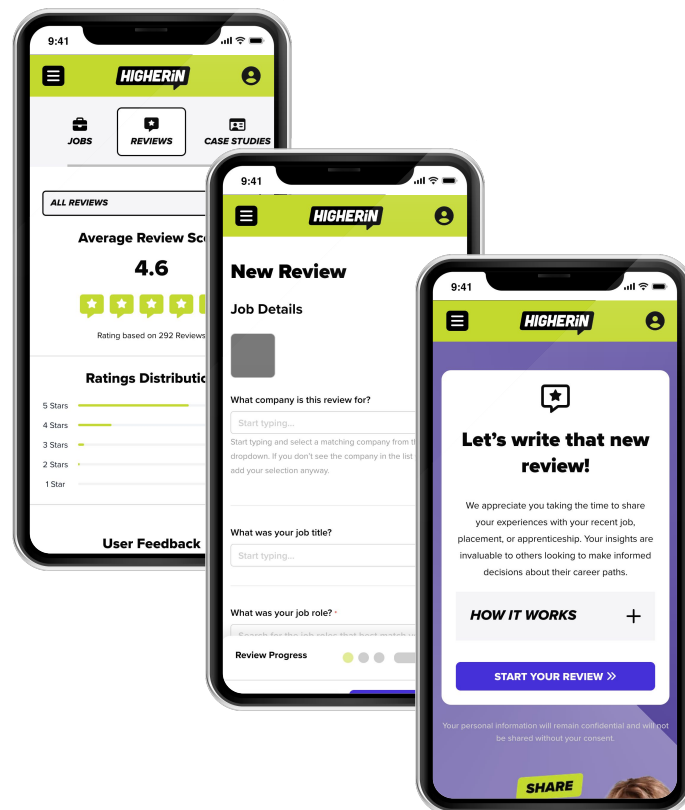
[GET STARTED >>](#)

# HERE'S HOW THE REVIEWS LOOK ON HIGHERIN

Reviewers answer 10 questions in total

A great resource for genuine peer-to-peer feedback!

Each review is moderated before going live



## HEAR FROM PREVIOUS TOP APPRENTICESHIP EMPLOYER WINNERS



**Mitchells and Butlers,  
Ranked #1**

*Top 100 Apprenticeship  
Employers Table 2025*

*“Apprenticeships remain a cornerstone of our retention and succession strategy, with over 10,000 apprenticeship starts since 2015; a commitment that remains unwavering. Mitchells and Butlers are fully dedicated to our apprenticeship strategy because we believe the hospitality sector provides an exciting and diverse career pathway.*

*We are honoured to have achieved the number one position in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in 2025, as voted for by our own learners, a true reflection of the passion we have for apprenticeships and what they offer.”*

## KEY DATES

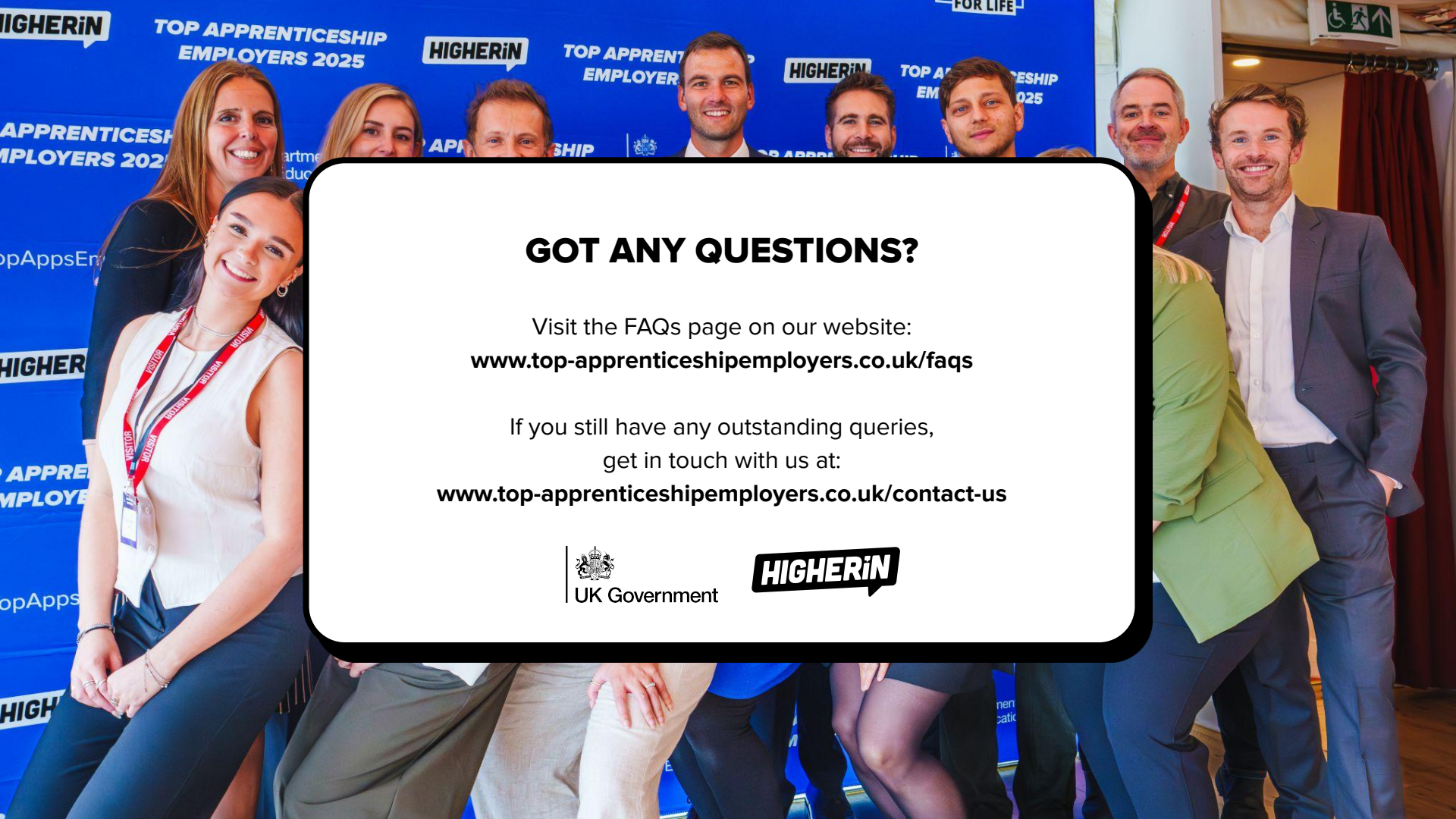
- **January 2026:** Start encouraging reviews
- **February/March 2026:** Entry process opens
- **Summer 2026:** Results are announced
- **September 2026:** Celebration event



Officially ranked in the **Top Apprenticeships**

RANK	COMPANY NAME	INDUSTRY	RANK	COMPANY NAME
1	Mitchells & Butlers	Catering & Hospitality	51	Savills UK Ltd
2	BAE Systems Plc	Engineering & Manufacturing	52	Screwfix Ltd
3	Amazon	FMCG & Retail	53	BMW Group
4	John Lewis Partnership PLC	FMCG & Retail	54	Norfolk Court
5	Bury Bees Nurseries Ltd	Early Years / Childcare	55	Department
6	Department for Work and Pensions	Business & Administration	56	Bright Horizons
7	GDX Logistics UK Ltd	Transport & Logistics	57	Superdrug UK
8	Whitbread plc	Catering & Hospitality	58	Royal Navy
9	McDonald's UK	Catering & Hospitality	59	Cappgemini
10	PwC	Accounting	60	British Airways
11	Lloyds Banking Group	Finance & Banking	61	Merseyside
12	Go-Ahead	Transport & Logistics	62	London Fire
13	Royal Air Force	Protective Services	63	E.ON UK Ltd
14	BT Group	Digital Media & IT	64	Sandwell M
15	Bupa	Health & Social Care Services	65	BDO
16	Mile	Business & Administration	66	Mace Limit
17	Specsavers	FMCG & Retail	67	Royal Mail
18	Greene King	Catering & Hospitality	68	West Midl
19	British Army	Protective Services	69	Virgin Mec
20	Tesco PLC	FMCG & Retail	70	WTW
21	EY	Accounting	71	Cummins
22	Network Rail	Engineering & Manufacturing	72	AstraZen
23	JLR	Engineering & Manufacturing	73	The Auto
24	B&Q Ltd	FMCG & Retail	74	IBM UK L
25	Aon	Insurance	75	BAM UK
26	KPMG UK	Accounting	76	Bank of E
27	British Broadcasting Corporation	Digital Media & IT	77	Tarmac
28	North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust	Health & Social Care Services	78	RSM UK
29	Babcock International Group Ltd	Engineering & Manufacturing	79	WM Mor
30	Balfour Beatty	Construction, Property & Surveying	80	Northun
31	British Gas	Construction, Property & Surveying	81	W
32	Twinkl Perkins Plc	Construction, Property & Surveying		





## GOT ANY QUESTIONS?

Visit the FAQs page on our website:  
[www.top-apprenticeshipemployers.co.uk/faqs](http://www.top-apprenticeshipemployers.co.uk/faqs)

If you still have any outstanding queries,  
get in touch with us at:  
[www.top-apprenticeshipemployers.co.uk/contact-us](http://www.top-apprenticeshipemployers.co.uk/contact-us)



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