

# *The DAF National Dealer Apprenticeship Programme*



## *A Practical Guide to Recruiting Apprentices*





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# A Practical Guide to Recruiting Apprentices

*The DAF National Dealer Apprenticeship programme is designed to help you to recruit and train today the technicians you will need for tomorrow. The programme is designed to help you benefit from:*

- **Cost effective recruitment**
- **A well trained and motivated work force**
- **Relevant DAF specific training**
- **Improved Company performance**
- **Help with the costs of training**
- **Meeting dealer standards**

Apprenticeships are a proven way of training young people to develop the skills you need. Its also a great way of showing your entire work force you are committed to staff development.

## **What is a DAF Advanced Apprenticeship?**

The DAF Apprenticeship Programme is designed to meet the specific needs of the dealerships in the DAF network. All DAF Apprentices follow an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework. In our network this is a progressive syllabus and each stage taking between 12 and 24 months with an expected completion for the full frame work of 36 months.

### **Apprenticeship**

- **NVQ Level 2 in Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair**
- **Key Skills Level 1**
- **IMI Technical Certificate Level 2**

### **Advanced Apprenticeship**

- **NVQ Level 3 in Heavy Vehicle Maintenance and Repair**
- **Key Skills Level 2**
- **Technical Certificate Level 3**

An Apprenticeship at Level 2 is equivalent to five GCSE passes at A to C and an Advanced Apprenticeship is equivalent to two A Levels.

In addition during the course of their studies a DAF Advanced Apprentice will cover the following DAF specific courses:

- **Technical Introduction to the DAF Product**
- **Safety & Maintenance Inspections**
- **DAVIE Diagnostics**
- **Basic Electrical Systems**
- **Basic Braking Systems**

As well as giving you an overview of apprenticeships, this booklet by answering the following questions is designed to give you a practical guide to recruiting and retaining the best apprentices available.

- 1 Is an apprentice right for our business?**
- 2 What work do I want them to do?**
- 3 What kind of person am I looking for ?**
- 4 What are my responsibilities to an apprentice as an employer?**
- 5 What pay and hours of work will I offer?**
- 6 How do I recruit an apprentice?**
- 7 Who will look after them once they join?**
- 8 What happens once they are qualified?**
- 9 How could an apprentice help improve my business?**

# Is an Apprentice right for my business?

Recruiting an apprentice is a long term commitment for your business and for the apprentice. It is important to consider several issues when thinking about taking on an apprentice, including:

## What's your current ratio of technicians to apprentices?

Do you have enough qualified staff to be able to give your apprentices the help they will need to develop their own skills. Do you have enough qualified technicians to satisfy the growing demands of your customers?

## What's the age profile of your current technicians?

The motor industry faces potentially severe staff shortages as the skilled population ages. You need to make sure you have enough technicians to replace people as they retire. As a general guide, most motor manufacturers recommend a ratio of one apprentice for every three qualified technicians.

# What work do I want them to do?

The DAF Apprenticeship Programme is a structured three year programme which trains apprentices in a logical manner.

In constructing a job description for your apprentice you should consider what they will learn at college and the areas that they need to cover to gain the relevant evidence for their National Vocational Qualification. The DAF apprenticeship guide poster will help you with this process.

There are also some example job descriptions on the website at

[www.daf-apprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.daf-apprenticeships.co.uk)

## If a qualified technician were to leave how would you replace them?

Advertising is very expensive, as is offering increased salaries to attract technicians from other brands.

Although recruiting and training apprentices calls for a significant investment of time and money, it is almost always cheaper in the long run to train your own staff than to recruit from outside or even worse to have to turn away work because you do not have enough qualified technicians.




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# What kind of person am I looking for?

Apprenticeships are open to all people regardless of gender, ethnicity, age or disability.

The level of funding available from the Government to support training varies according to the age of an apprentice when they start. Apprentices aged between 16 -19, attract the maximum amount of funding support. The DAF programme is funded on the basis of the vast majority of new recruits being 16-17 year olds.

When interviewing potential apprentices you look for the following attributes as a minimum:

## A real commitment to learning.

Working and studying at the same time is a tough task so has this applicant got what it takes to get through three years of study? Do they realise they will have to spend up to 10 weeks every year away from home at college and do they feel ready to do this? These are young people, are there any signs their family are committed to helping them through their studies?

## A real interest in the sector.

Applicants who are really committed to working with vehicles will have tried to find themselves relevant work experience before they apply. Try to find out what they have done and what they have learned from it.

## Good people skills.

Technicians talk to customers every day and although apprentices will develop their communication skills during their studies, they should be able to demonstrate at the interview an ability to communicate about the things they have done, their likes and dislikes and their aspirations for the future.

## A level of academic achievement.

Achieving an Advanced Apprenticeship qualification calls for excellent technical skills and the ability to deal with far greater academic detail.

Applicants should have, or be expecting, the equivalent of at least three GCSE grades A-C, including English and Maths.

There will also be other attributes that are important to you as an employer; honesty and integrity, the ability to adapt to new situations and a flexible approach to work are all key elements of a successful technician.



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# What are my responsibilities to an Apprentice as an employer?

Apprenticeships are “Jobs with training”. Apprentices are full members of staff from day one who are subject to all your normal employment terms and conditions. Any arrangements, such as probationary periods, hours of work and other contractual terms should be agreed with the apprentice. Apprentices should be issued with contracts of employment in the same

way as other staff. Skillnet can advise on specific contract terms to cover the specific nature of apprenticeships. Further details can be found on

[www.daf-apprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.daf-apprenticeships.co.uk)



# What pay and hours of work will I offer?

Apprentices under the age of 19 are not entitled to the National Minimum Wage.

Apprentices over 19 who have completed one full year of their apprenticeship are entitled to the National Minimum Wage.

A detailed guide to the National Minimum Wage is available from [www.hmso.gov.uk](http://www.hmso.gov.uk)

In England, the Learning and Skills Council define a minimum wage for full-time apprentices. An up to date figure for this can be obtained by calling the LSC direct or contacting your Skillnet representative. You should however consider what a competitive weekly wage is for apprentices in your area.

“Poor wages during training” is the most commonly cited reason for apprentices leaving the industry during their first year of training. Your Skillnet assessor will be able to advise you on the rates paid in your area.

Apprentices under the age of 18 can work a maximum of 40 hours in any week



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# How do I recruit an Apprentice ?

Skillnet markets nationally on behalf of the DAF Trucks Apprenticeship Programme. We will contact schools, further education colleges, Connexions and Careers Offices across the UK to generate applicants who will then be matched to your vacancies. Some dealerships choose to add to this national marketing campaign by making

their own contacts with local schools and Connexions offices.

Excellent ways of getting these important advisors to recommend your career opportunities to the best school leavers include:

- **Arranging “open days” for Connexions staff to visit your dealerships.**
- **Offer work tasters and work experience opportunities for year 10 to 12 pupils from local schools (14 to 16 year olds).**
- **Give potential apprentices the chance to visit your premises with their parents to find out more about the opportunities you can offer.**
- **Visit local schools to talk to groups of pupils about careers in the motor industry.**

A wide range of promotional material is available from DAF/Skillnet to support dealer initiatives.



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# Who will look after my apprentices once they join?

We strongly encourage all employers to appoint a specific work-place mentor that apprentices can go to to discuss any part of the training or any concerns they have about their work.

Although the Skillnet assessor will offer support and guidance throughout the

course of their qualification, apprentices benefit from having access to someone based in their workplace who they can work with. Skillnet can offer specific training to support these workplace mentors.

For further details, please speak with your regular assessor.

# What happens once my apprentice is qualified?

Hopefully the question you and your newly qualified technician will be asking is what training is next? Whether your aim is to develop your new technician into a diagnostic

technician or a manager of the future, learning does not stop after they have graduated.



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# How could an apprentice help improve my business?

Succession planning and career development is a vital part of today's businesses and dealerships are no different. The motor industry is however recognised for promoting from within and many senior members of dealer staff started their working life as an apprentice. Indeed the DAF network can boast a number of Service Managers who have graduated through the DAF Dealer National Apprentice Programme.

Giving a young person a career opportunity and investing in their development buys goodwill and loyalty to the dealership and the DAF brand. It demonstrates that you

have progression opportunities, be it from apprentice to master technician, or to workshop foreman or service manager and we hope one day to Dealer Principal.

Developing youngsters through your business provides you with a constant flow of people loyal and experienced to succeed the older generation.



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