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Sample Assessment for Functional Skills English Reading Level 2

Decision Time

Source Documents

Note:

These materials relate to the Functional Skills English assessments that will be in use from September 2015

3748-013 Sample Assessment
Level 2 Functional Skills English
Reading
Decision Time

Source documents

Do not write your answers in this booklet as this will not be marked.
All answers should be written in the space provided on the question paper.

Document 1 – magazine article. Use this document to answer question 1.

Scarlett Stark

Business2Community Magazine

Apprenticeship VS College?

So you've just left school. Taking the next steps towards a career can be daunting. The main issue is what to do next. Current options include going to college, joining an apprenticeship scheme or finding a job.

This can be a stressful time, because you've got to try and make your mind up about what you actually want to do in life. It's important to evaluate your position, your strengths and what makes you tick before making a decision. You don't want to get six months down the line and discover you don't enjoy the vocational path you have undertaken with an apprenticeship or that education is no longer for you.

If you take on a job with no educational commitments it is easier to jump ship than if you have committed to an apprenticeship or continued in education. Here are some pros and cons of choosing an apprenticeship rather than college to hopefully help you make the right decision.

PROS

Learning On The Job – From the start, you learn as you work. You're not confined in a classroom and you get hands-on experience and a real life environment to learn problem solving skills. A real benefit in the future is that it gives you an advantage over those who haven't gained as much practical vocational experience.

You Get Paid To Learn – As an apprentice you earn a wage, paid directly into your bank account. You also get holiday pay. College students will have to study and work part-time to earn any money.

Getting Ahead – You'll have more experience in practical work than your friends who have gone to college. You will also learn typical workplace skills such as teamwork. You can learn even more by taking on paid overtime.

A Job Opportunity – If you've shown that you can cut the mustard, there may be an opportunity at the end of the apprenticeship for a permanent position and an opportunity to join a pension scheme.

As you can see, there are some real positive aspects to an apprenticeship, but there are also some negative factors that you should consider before taking the plunge.

CONS

Hard work – You're going to have to work hard to get your qualification and practical work completed. You might sometimes have to miss social events because you'll have to do a full day's work every day and study as well.

Low pay – As said previously, you are paid to learn. However, apprenticeship wages tend to be the minimum wage. You will only get a pay rise when the government changes the minimum wage. After all, your employer is helping you develop your skills.

You'll start at the bottom – You need to learn the basics. You might find that some of your tasks you start with are boring, but that's just a fact of life. Everyone has to do jobs that can be a bit mind-numbing at times, but once you've worked through those tasks you can move on to better things!

Stand out from the crowd – Competition is tough. Apprenticeships are in high demand, more so than college places. If you really want to get an apprenticeship then do your homework, know what is expected of you and do some background research.

Good luck!

Document 2 – webpage. Use this document to answer questions 2 and 3.

http://skillsforcareers.com/Making a decision

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Making a decision

Fast-forward two years and compare yourself against a friend who decided to go to college to gain qualifications as opposed to doing an apprenticeship. Where would you both be now?

Completing an apprenticeship will allow you to gain a comparable qualification, but with the benefit of invaluable work experience and knowledge, as well as earnings and a possible benefits package.

Now look at the job market where you are both applying for the same position. When the employer looks at your CV's they will see you both have the same level of qualification. However, you have two years' worth of work experience, a qualification achieved exclusively in the work place and a reference from an employer. It would be highly unusual not to be able to include more detail on your CV as well. Put yourself in the employer's shoes; which of you is more likely to be shortlisted for an interview? It would obviously be the apprentice.

Jack's story

I left school at 16 after my GCSE's and was mystified as to what I was going to do. I explored both vocational and academic options at college where all my friends were going. But being a confident and hard working individual, I decided these characteristics could be put to better use in an apprenticeship, even though I was apprehensive and knew I would miss out on some of the great social events at college.

Despite a tough selection process because of fierce competition, I started my level 2 Business Administration Apprenticeship with Chesterborough Council, working in one of their business innovation centres. On my first day, walking into the building was intimidating. After all, I was no longer with all my mates at school and I felt like a fish out of water. But I was soon accepted and made to feel like a team member.

Over time, the role provided me with great exposure to all aspects of the business, although a lot of my first tasks were repetitive and boring. However, even these helped me really improve my time management skills, and when I had finished my apprenticeship I was able to secure a full time position. That wouldn't have happened if I had gone to college.

My apprenticeship was arranged through a training provider, Skills for Careers, and throughout my apprenticeship I was released one day a month from the Council to attend workshops run by Skills for Careers at their Business Academy. I was able to meet and network with a group of apprentices from a variety of businesses. A whole host of topics were covered, including presentation skills.

I had a dedicated assessor who worked really closely with me and was always available if I had any queries or concerns.

I made the right decision, unlike my friends who are just leaving college, who don't have a full time job, aren't earning any money and are not yet on a career ladder. I love the fact that I am earning money, even though the government hasn't given me a pay rise!

Current vacancies

Digital Marketing Apprentice
Digital Marketing Apprentice
Location: Sheffield, United Kingdom

Customer Service Apprentice
Social Media Apprentice
Location: Kent, United Kingdom

Social Media Apprentice
Digital Marketing Apprentice
Location: Bristol, United Kingdom

Administration Apprentice
Digital Admin. Apprentice
Location: London, United Kingdom

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Document 3 – advertisement. Use this document to answer questions 4 and 5.

THE GLOBAL RETAIL TRAINING COMPANY

Customer Service Apprenticeship Level 3

We currently have three vacancies available for this apprenticeship scheme in the Sheffield area.

We are the most successful international training company, with links to customer service departments in many high street and online retail chains. We are looking for self-motivated apprentices to be placed with one of these retailers. You will have an outstanding career path if you demonstrate initiative.

This is an opportunity for enthusiastic people to embark upon one of the most exciting and rewarding professions within this fast growing industry.

Your duties will include:

- Customer order management
- Responding to customer queries
- Managing Ebay/Amazon orders
- Customer live chats

You will learn to:

- Provide excellent customer service
- Give customers a positive impression of yourself and your organisation
- Go the extra mile in customer service
- Communicate with customers in writing or through the use of ICT
- Deal with customers by telephone or live chats
- Pass Functional English, maths and ICT qualifications

You will be entitled to:

- The Government recommended minimum wage for your age group
- A pay rise in line with government policy
- A choice of monthly or weekly wages
- 28 days paid holiday (including bank and public holidays)
- The opportunity to join a pension scheme at the end of the apprenticeship
- Be paid for any overtime you choose to work

With us, you can't fail to succeed.

If you are interested in working with the best retail training company, send your CV, copies of relevant certificates and a covering letter telling us why you are the apprentice for us, to:

Miss Anna Lewis, Human Resources, The Global Retail Training Company,
129 Sheffield Way, Sheffield, SSW 3ZZ.

Applications close on the last day of the month.

Document 1 adapted from: http://www.business2community.com/human-resources/apprenticeship-vs-college-01013129#GRbqhyQIHF82izAh.99

Document 2 adapted from: http://www.skillsforcareers.co.uk/620/