



Young Apprentice



**A guide to your rights and
responsibilities at work**

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Young Apprentice - rights and responsibilities at work

So you are a Young Apprentice, a young person in the world of work. You know about your rights as a student in school. Your teachers will also have told you often about your responsibilities. In school, you know who to speak to if there is a problem. *But what are your rights and responsibilities when you go to work? Who do you turn to if there is a problem?*

A Young Apprentice is not the same as an employee. Employees have employment rights which are the law of the land. They also have responsibilities to their employer, other employees and the public. When you are employed, you will have a contract of employment. This will set out your rights and responsibilities. As a Young Apprentice you may be asked to sign a similar agreement.

There are several people who can support you at work. Your *employer* will see you as a young trainee. You

will have a *supervisor*, someone who will manage your work. You may have a *mentor* who can help you fit into the workplace. Your *teacher* should visit you regularly to see you at work. You will have *colleagues* or people in your team that you work alongside.



If faced with a problem you need first to talk to your supervisor. You should also tell the teacher who is responsible for looking after you during your Young Apprenticeship. Remember you should always talk to

Young Apprentice - RESPECT

teachers about any problems; your school still has responsibility for you when you are attending your apprenticeship. Finally, you should tell your parents or carer. Problems are best shared. What you should NOT do is to worry and not tell anyone.

This booklet will help you understand your rights and responsibilities as a Young Apprentice. It includes some things to do:

- Discuss or think about the five *What would you do if?* problems.
- Test your understanding with the True/False Test.
- Check out the web links to find out more about rights and responsibilities at work.

There are answers to the problems and the True/False Test at the end of this booklet.

Young people want to have respect and to earn respect from other people. *But what does that really mean?* It is really all to do with rights and responsibilities. You and people you meet have the right to be treated with respect. This means to be treated fairly. It means we accept that everybody is different but that everyone has a right to be equally valued. You should treat others as you want to be treated.

As a Young Apprentice you have the right to be listened to. If you have something to say about your work, then people should listen. But you have a responsibility to listen carefully to what people at work say to you. People will have confidence that you are listening if you make some eye contact with them and ask questions on what has been said.

We all have our own identity, a sense of who we are. Britain is a very diverse culture and the same is true

Young Apprenticeship - Working Rules - Your Responsibilities

of workplaces. People from all cultures and backgrounds have the right to be treated equally and with respect.

Because of your age there will be some tools that you are not allowed to use and some tasks that you are not allowed to do. You should not be denied opportunities which other Young Apprentices have because of your gender, ethnic background, sexuality or faith. This would be unfair discrimination.

As in school, some work colleagues may want to make jokes at your expense. The odd joke is to be expected and is part of being accepted. But if this goes on, then it becomes a form of bullying.

A. What would you do if?

Someone you work with makes comments you do not like about your faith or background.

As a Young Apprentice you are there to learn about the vocational area. The work tasks you are given will help you develop vocational knowledge and skills. Most employers accept the need to train their staff. You are involved in work-based learning. But you are also a worker.



Most employers are also in business to make profits through the work of their staff. This is why employers have rules which employees are

expected to follow. As a Young Apprentice you will be expected to follow these rules. These are some of your responsibilities to your employer:

- **Hours of work** – it is important to keep to your agreed hours of work including break times.
- **Work rate** – it is essential that you work hard to complete tasks in the time set.
- **Behaviour** – work can be fun, but your work colleagues are there to do their jobs. Your responsibility is not to distract people from their work by doing things that you know you should not be doing.
- **Confidentiality** – businesses are in competition with each other. There may be rules about things you must not tell other people about your work.
- **Materials** – there are usually strict rules about the removal of materials from the workplace. Make sure that you do not remove any materials unless with the agreement of your supervisor (e.g. you have a completed piece of work which it has been agreed you can take home).
- **Computer and telephone** – employers may have rules about the use of the internet and phone for personal use. There may also be strict rules about the use of email and intranet. Messages are often monitored and saved and there can be serious consequences for misuse.
- **Tools and equipment** – remember to ask permission before you use equipment or materials for yourself or for schoolwork at the work place. For example, using shampoo and colouring for your own hair

Young Apprentice – Health and Safety

in a hairdressers, or using tools in a workshop to complete a piece of coursework.

B. What would you do if?

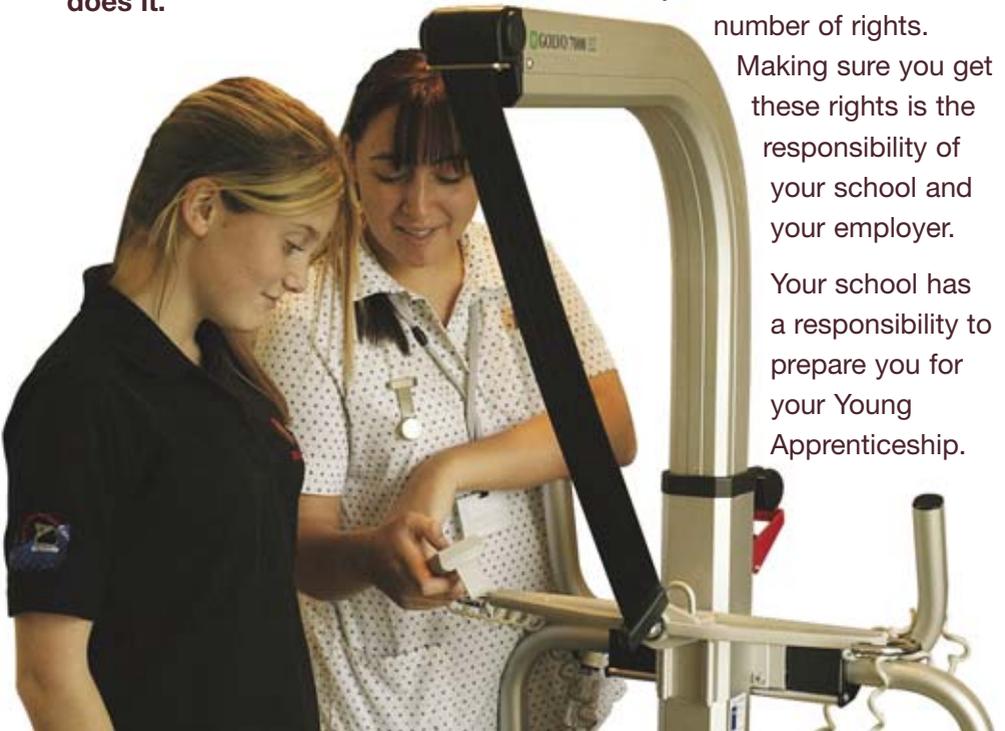
People you are working with surf the internet and make personal phone calls. They tell you it is alright as everybody does it.

Each year there are accidents and sometimes deaths among young people going to work. Workplaces can be dangerous places. This is why there are lots of rules to follow about health and safety. To give you added protection Young Apprentices are regarded as employees in health and safety law. You have a

number of rights.

Making sure you get these rights is the responsibility of your school and your employer.

Your school has a responsibility to prepare you for your Young Apprenticeship.



This includes raising your awareness of what health and safety means. Your employer has a legal responsibility to undertake an assessment of the risks involved in your work. They should be able to give you and your parents or guardian a list of the ‘significant’ (that is the main) risks to your health and safety. The employer also has a responsibility to tell you what ‘control measures’ they have put in place to reduce those risks.

On your first day at work or before starting your Apprenticeship you should have an induction to the workplace. Health and safety is an important part of your induction. Ask for a copy of the main points and study them later. Do not be worried about asking questions about anything you do not understand. Make sure you understand what you are not allowed to do by law.

Your responsibility is to put the health and safety lessons into practice at all

times. Your employer must offer you the full range of health and safety protection. This can include special clothing, shoes or equipment. Other colleagues may not always use such clothing and equipment. If so, do not copy them, follow the rules and talk to your supervisor about it. You have a responsibility to look after your own health and safety, but also that of colleagues and people who may be affected by what you do or do not do. You must not interfere with or misuse anything that might affect health and safety. It is a criminal offence.

C. What would you do if?

You do not understand some of your health and safety induction at the workplace. Then your workmates ignore health and safety rules.

Young Apprentice - Welfare

Your school has a responsibility for your welfare. Your welfare and well-being is very important and you also need to look after yourself. If you are under 18 you are regarded as a child in child protection law. As a Young Apprentice you will spend up to 50 days during Years 10 and 11 at your workplace. The person who you are likely to have most contact with, your supervisor, will have volunteered to work with young people. They will also have had a Criminal Records Bureau check to make sure that they are a proper person to work with young people. Thankfully there are very few incidents of young people on work experience being harassed.

Employers often have rules about how people should behave towards each other at work. These are to stop complaints about harassment so people can get on with their work. If you experience any problems you should tell at least three people: your

supervisor, your teacher and your parents/carer.

One problem might be people getting too close to you or touching you. If this happens you should tell them politely not to do that. If this goes on,



as soon as it happens, then tell your supervisor, teacher and parents. Another problem may be people inviting you out socially after work. Socialising is an important aspect of work, and you must decide whether to accept an invitation. Generally you

should not accept an invitation from one work colleague. But if the team or office is socialising then this would be a more public event and you may want to go. Socialising sometimes can mean alcohol and you and your work colleagues need to act within the law. You should refer such invitations to your supervisor, teacher and parents/carer.

D. What would you do if?

A work colleague of the opposite sex starts to show interest in you and asks you to meet them after work.



Young Employees – Rights at Work

Knowing about rights and responsibilities of people at work is part of the National Curriculum in citizenship. As a Young Apprentice you are in a good position to find out about rights and responsibilities in practice.

Trade unions help people at work. Your workplace may recognise a trade union. If they do there will be a trade union representative. You can find out who they are and talk to them about rights and responsibilities at work. Everyone has the legal right to join a union. Some unions have lower rates for student members. The age at which you can join varies between unions (check out the websites below).

The Trade Union Congress is the national body that represents trade unions. They have two websites where you can find out more about rights at work:

www.worksmart.org.uk

On this site you can find out about your rights, health, career, money and the business you work for. There is a helpful dictionary that explains what all the ‘work words’ mean.

www.tuc.org.uk

This is the main TUC website where you go to helpful parts of the site such as ‘Know your rights’ and ‘Mainly for students’.

E. What would you do if?

A 17-year-old friend asks you to find out whether they are entitled to the national Minimum Wage.

Young Apprentice - True / False test

Did you read and understand this booklet? Check your understanding with this quick True/False test.

Statement	(✓)	
	True	False
1 I have a right to a mentor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 I have a right to a supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 I have a right not to work with people I don't like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 I have the right to play jokes on colleagues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 I have the right to use all tools and equipment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 I have the right to take waste materials home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7 I have the right to use the internet during breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8 I have the right to know about the significant risks to my health and safety at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9 I have the right not to wear unfashionable safety clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10 I have the right not to be harassed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answers to True/False: 1.F; 2.T; 3.F; 4. F; 5.F; 6.F; 7.F; 8.T; 9.F; 10.T

Answers to What to do if? problems

A You should inform your supervisor and your teacher. Your supervisor should take some action, in the first case asking them not to repeat such comments. If serious, the supervisor should make sure they do not come into contact with you. Such incidents are uncommon.

B You should ask your supervisor about the rules on internet and telephone for personal use, and follow those rules. You do not need to 'shop' your work colleagues to do this.

C Health and safety is important as people's bodies and lives are at risk. You must ask if you do not understand and if there is a written list of do's and don'ts that you can keep. Do not follow the bad habits of other people. This is something you should mention to your supervisor or teacher for

them to take action. Bad health and safety practice can harm other people.

D It is always unwise to meet people you do not know well alone. However, if there is a group social event which everyone knows about then that may be different.

E You can ask your supervisor about the Minimum Wage. But you can refer your friend to the TUC website address www.tuc.org.uk, so that they can find out for themselves.



www.apprenticeships.org.uk

www.tuc.org.uk

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