Free career resource · Apprenticeships

Cyber security apprenticeships in the UK

A cyber security apprenticeship is a real job with training built in: you're paid a wage, at least 20% of your working time goes on training, and you don't pay tuition fees. In England the two main options are the Level 4 Cyber security technologist (typically 24 months) and the Level 6 degree apprenticeship (about 48 months). Places are competitive: about 500 people started a cyber apprenticeship in England in 2024/25.

By the Cyberend team · Published and updated 22 November 2026

THE SHORT ANSWER

- **Paid, with no fees:** you're an employee earning a wage and holiday pay, with at least 20% of your hours for training GOV.UK.
- **Two main options in England:** Level 4, typically 24 months Skills England, and a Level 6 degree apprenticeship of about 48 months Skills England.
- **Pay varies a lot:** the legal minimum is £8.00 an hour in your first year GOV.UK, but Thales advertises £24,000 for its 2027 Level 4 apprenticeship Thales.
- **Competitive:** about 500 cyber apprenticeship starts in England in 2024/25 DSIT 2026, so apply widely and early.

How apprenticeships work

An apprenticeship combines a job with study. You work alongside experienced staff, get time for training related to your role, and finish with a recognised qualification GOV.UK. The government and your employer pay for the training.

Higher apprenticeships (Levels 4 to 7) are equivalent to a foundation degree and above, and degree apprenticeships (Levels 6 and 7) lead to a bachelor's or master's degree GOV.UK.

The two main cyber apprenticeships

Level 4 Cyber security technologist

TYPICAL LENGTH

24 months Skills England

WHAT YOU FINISH WITH

A Level 4 qualification, with options in security engineering, risk analysis, or defending and responding (the SOC route).

GOOD FOR

School and college leavers with A levels or equivalent, and career changers.

Level 6 Cyber security technical professional

TYPICAL LENGTH

About 48 months Skills England

WHAT YOU FINISH WITH

A bachelor's degree, with no tuition debt.

GOOD FOR

People who want a degree but would rather earn while they study.

Some degree apprenticeships are also certified by the National Cyber Security Centre, which publishes the full list, including Scottish Graduate Apprenticeships NCSC.

What you're paid

The legal minimum for apprentices is £8.00 an hour from 1 April 2026. It applies if you're under 19, or 19 or over and in your first year. After your first year, if you're 19 or over, you're entitled to the normal minimum wage for your age GOV.UK.

Many cyber employers pay well above the minimum. Thales, for example, advertises £24,000 for its 2027 Level 4 Cyber Security Engineer apprenticeship in Crawley Thales. Always check the salary in the advert.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Compare offers on the whole package: salary, the qualification you finish with, the training provider and what happens at the end.

Who can apply

To start an apprenticeship in England you need to be 16 or over, living in England and not in full-time education. You can apply while you're still at school, as long as you'll be 16 by the

end of the summer holidays. The rules set a minimum age but no maximum GOV.UK.

Entry requirements are set by each employer. Many ask for GCSEs in maths and English, and A levels or equivalent for degree apprenticeships. Relevant experience or qualifications can shorten your training GOV.UK.

Where to find vacancies

Find an apprenticeship (England)

The government's official search, with vacancies from employers of every size GOV.UK.

Search apprenticeships →

Cyberend's entry-level jobs

Graduate, apprentice and junior cyber roles from Cyberend's UK jobs board, checked every few hours.

See entry-level jobs →

Employer careers sites

Large employers in defence, banking, consulting and telecoms often advertise on their own sites, sometimes many months before the start date.

Civil Service Jobs

Government departments advertise their roles here, including apprenticeships Civil Service Jobs.

Search Civil Service Jobs →

How to apply

1 Start early

Many large employers recruit months ahead of a September start. Set reminders and apply as soon as roles open, as some close early.

2 Tailor your CV

Show interest and evidence: courses, projects, clubs and transferable skills. Our **CV guide and free template** walks you through it.

3 Practise online tests

Many employers use numerical, verbal or logical reasoning tests. Free practice tests are easy to find, and familiarity helps.

4 Prepare for interviews and assessment days

Expect questions about why you want the role and some basics. See our **interview preparation guide**.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

Each nation runs its own apprenticeship system, with its own search service:

- **Scotland:** apprenticeships.scot, including Graduate Apprenticeships apprenticeships.scot
- **Wales:** Careers Wales Careers Wales
- **Northern Ireland:** nidirect nidirect

Not sure an apprenticeship is right for you?

Compare it with the other routes in our guide to **entry-level cyber jobs**, or read **how to get your first cyber security job**.

Common questions

Can adults do a cyber security apprenticeship?

Yes. You need to be 16 or over, and the rules set no maximum age GOV.UK. Career changers often bring useful experience, which can shorten the training.

Do I get a degree?

With a Level 6 degree apprenticeship, yes: you finish with a bachelor's degree and no tuition debt Skills England. A Level 4 apprenticeship gives you a higher-level qualification, a step above A levels.

Will I have a job at the end?

It isn't guaranteed, so ask each employer what usually happens when apprentices finish. Either way, you'll have two to four years of real experience, which is what most cyber employers look for.

How competitive are they?

Very. About 500 people started a cyber apprenticeship in England in 2024/25 DSIT 2026. Apply to several, and show real interest through projects and practice.

Sources and method

How apprenticeships work, who can start one and the levels are from GOV.UK. Course details are from the official apprenticeship standards published by Skills England. Pay rules are from GOV.UK's National Minimum Wage rates from 1 April 2026, and the example salary is from the employer's own advert. The number of cyber apprenticeship starts is from the government's 2026 cyber skills report.

GOV.UK: Become an apprentice: how apprenticeships work Official guidance

Who can start an apprenticeship in England, apprenticeship levels, length, and the minimum 20% of working time for training.

Skills England: Cyber security technologist (2021), Level 4 apprenticeship standard ST1021

Official guidance

The current Level 4 cyber apprenticeship in England: options, typical duration and job titles.

Skills England: Cyber security technical professional (integrated degree), Level 6 apprenticeship standard ST0409

Official guidance

The degree apprenticeship in cyber security in England: duration and typical job titles.

GOV.UK: National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates Official guidance

Legal minimum hourly pay from 1 April 2026, including the apprentice rate.

Thales UK: 2027 Level 4 Cyber Security Engineer Apprenticeship, Crawley

Published by the employer

A live 2027 cyber apprenticeship advert with its published salary and closing date.

Department for Science, Innovation and Technology: Cyber security skills in the UK labour market 2026

Advertised pay

Research by Ipsos and Perspective Economics, published 29 September 2026. Pay figures come from 34,932 UK core cyber job adverts in 2025 (Lightcast), of which 8,481 stated a salary.

National Cyber Security Centre: NCSC-certified degrees Official guidance

The official list of UK degree apprenticeships, bachelor's and master's degrees certified by the NCSC.

GOV.UK: Find an apprenticeship Official guidance

The official search for apprenticeship vacancies in England.

Civil Service Jobs: Civil Service Jobs Official guidance

Where UK government departments advertise vacancies, including security roles and apprenticeships.

Skills Development Scotland: Apprenticeships in Scotland Official guidance

Modern, Foundation and Graduate Apprenticeships and vacancies in Scotland.

Careers Wales: Apprenticeships Official guidance

How apprenticeships work in Wales and where to find vacancies.

nidirect: Apprenticeships Official guidance

ApprenticeshipsNI and Higher Level Apprenticeships in Northern Ireland.

Every figure and link in this guide was checked against its source on 22 November 2026. Live job listings update every few hours.

This is a PDF copy of a free Cyberend guide. Read it online, with today's live UK cyber security jobs, at cyberend.io/resources/cyber-security-apprenticeships-uk.