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## Awards Q and A

This document provides answers to some of the frequently asked questions about the National Apprenticeship Awards.

If you would like more information or help with your entry, you can email us at [entries@appawards.co.uk](mailto:entries@appawards.co.uk) or call the helpline on 0800 954 88 96.

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## Questions and Answers

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### **Can I enter the Apprenticeship Awards if I live outside of England?**

Entries will only be accepted from employers and apprentices, based in England with SASE compliant apprenticeships (Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England) or the new Apprenticeship Standards.

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### **What is the closing date for entries?**

You must ensure your application is submitted by 5:00pm on Wednesday 28 July 2021. We will email you a confirmation of receipt. If your application requires a reference (Apprentice category only) or apprentice declaration (Rising Star category only) this must also be complete by 5:00pm on Wednesday 28 July 2021.

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### **How does the Awards process work?**

The National Apprenticeship Awards are a competitive process and progression is made through several stages.

- All applications are read, sifted and moderated to find the highest scoring category entrants in each region.
- Regional finalists will be publicly announced.
- The regional winners will automatically be shortlisted for the national stage. This shortlist will undergo a second tier national judging process where the national finalists will be selected. Only national finalists will be invited to the national awards ceremony.
- The national judging panel will select from the country's elite one national winner and two highly commended in each category.
- The National Apprenticeship Award winners will be announced at a national celebration event.

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### **How do I know that my application has been accepted?**

You will only be entered into the National Apprenticeship Awards once your application is fully complete and submitted. We will email you confirmation upon receipt. It is your responsibility to ensure that the application is completed and that the submit button has been pressed on the online application form.

The Apprentice of the Year entries will only be accepted once your referee has submitted their sections of the application. The Rising Star application will only be accepted once the apprentice declaration has been completed. Entrants will be emailed to notify them that their application has been accepted.

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### **Can I attach any supporting documents to my application?**

Applications allow you to attach photos and tables to help evidence the claims made in your responses. Use a chart, table or graph to demonstrate metrics such as statistics, quantifiable information and comparative data. Remember to provide a base line to show progression.

Text contained in charts, tables or graphs should be counted towards the final word count. If your supporting document is over the word count, it will be removed from your entry. Please make sure that all charts are clear and in black and white, as your entry will be photocopied for the judges.

Do not include hyperlinks to websites, videos or other information in any part of your entry.

The upload facility should not be utilised for items such as additional references, certificates, prospectus documents or training materials.

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### **Can I enter the Apprenticeship Awards on behalf of the entrant?**

Yes, however remember that you will need their permission as the application requires the entrant's personal details. The answers need to be written in the words of the entrant.

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### **What if the entrant does not have access to a computer at work or at home?**

If the entrant does not own a computer or use one at their place of work, we ask that they work with their learning provider or employer to help them complete the online form.

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### **Do I have to complete the application all in one go?**

No, once you have registered, the application process is simple and straightforward. You can save and return to your application at any stage before finally submitting your form.

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### **Does a word count apply to the questions?**

Yes, each question has a maximum number of words. You should plan your response and provide as much evidence as possible to support the claims made within your answers. Use plain English and avoid jargon to help the judges understand your responses.

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### **Do I have to apply online?**

Yes, to ensure the process is consistent and fair, all applications must be filled in online. Personal information is required and an online process is the best means by which we can ensure your details are protected.

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### **Are there any sponsorship opportunities for the Awards?**

There are a number of different sponsorship opportunities available for the Awards.

Please contact the Awards team on [apprenticeship.awards@education.gov.uk](mailto:apprenticeship.awards@education.gov.uk) for more information.

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### **What if I want to make changes to my application?**

You can edit your application at any time before it has been fully submitted. After this, you will not be able to make any changes.

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## Employer of the Year categories

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### Can I submit more than one application?

Only one Employer of the Year entry is allowed per employer. Don't forget to enter your exceptional apprentices too! The Rising Star, Apprentice of the Year and Champion of the Year categories are looking to award those who can demonstrate outstanding contribution and commitment to their employer and progression in their careers.

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### How do I know where my application will be judged?

Your entry will be judged by a panel, based on the postcode of your organisation. Only one entry is allowed per employer. If you are a multi-sited organisation, please enter the postcode for the region you would like your entry to be judged in – this is usually the location of your Head Office or the site where the majority of the apprenticeship training takes place.

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### What are judges looking for?

Judges are looking for proactive employers who can demonstrate how they have delivered an exemplary apprenticeship programme that has benefited their organisation and individual apprentices.

Make your application stand out by including essential evidence such as quotes from clients and apprentices, statistics, comparative data and quantifiable information.

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### What questions are on the application?

To see the questions, please view the relevant planning guidance documents on the awards application site.

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### What are the rewards?

Employers who are recognised through the National Apprenticeship Awards receive a range of benefits:

- A top accolade for all of their hard work and commitment to apprenticeships
- Public recognition through national, regional and sector media channels
- National winners will be announced at a national celebration event
- Enhanced reputation plus a motivated workforce and increased staff morale
- Speaking opportunities at Education and Skills Funding Agency events

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### Can I enter as a subsidiary company?

A subsidiary company may apply on behalf of the parent group, but this then excludes the parent group from applying. More than one subsidiary of the parent may apply for the awards, as long as the application references only the apprenticeships that are delivered wholly by that subsidiary. Any recognition will go to the subsidiary and not the parent group.

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### Which category should I enter?

The Employer of the Year category is open to employers from all sectors and celebrates employers who can showcase their commitment, contribution and the success that apprenticeships have brought to their organisation.

There are three employer categories to acknowledge organisations of different sizes:

- SME Employer of the Year: 1 – 249 employees
- Large Employer of the Year: 250 – 4,999 employees
- Macro Employer of the Year: 5,000+ employees

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## Apprentice of the Year categories

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### What are the judges looking for?

Judges are looking for apprentices who can demonstrate their achievements, contribution and the impact they have made within the organisation they work. Include evidence to make your application standout, such as quotes from clients, staff and fellow apprentices, statistics, comparative data and performance reviews.

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### Do I still have to be doing my apprenticeship?

To enter the Apprentice of the Year category you must either be currently undertaking the level of qualification applicable to your chosen category or have completed that level within the last 12 months, i.e. since 1 July 2020.

Stronger entrants have usually completed more than 50% of their current apprenticeship and as a result they are able to provide more evidence in their answers.

If you completed your apprenticeship over 12 months ago you should consider entering the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year category, which is open to individuals who go above and beyond to champion apprenticeships. You may also be eligible for the new Rising Star Award.

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### Which category should I enter?

The three apprentice categories are looking to recognise those who are working towards or have recently completed their apprenticeship.

There are three Apprentice of the Year categories:

- Intermediate Apprentice of the Year – for those who are working towards, or completed, NVQ Level 2 qualifications
- Advanced Apprentice of the Year – for those working towards, or completed, NVQ Level 3
- Higher or Degree Apprentice of the Year – for those working towards, or completed, NVQ Level 4 or higher qualifications

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### Do I have to complete my application before I send it to my referee?

No, but please note that your application will only be accepted if both sections of the application are complete. It is your responsibility to ensure that it is complete and submitted.

Remember to allow your referee sufficient time to fill in their section before the deadline – 5:00pm, 28 July 2021. We will notify you by email when your referee has completed their section.

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### What questions are on the application?

To see the questions, please view the relevant planning guidance documents on the awards application site.

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### What are the rewards?

Apprentices who are recognised at the National Apprenticeship Awards will receive the following benefits:

- A top accolade for all the hard work you have put into your apprenticeship
- Public recognition through national, regional and sector media channels
- National winners will be announced at a national celebration event
- The honour of being named one of the best apprentices in England and an exemplar for your outstanding achievements
- Speaking opportunities at Education and Skills Funding Agency events

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## Apprenticeship Champion of the Year Category

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### **What is Apprenticeship Champion of the Year category?**

The Apprenticeship Champion of the Year is open to individuals who go above and beyond to champion apprenticeships.

If you are still in the process of completing an apprenticeship, or completed in the last 12 months, you should apply in the Apprentice of the Year category.

The application process for Apprenticeship Champion of the Year has changed for 2021, and the initial nomination will now come from a colleague or contact who recognises their 'champion' credentials. The nominator will be required to write a short reference, explaining why they think the individual is an 'Apprenticeship Champion'.

Once the nomination has been submitted the nominee will receive an email to alert them, and they will then complete the application form.

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### **What questions are on the application?**

To see the questions, please view the relevant planning guidance documents on the awards application site.

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### **Who can act as my referee?**

As the application process now starts with a nomination, we no longer require a reference for this category.

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### **What are the rewards?**

If you are recognised in the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year category, you will receive the following benefits:

- A top accolade for your personal achievements and contribution to apprenticeships
- The national winner will be announced at a national celebration event
- Public recognition for your commitment to apprenticeships including press coverage

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### **What are the judges looking for?**

Judges are looking for strong advocates of apprenticeships who showcase how they proactively go beyond their normal duties to promote apprenticeships as an excellent career route.

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## Rising Star Category

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### **What are the judges looking for?**

The Rising Star Award seeks to recognise apprentices that have made impressive progress in their career to date and have the potential to go even further.

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### **Who can enter the Rising Star category?**

Apprentices should be nominated for this award by their employer.

To be eligible for the Rising Star Award, the apprentice being nominated must either:

- Be currently undertaking an apprenticeship at any level
- Have completed their apprenticeship within the last two years (since 1 July 2019)

If the apprentice completed their apprenticeship more than two years ago, they should consider entering the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year category. This category is open to individuals who go above and beyond to champion apprenticeships.

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### **Can an employer nominate more than one apprentice?**

Yes. An employer may nominate more than one apprentice for the Rising Star Award. A separate application must be completed for each apprentice.

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### **What are the rewards?**

If you are recognised in the Rising Star category, you will receive the following benefits:

- A top accolade for your achievements as an apprentice
- The national winner will be announced at a national celebration event
- The honour of being named as a 'one to watch' apprentice in England and an exemplar for your outstanding achievements
- Public recognition for your commitment to apprenticeships including press coverage

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### **Do I have to complete the application before my apprentice fills in their declaration?**

You do not have to wait until all sections are complete before requesting your nominated apprentice completes their declaration. Please note that your apprentice's email address must be different to the one you used to register with.

Remember to give them sufficient time to complete before the deadline. You will receive an automatic email advising you when the apprentice has completed this section and the entry has been finally submitted.