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# TOP 100 Leading by example

Work with the best if you want to aim high, says Virginia Matthews

The City & Guilds Top 100 Apprenticeship Employer list is compiled annually and features businesses that entered the National Apprenticeship Awards 2014. Every one of these companies (including the eight featured here) exemplifies the highest standards of excellence in recruiting, supporting and developing their apprentices to become invaluable employees.

Both these companies and their apprentices are an inspiration. They recognise the positive difference a good apprenticeship can make to a business's bottom line and individual's future – increasing productivity, driving growth and helping to secure Britain's recovery.

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg comments: "Apprenticeships are increasingly the first choice for many young people. In fact, businesses I speak to say they couldn't function without apprentices. Good quality apprenticeships give hard-working young people the chance to aim high for their dream job while playing their part in building a stronger economy. I'd like to congratulate the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers for investing in so many young people's bright futures. "The employers on this year's list are proof that apprenticeships are at the heart of many of our most

important industries. Around half a million people a year take the chance to learn while they work and we are well on track to celebrating a fantastic milestone – the two millionth apprentice since 2010. So my message to business is don't stop now – take on an apprentice and invest in new talent."

The announcement of the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers took place at the National Apprenticeship Awards ceremony on November 13 at the LG Arena, Birmingham.

## The top 100

**A** Addleshaw Goddard LLP  
**AIT Ltd**  
Alcoa Power & Propulsion  
**Amey Plc**  
Arthur Padgett Ltd  
**B** Barclays Bank Plc  
Barclays RBB Technology  
**Barlows (UK) Ltd**  
Barratt Developments Plc  
**Be Wiser Insurance**  
Bernicia Housing Group  
**Blue Moon Creative Ltd**  
Brethertons Solicitors LLP  
**British Airways Plc**  
British Army  
**BT Fleet**  
Building Research Establishment

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## Cestria

Part of the Isos Group, Cestria Community Housing Association is a housing provider that owns and manages 4,200 properties in Chester-le-Street, County Durham. With more than five per cent of its 165 staff currently made up of apprentices, the firm's opportunities for school-leavers span a range of specialist trades, such as horticulture, plumbing, electrical work and business administration.

"Our apprentices say they feel valued, listened to and part of a team, while gaining on-the-job skills," says Martin Warhurst, managing director of Cestria. "Staff who work with them have also benefited, in particular by gaining a new understanding of young people in the workplace."

The organisation values commitment, a willingness to work and get involved, a sense of humour, passion and personality.



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## Tangerine PR

The Juice Academy is the country's first industry-led social media apprenticeship scheme. Created by Sandy Lindsay, chair of the Manchester-based PR agency Tangerine, and taught by digital marketing professionals, its aim is to help address "the UK's huge digital skills gap". Since its inception last July, the academy has placed nearly 70 young people with leading businesses.

"There are thousands of talented school-leavers out there, many of whom – due to recent increases in tuition fees – might opt for the apprenticeship route," says Lindsay. "The Juice Academy receives hundreds of applications for each intake though, so to stand out aspiring apprentices should demonstrate passion, tenacity, enthusiasm and knowledge of digital and social media."



## UKTV

UKTV is a multi award-winning London-based television network that reaches 42 million viewers a month and employs 220 people. It launched its apprenticeship scheme last year and employs a handful of young people in a range of departments, including digital marketing and scheduling.

"Apprentices not only bring fresh energy and ideas but also provide a valuable window into one of our key demographic markets for the future," says Claire Astley, UKTV's human resources director. "The scheme is a great chance for us to offer work opportunities to people with little or no media experience, and to provide the right candidates with a stepping stone to an exciting career in an industry that's often seen as being hard to access."

CONTINUED OVERLEAF



## British Airways

The UK's largest international carrier, BA flies around 40 million customers every year via its fleet of more than 280 aircraft. The company will employ around 175 school-leavers this year in a variety of roles in engineering, operations, IT, finance and project management. While the majority of placements will be in London, opportunities also exist in aircraft-maintenance bases in Cardiff and Glasgow.

Since 2010, BA has hired more than 500 apprentices, many of whom have gone on to take permanent roles with the airline, says Andy Kerswill, former BA apprentice and now director of

engineering. "Apprenticeships offer an unprecedented foundation for our business and, in turn, BA provides tremendous opportunities for young talent," he believes.

"They encompass a unique blend of academic learning and invaluable business practice and become a rich source of skilled, well-trained professionals. They are extremely dedicated and tend to stay with the company for a longer period of time."





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**C** Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
 Castrol UK Ltd  
**Cestria Community Housing Association**  
 Circle Housing  
**City of Lincoln Council**  
**D** Dale Power Solutions Ltd  
**Dental22**  
**E** e2v Technologies (UK) Ltd  
**East Kent Hospitals University Foundation Trust**  
 East Midlands Housing Group  
**EDM Zone Ltd**  
 EE  
**Emanuel Whittaker Ltd**  
**F** FCO Services  
**Ford Motor Company**  
 Fujitsu  
**G** Genix Healthcare Limited  
 Ginger Nut Media  
**GKN Aerospace – Filton**  
 Goringe Accountants Ltd  
**Graham Engineering Ltd**  
 Griffon Hoverwork Ltd  
**H** HSBC  
 Hemingway Bailey Ltd  
**I** IBM UK Limited  
 Impact Ducting Sales Ltd  
**Impossible Creations Ltd**  
 ITV plc  
**J** James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
 JEB Engineering Design Ltd  
**JLES Group Limited**  
**K** K M F Ltd  
**KFC GB Ltd**  
 Knowhow  
**L** Liebherr GB Ltd  
 Livin Housing Ltd  
**Living Group**  
 Lloyds Banking Group  
**M** MBDA UK Ltd  
 Mitchells & Butlers  
 Retail Ltd  
**Mitchells Grievson Limited**  
 Mondelez International  
**N** Nestlé UK Ltd  
 North Yorkshire County Council  
**Nottingham City Council**  
**O** Optimity Limited  
**Optionis**  
**P** Partwell Cutting  
 Technology Ltd  
**Paw-Fect**  
 PwC  
**Q** Queen Street Garage Ltd  
**R** Redrow Homes Ltd

**R** Resolve IT Solutions  
 Resource Productions  
**River Cottage Limited**  
 Royal Castle Hotel  
**S** Santander UK  
 SCA Hygiene  
**Smith's Wood Community Primary School**  
 South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group  
**South West Water**  
 Southern Gas Networks  
**Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council**  
**T** TNT Express (UK) Ltd  
**TAG Sports & Promotional Clothing Ltd**  
 Tangerine PR & Coaching Ltd  
**Tata Steel**  
 TechQuarters  
**The Community Housing Group**  
 The Landscape Group  
**The Manufacturing Technology Centre**  
 Top to Toe  
**Topps Tiles Plc**  
**U** UK AEA  
**UKFast**  
**UKTV**  
**V** Virgin Media  
 Vital Technology Group  
**WEC Group Ltd**  
 Weightmans LLP  
**William Davis Ltd**  
 Wincanton  
**Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Trust**

## ITV

The 12-month apprenticeship programme run by independent broadcaster ITV has, since 2010, provided around 25 young people every year with the opportunity to gain valuable hands-on experience in an industry that is notoriously difficult to break into.

New recruits get the opportunity to work alongside seasoned experts in anything from news and post-production to digital marketing and global sales. Seen as a core talent pipeline for ITV recruitment, the broadcasting firm believes that its school-leaver package

is “an ideal vehicle to attract, train and retain fresh talent”.

The scheme, which offers placements in London, Leeds, Manchester and Birmingham, provides work-based learning experiences, industry-specific skills, bespoke personal development and access to a large network of contacts.

Candidates, adds the firm, should have a genuine interest in what it does, the desire to learn and to be able to work as part of a team; it says that it values “these personal attributes more than academic qualifications or tons of experience”.



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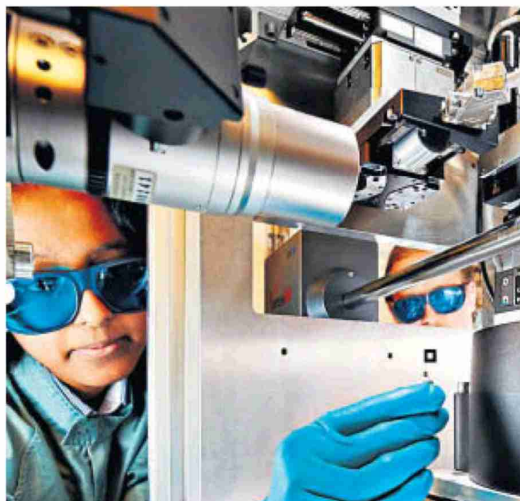
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## Nestlé

Food and drinks manufacturer Nestlé has been delivering apprenticeships for more than 40 years at its sites across the UK and Ireland. This year it will recruit 54 school-leavers into key areas, such as engineering, food manufacturing, operations and finance. Once on board, apprentices have a coach and mentor; in conjunction with line managers, they help to create individual action plans to ensure progress. "We encourage our apprentices to get involved in the organisation and we give them responsibility," says the firm.

Once their training is complete, and providing they meet Nestlé's required standards, apprentices are offered permanent posts and the option to progress to higher education via foundation or honours degree programmes. "Educational achievements ensure they have the capacity to complete qualifications, but they also need to have a spark and the drive necessary for contributing to the further growth of the organisation," says Nestlé.



## IBM

Global business and technology giant IBM takes on around 60 technical and business apprentices yearly for its three-year school-leaver programme, which offers postings across the UK. Recruits can obtain the Advanced Apprenticeship for IT Professionals qualification and are encouraged to pursue long-term careers within IBM. Each school-leaver is also assigned a professional development manager. "We want our apprentices to contribute to the business immediately and develop into future leaders," says an IBM representative.

Applicants need five GCSEs at grade C or above, including maths and English, and must have, or be predicted, 160 Ucas points for their A-levels or equivalent. Also vital are drive, adaptability, client focus and teamworking and creative problem-solving skills.

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## Griffon Hoverwork

Global hovercraft developer Griffon Hoverwork, which currently employs 25 apprentices, says that by investing in school-leavers the firm not only builds skills for the future but also develops the best work ethos, attitude and standards among its staff. Its current tranche of apprentices are being trained as marine engineers, marine electricians, marine outfitters, aluminium fabricators and welders, and designers. All are employed on a full-time basis and have the same benefits as their colleagues.

"Our apprenticeship scheme has made a significant contribution to the growth of our business in terms of skills development and retention, and we've found that apprentices tend to be very loyal," says Mike Chalkley, engineering director for the firm. "The entire workforce has contributed to the development of these young people, which has had quite an impact on the organisation."



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