

Helping you recruit the best apprentice for your business

Broker apprenticeships, backed by Aviva

Thinking of recruiting an insurance broker apprentice?

This guide will tell you what to do (and what not to do) to help you attract, hire, and welcome the best candidates.



What an apprenticeship offers you

A lot goes into running an apprenticeship programme, of course. But we assure you it's worth the effort. And you've got all our experience at Aviva to call on, as well as the expertise of our partners at Davies Learning Solutions, whenever you need to make sure yours is a success.

For full details of what the programme itself involves, read the [Broker apprenticeships, backed by Aviva guide](#).

What is an apprenticeship?

Not to be confused with internships, an apprenticeship is a paid job where employees gain valuable experience in a role while following a set training plan and working towards a nationally-recognised qualification. Employers commit to giving apprentices time and space to develop and study. Typically, apprentices spend 80% of their time learning 'on the job' and 20% learning 'off the job'.

Apprenticeships are open to anyone over the age of 16 and are a great way to get started in a new career.

Why your business should have one

Apprenticeships offer just as much to a business as they do to an individual looking to upskill. An apprentice can bring new ideas and energy to your team. And as their training can be adapted to the needs of your business, it's an effective way to grow the talent you need.

What support can you get?

You're not on your own in setting up a successful programme. Our Insurance Broker Apprenticeship has been created to help you make the most of the opportunities you have to offer. Plus, there's funding to help you do it.

INSURANCE BROKER APPRENTICESHIP

Level 3

- 12-15 months duration
- Training to achieve Insurance Practitioner Level 3 Apprenticeship Qualification and Certificate in Insurance
- Maximum funding £8,000

We're here to help you

We've been running apprenticeships at Aviva for years and we're here to pass on everything we've learned. With our help, you can plan, recruit, and onboard a new apprentice with ease. This guide will walk you through what you need to do. And any other advice or information you need, we're happy to help.

An overview of your journey to hiring a new apprentice

Phase 1

Planning

- > Who will lead the recruitment project?
- > What kind of apprentice do you want to attract?
- > Defining the apprentice role
- > Designing your application process
- > Making sure you're ready to recruit

Phase 2

Advertising

- > Writing your job description
- > Deciding where to advertise
- > How to stand out
- > Monitoring your response

Phase 3

Selecting

- > Managing responses
- > How to run an interview
- > Strong interview questions
- > Making an offer and contracts

Phase 4

Onboarding

- > Before the first day
- > On the first day
- > Your apprentice training schedule
- > A final note

Planning

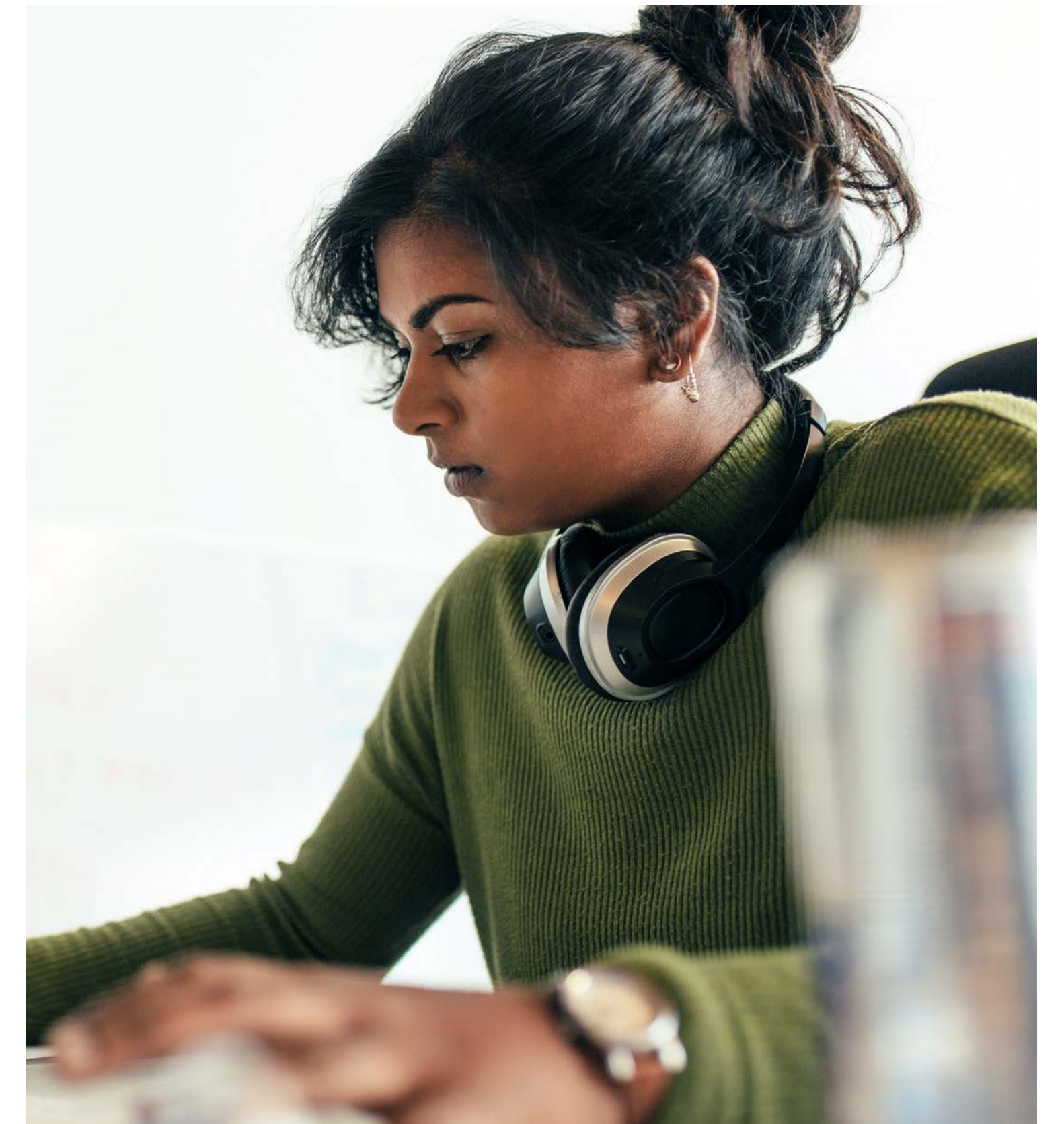
Who will lead the recruitment project?

Knowing you need to hire an apprentice is one thing. Knowing how to successfully manage the recruitment process and get the best candidates to apply is another thing entirely. But that's where this guide comes in. So, let's start at the beginning with the initial questions you'll need to answer:

Who will lead the recruitment project?

First, decide who in your team is going to have overall responsibility for the process of hiring your apprentice. You may need to split responsibilities: someone to organise and run the campaign, while someone else interviews and makes hiring decisions, for example. It's important to get this clear, right at the start. Clear accountability is important to make sure the process goes smoothly.

This person (or people) will be responsible for creating and placing any advertising, organising interviews and preparing for your new apprentice's arrival. They will also manage the budget for the campaign – this will influence where and how often you advertise for your apprentices.



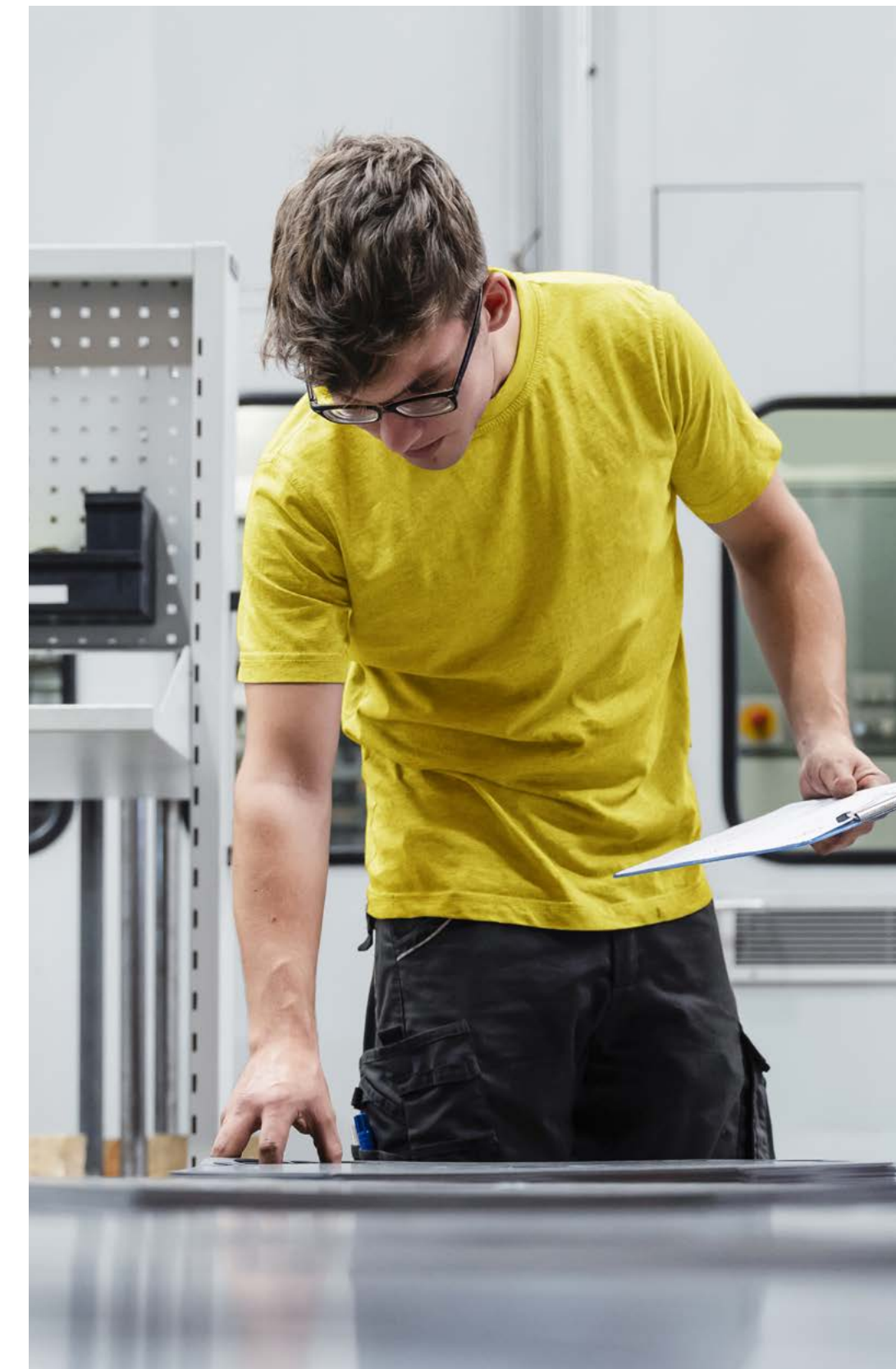
Planning

What kind of apprentice do you want to attract?

Knowing the sort of person you want to attract is vital. What skills or qualities are you looking for? What's your overall development plan for this individual? Being clear on this now will help you write a clear and accurate job advert that will attract the right person. It will also help you choose the best places in which to advertise – if you think about where your ideal candidate is now, you can advertise somewhere they are likely to see.

Hiring a new apprentice is a great way to increase diversity in your team, bring in someone with new ideas and new perspectives. The person who will turn out to be a great asset to your business may not have the expected qualifications or background. So before you begin the process, think about the person you want to attract. What strengths would you like them to bring? Consider defining a set of values that you would like this person to exemplify (we talk more about recruiting by values later on, when we discuss interviewing).

Defining the apprentice role

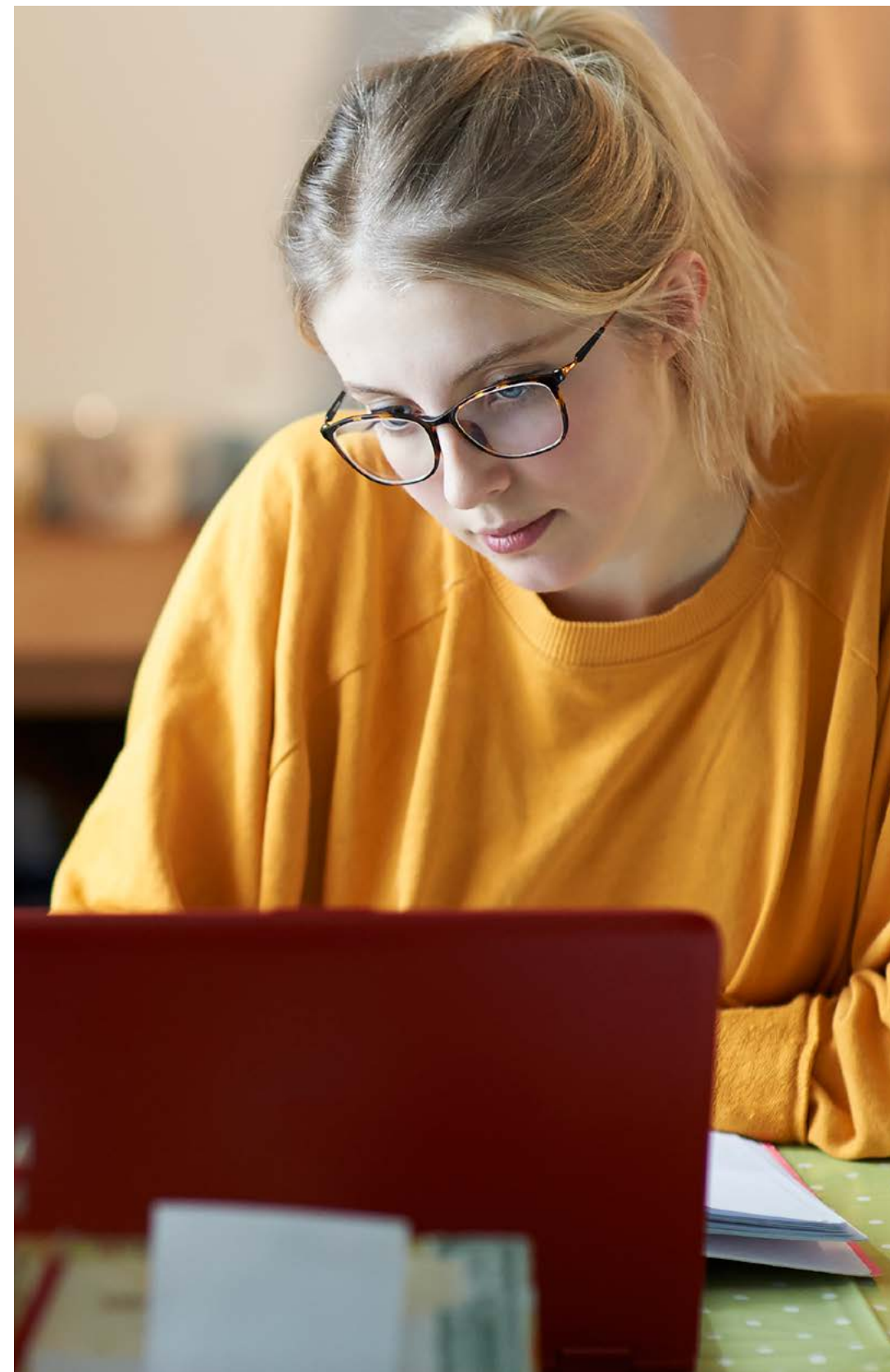


Defining a clear set of responsibilities and professional goals is essential. This helps both your team and the apprentice understand what is expected of them. It's also important to be clear around what a candidate can expect the apprenticeship to lead to if they show promise. Collecting this information will also help you create a clear and concise job description – and that's essential for writing your advert.

Planning

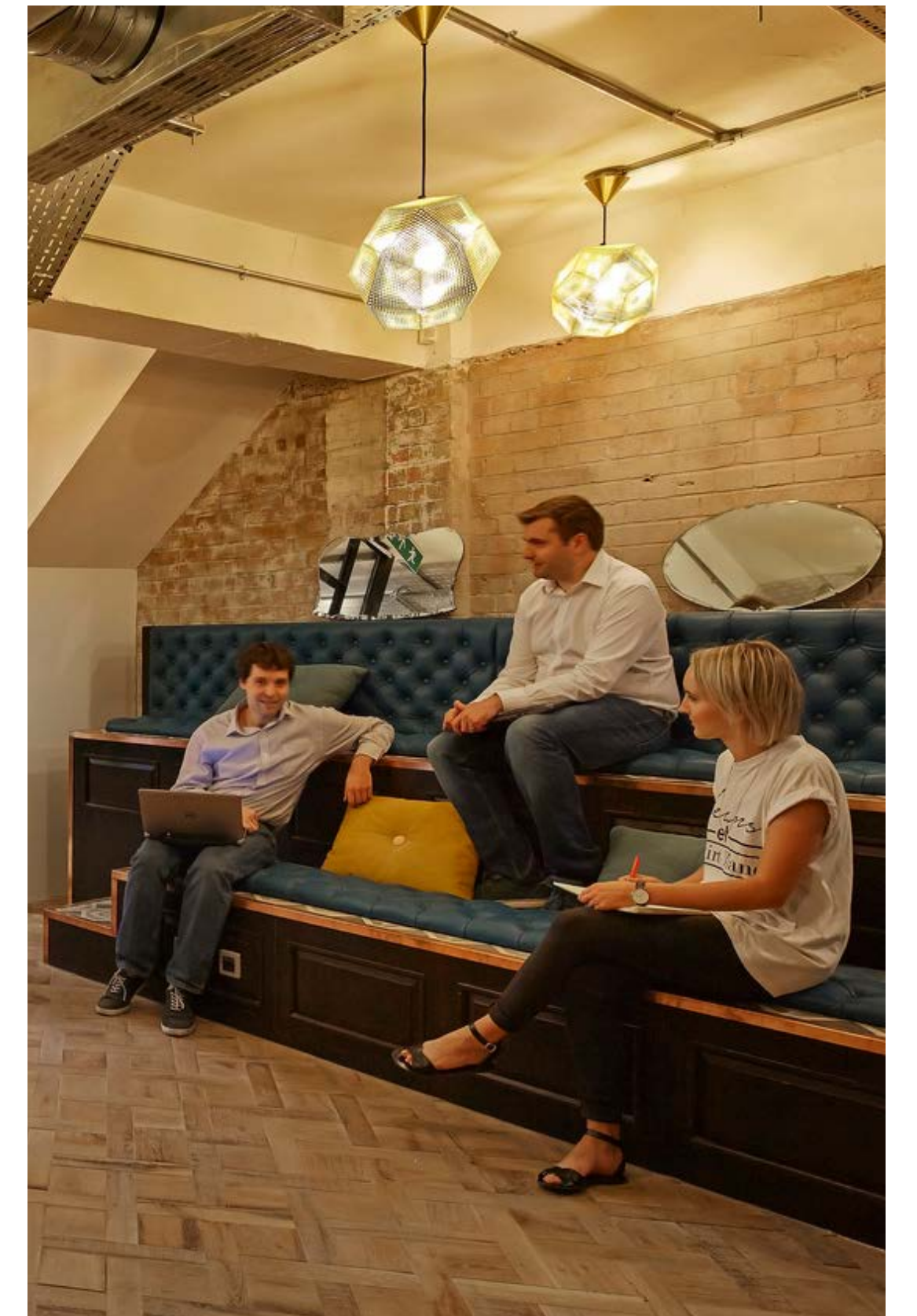
Designing your application process

Decide how you want candidates to show their interest in your apprenticeship. Perhaps you want them to email their CV direct to you, or apply via a special webpage you're setting up? Make sure you have decided who will be responsible for selecting suitable candidates for interview or further consideration. Set a deadline for applications so there's a cut-off point for your campaign, after which you won't consider any new candidates.



Making sure you're ready to recruit

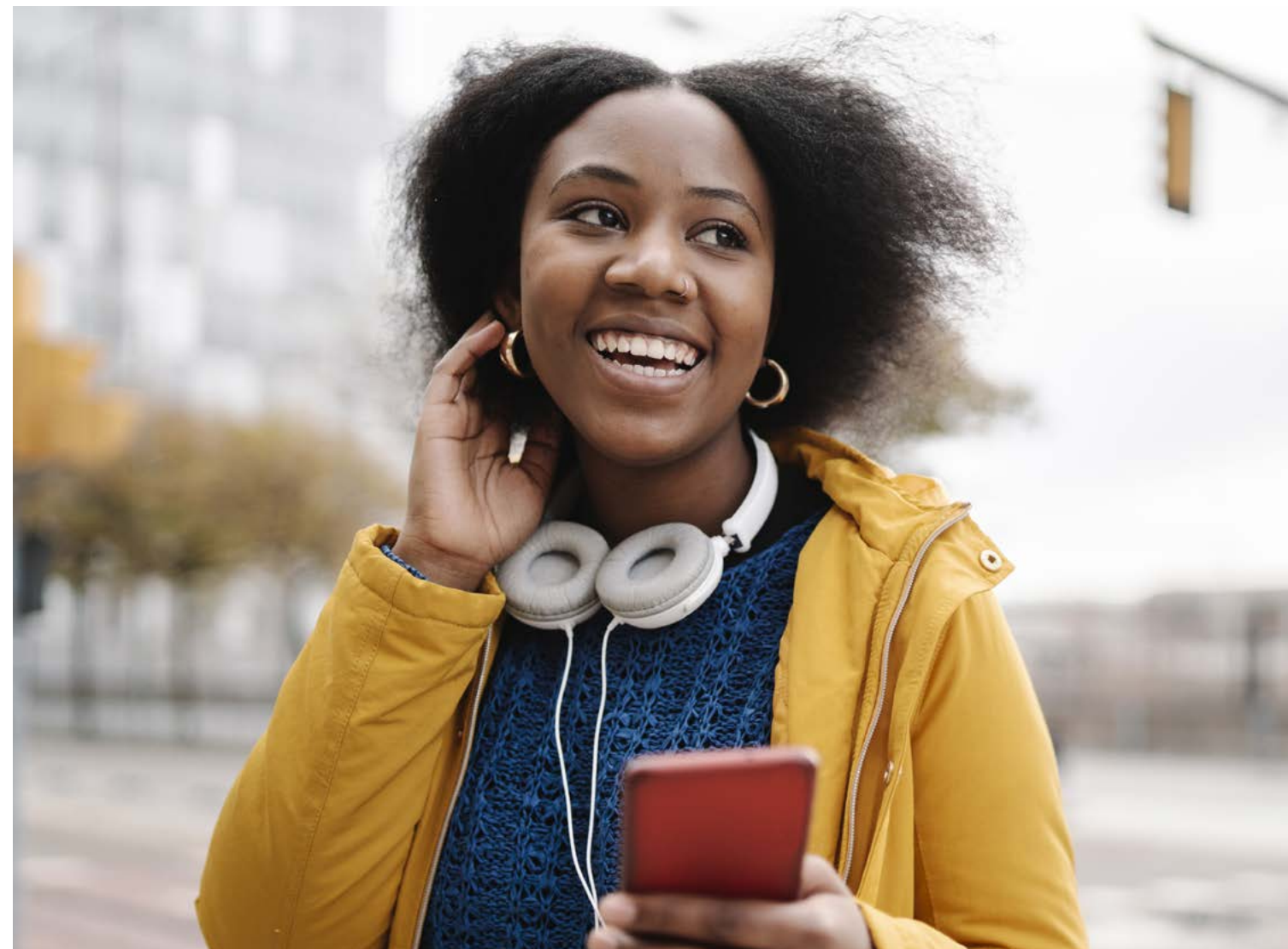
Before you press 'go' on your recruitment campaign, make sure that you have everything in order. Is your website up to date? Have you uploaded any new content to any social media recently? Good candidates are likely to do some research on you in both of these platforms before applying, so make sure you are presenting your best face. If you have a visible office front, it's worth making sure it looks presentable as well.



Advertising

Writing your job description

With a plan in place, you're now ready to start producing the assets you'll use to attract people to apply for your Apprenticeship.



You need to make this as interesting, exciting (and short) as possible. What you write here can be used in a number of different ways to tell people about your apprenticeship – an online job board posting, for example, or a social media post, a press ad, a poster. We'll look at your full range of options later. First, let's get that job description written.

What you write should:

Feature the key job details

That's the **job title**, the **location** and ideally the **salary** you are offering.

Introduce yourselves

Even the world's most famous brands will start a job description with a short sentence or two about who they are and what they do. So you should look to do the same and explain your offer clearly, setting the scene for the reader.

EXAMPLE

We're **[insert your business name here]**. We provide our customers with a range of business and personal insurance designed to suit their needs and protect them when needed. **[Insert more about what your business does here, if you want to]**. Now we're looking to recruit an apprentice to join our team. This is your chance to become a professional, qualified Insurance Broker – in just 12 to 15 months. Helping provide the insurance everybody needs is a rewarding career, with plenty of challenges, earning potential and opportunities to progress.

Reveal more about the role

You'll know what type of person your apprentice should be and what they will be doing. But your target audience may not. So you'll need to explain to them what an insurance broker does, the different opportunities available within your business, and what's involved in the apprenticeship programme – as well as the potential for career progression through your business. Try and make it sound as exciting and interesting as possible – these are excellent opportunities after all.

Advertising

Writing your job description

EXAMPLE

So what's involved? There's plenty of variety in the role. You'll meet customers, handle sales, help to manage accounts, marketing and more. Training normally lasts between 12 and 15 months – a combination of 1-to-1 coaching, digital learning and exam preparation workshops delivered by Davies Group. You'll also combine that with invaluable on-the-job experience, seeing just what an Insurance Broker does and what you could accomplish. At the end of it, you'll achieve a Level 3 Insurance Practitioner qualification, along with your Certificate in Insurance accredited by the Chartered Insurance Institute (CII). This will give you a lot of what you need to progress your career in insurance. All backed by Aviva.

Include the strengths and experience you're looking for

Having established what your apprentice will be doing, now it's time to outline the types of strengths and attributes your ideal candidate will be expected to have. This is vital information that will ultimately help ensure you attract suitable individuals to apply for your apprenticeship. It's also needed to filter out unsuitable candidates too, so you don't get overwhelmed with applications from people who don't meet your requirements.

EXAMPLE

The strengths we're looking for in our apprentices include:

- An aptitude for on-the-job learning
- An eagerness to continue to study
- An interest in insurance and an appreciation of its importance in everyday life
- An ease in communicating and building relationships

Show what's in it for them

It's a competitive marketplace with lots of businesses seeking apprentices. So you're going to need to make your job description stand out from the crowd. The best way to do this is to think about what it is that makes apprenticeships at your firm different, more exciting, and more rewarding than anywhere else. You'll need to try and put yourself in your ideal apprentice's shoes and think about what they are looking for. So, for example, you could consider:

- What it's like to work in your firm – do you have flexible working options, a good social life, a great work/life balance, or any other benefits that make every day different?
- Are you offering a salary or benefits package that's above and beyond the normal levels for this kind of role?
- What kind of future opportunities can you offer an apprentice? Is there scope to move into different roles or work at different sites?

Advertising

Writing your job description

Finally, give clear instructions on how to apply

This bit, known as the **Call to Action** usually comes at the end of the job description. If someone has read up to this point, chances are you've got them interested. So now you need to tell them what to do next. This will depend on the application method you decided on in the planning stage. Remember – you can use more than one application method. The easier you make it to apply, the more applications you're likely to get. Be very clear what you expect from your candidates. For example, if you ask for a cover letter, be sure to give an idea of what you are expecting it to contain, and how long it should be.

All of the above can come together in a full-length job description suitable for a job posting that might look something like this:

EXAMPLE

Insurance Broker Apprentice

Location £Salary

We're **[insert your business name here]**. We provide our customers with a range of business and personal insurance designed to suit their needs and protect them when needed. **[Insert more about what your business does here, if you want to]**. Now we're looking to recruit an apprentice to join our team. This is your chance to become a professional, qualified Insurance Broker – in just 12 to 15 months. Helping provide the insurance everybody needs is a rewarding career, with plenty of challenges, earning potential and opportunities to progress.

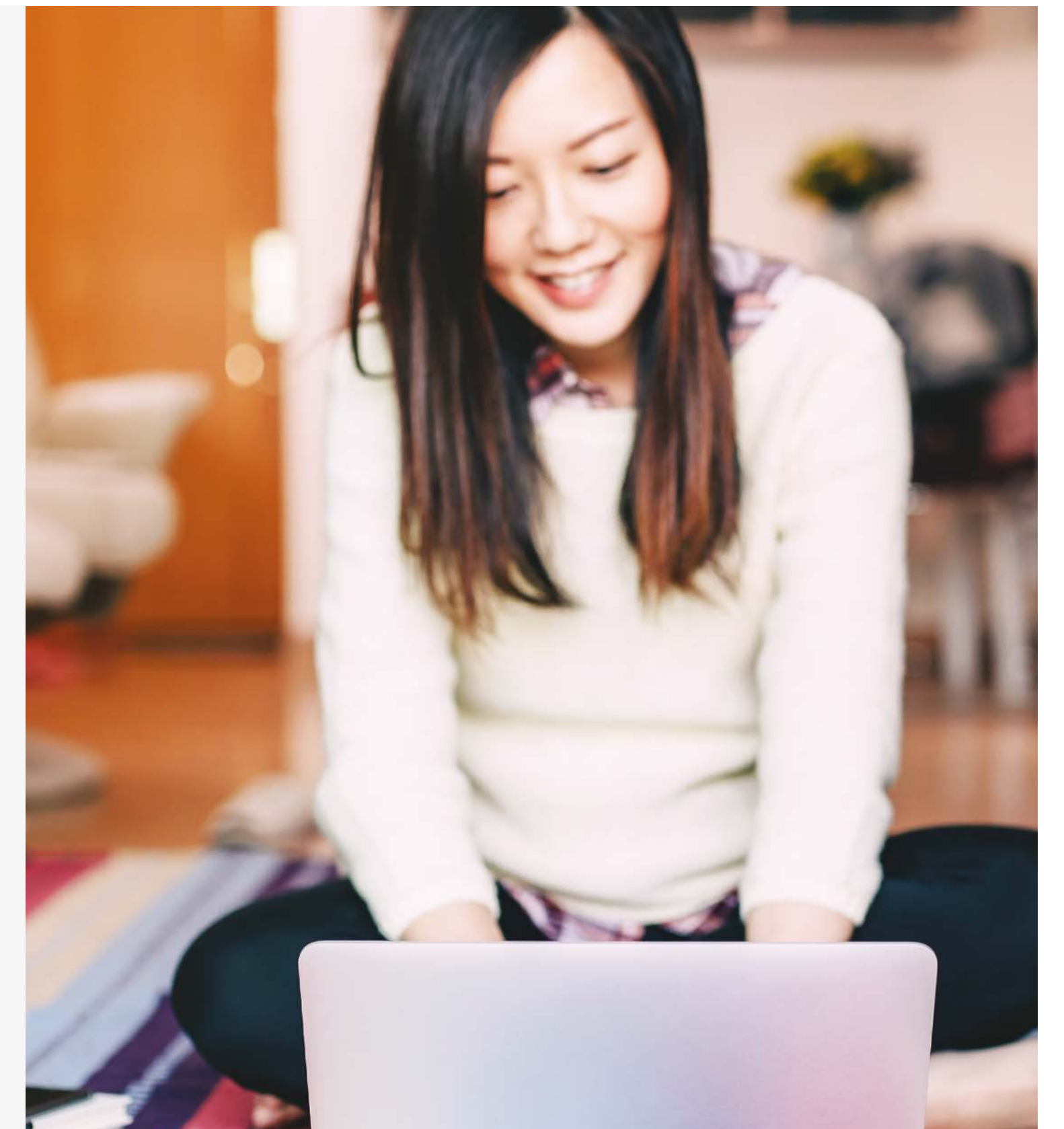
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What are we looking for from you?

- An aptitude for on-the-job learning
- An eagerness to continue to study
- An interest in insurance and an appreciation of its importance in everyday life
- An ease in communicating and building relationships

Want to learn more about us? Visit RepresentativeNameInsurance.co.uk

To apply, please email your CV to Joanna.Founder@representativenameinsurance.co.uk



Advertising

Deciding where to advertise

Where are your audience looking? Think about the channels that are most likely to be used by would-be apprentices and look into using them. The job description we covered earlier will form the core of the content you include in your advertising – but it won't be the only thing.

Building relationships with schools and colleges

Many school and college students will be interested in what an apprenticeship has to offer. Get in touch with local schools, colleges and further education providers and ask how you might be able to advertise your apprenticeship to their students. See if you can make contact with their careers advisors and attend their career days to gain access to a local pool of potential apprentices.

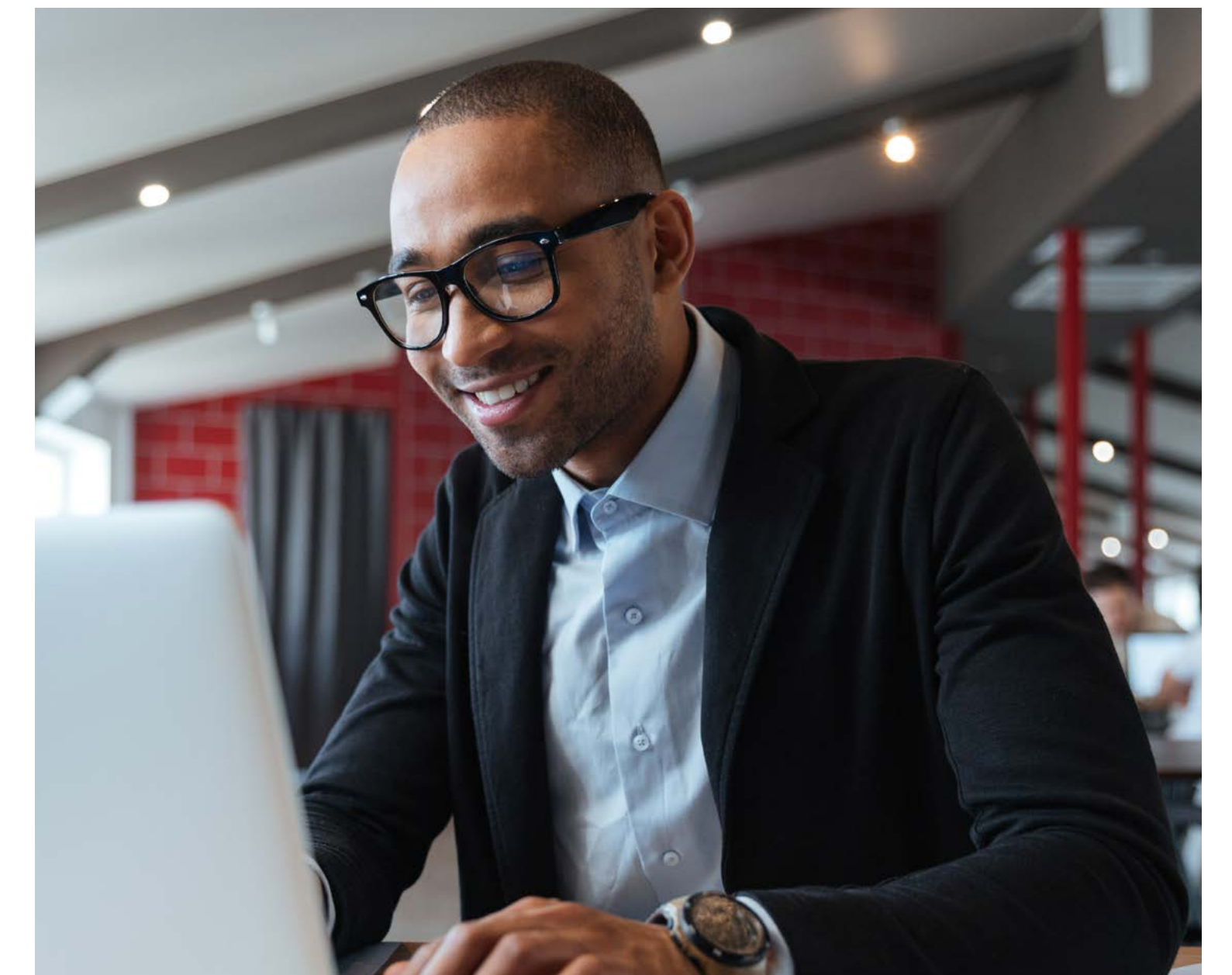
Attending recruitment fairs

Many local colleges, schools and other recruitment organisations have yearly careers fairs – these can be a great way to access, and meet, interested individuals. To attend, you'll need a stand of some kind – this can be a simple table combined with some banners, or you can consider investing in a more bespoke careers fair stand. You need a representative from your business at the stand who is confident and knowledgeable about the opportunity – someone friendly and welcoming. Finally, you'll need something that interested people can take away with them.

Online job boards

An online job board is a searchable way to post your job description online. The most obvious place to advertise is the government's free portal for apprentices. Aviva will help you access this through Davies Group, our training provider. This is a great way to reach a large, interested audience – it is targeted solely at apprentices and will give you excellent visibility.

Consider commercial job boards as well. You can post your job description here to gain more of a profile in the local area. The major UK options for general recruitment are Indeed ([indeed.com](https://www.indeed.com)) and Reed ([reed.co.uk](https://www.reed.co.uk)).



Advertising

Deciding where to advertise

Press advertising

You may want to consider using the local media. While you may not feel your apprentices are avid readers of the local press, their parents and other influencers may be. Much of the local press is online as well as in print, and advertising often includes offline and online options. Remember – you will have to significantly reduce the content of your job description here.

Social media

If you have a presence on social media, then advertising via Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn allows you to target users precisely by age, location and other filters. It can be a powerful way to reach the apprentice age group. Space is very limited in these executions, so consider carefully what you want to say.

Handy links:

[Posting a job on Facebook](#)

[Posting a job on LinkedIn](#)

Referrals

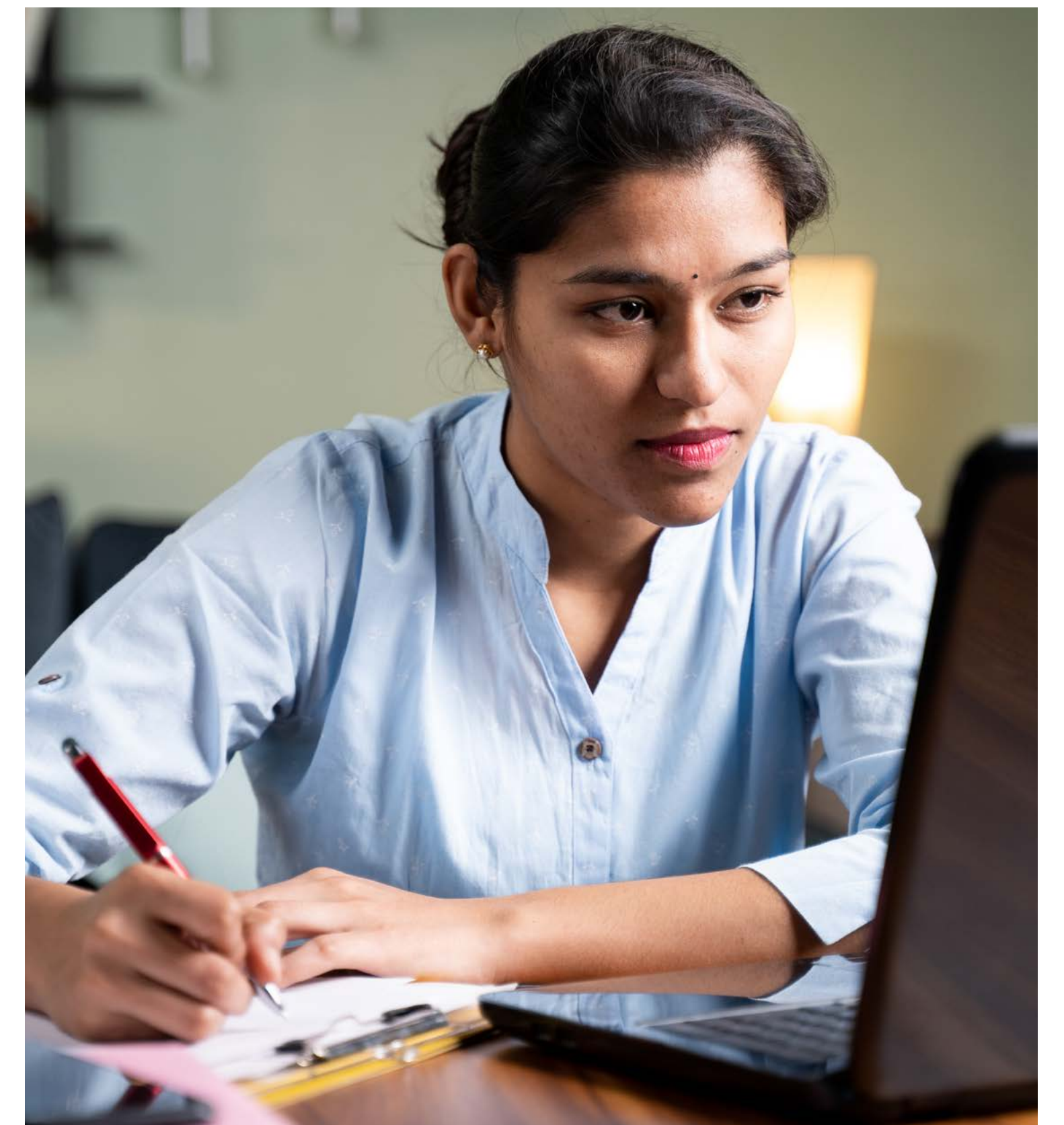
Referrals are a great way to find suitable people. And they're cost-effective too. Encourage your team and the wider business to mention the opportunity across their personal and professional social networks. If a colleague refers a candidate who ends up being hired, you may want to reward that colleague with a small incentive.

Other options

There are lots of ways to attract candidates, ranging from the obvious to the not-at-all obvious.

- Consider creative options, such as taking a stand at a local fete or community event.
- You could print up a leaflet and distribute it around the local area.
- If you or any of your fellow brokers have connections with sports or social clubs, get posters up in the community.

Finally, if your business has a high street location, you can always advertise your role with a poster in the window. Potential apprentices may well see it, as well as members of their family and network, such as parents and grandparents.



Advertising

How to stand out

You are unlikely to be the only local business looking to hire a great apprentice. How can you make sure that your advertising stands out from the crowd?

Design

If you have access to professional design, use it. Clean, well designed advertising will present your business as a professional and an attractive place to work. Use strong headlines that convey an offer in simple language that will catch the eye and make your audience think. If using imagery, consider what might attract the audience you are looking for.

Active, not passive

Make sure you always write your advertising in the active voice. So for example, always say 'We have an exciting new opportunity for an apprentice...' instead of 'an exciting

opportunity has arisen for an apprentice to join...'. The passive voice generally comes across as dull, stuffy and bureaucratic. The active voice is more personable.

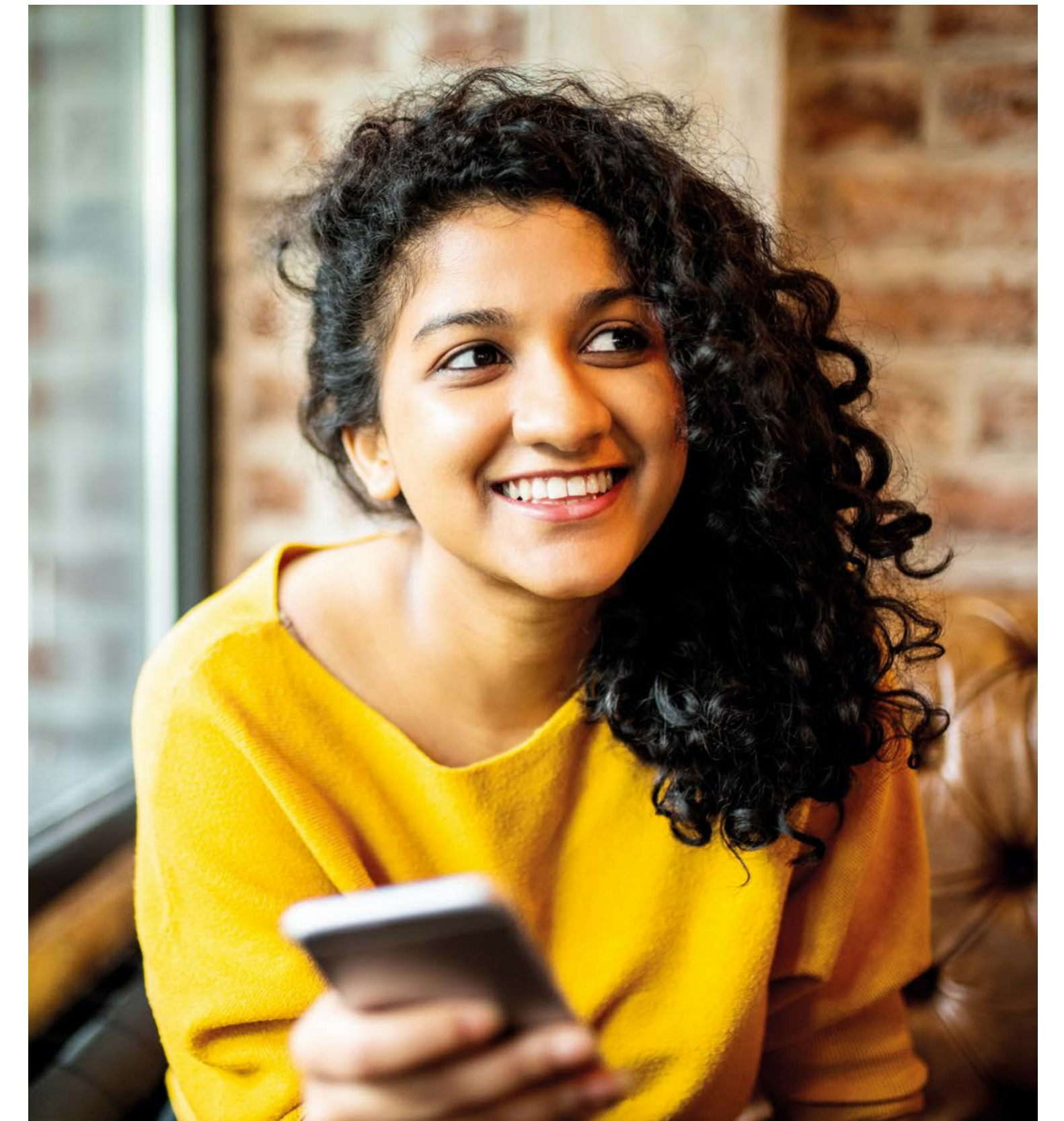
Creating a campaign timeline

Once all the recruitment collateral you need is ready, it's time to decide the order in which you are going to show what you've created to the world.

Perhaps you want to go all-in, all at once. Or you may prefer to drip-feed what you've created in phases, holding back certain campaign assets for later on.

Either way, it's a good idea to create a campaign timeline that shows what assets are rolling out and when.

It normally takes between 6-12 weeks from the planning stage to a successful appointment. However, obviously this will be longer if you are struggling to get the right applicants and need to re-advertise.



Advertising

Monitoring your response

Even if you are only intending to recruit one or two apprentices, it's useful to monitor your response to get a good idea about what has driven good quality applications and what hasn't worked so well.

Set targets in terms of the number of responses you want to choose from. Have a plan around what to do if you don't hit your target (consider changing where or how you advertise for example, or ask for feedback on your advertising from members of your target audience). Also have a plan if you receive too many. It's fine to close your recruitment campaign early, although you should make this possibility clear in your advertising.

EXAMPLE

"Closing date 22nd July 2023. Remember, we may stop accepting applications early if we receive a lot of interest, so we recommend you apply as soon as possible."

Having the ability to track the performance of each of your campaign assets will stand you in good stead for any future campaigns. For example, if your ads on Instagram or Facebook result in a lot of high quality applications, you might want to devote more attention (and budget) to your social media assets in future recruitment drives.



Selecting

Managing responses

Make sure all responses are collated and organised. It may be useful to set up a dedicated email address just for the purpose of receiving applications. It's good practice to send a brief email to each candidate confirming receipt and giving an idea of when they'll hear if they've progressed to the next stage.

Sifting

Once applications have closed you can begin sifting. First remove all applications that don't meet your basic requirements. From what's left you can create a shortlist of people you want to consider for interview. Interviews can be time-consuming, so don't try and interview too many people – but equally, if you interview too few, you run the risk of not having anyone accepting your offer and having to start again. Typical interview shortlists will be between 5 and 10.

Alternatively, if you have lots of great candidates, you could invite them to a group assessment or 'recruitment day'.

This could involve a mix of group and individual activities – like practical tasks and role plays – sessions to tell candidates more about the apprenticeship itself, as well as your 1-to-1 interviews.

When you have your shortlist prepared, it's good practice to contact all unsuccessful candidates to let them know they've not been shortlisted. If you can give some constructive feedback here, that's usually appreciated. This might seem like an unnecessary step, but the thing that candidates consistently raise as their number one complaint is the issue of 'ghosting' – not hearing back from employers they've applied to.

The same thing applies, but even more so, to candidates who have not succeeded at the interview stage. It's not just disheartening for candidates to receive no or impersonal feedback following an interview, but that disappointment can translate into a negative perception of your business. So always build in the time to give personal and considered feedback to all unsuccessful interviewees. Your feedback should highlight the positives as well as mentioning areas where they may need to focus more attention.



Selecting

How to run an interview

A successful interview is a conversation, rather than an interrogation. Make sure that your questions are designed to encourage this conversation. They should be simple, well structured, and open-ended – requiring a bit more than a simple yes or no.

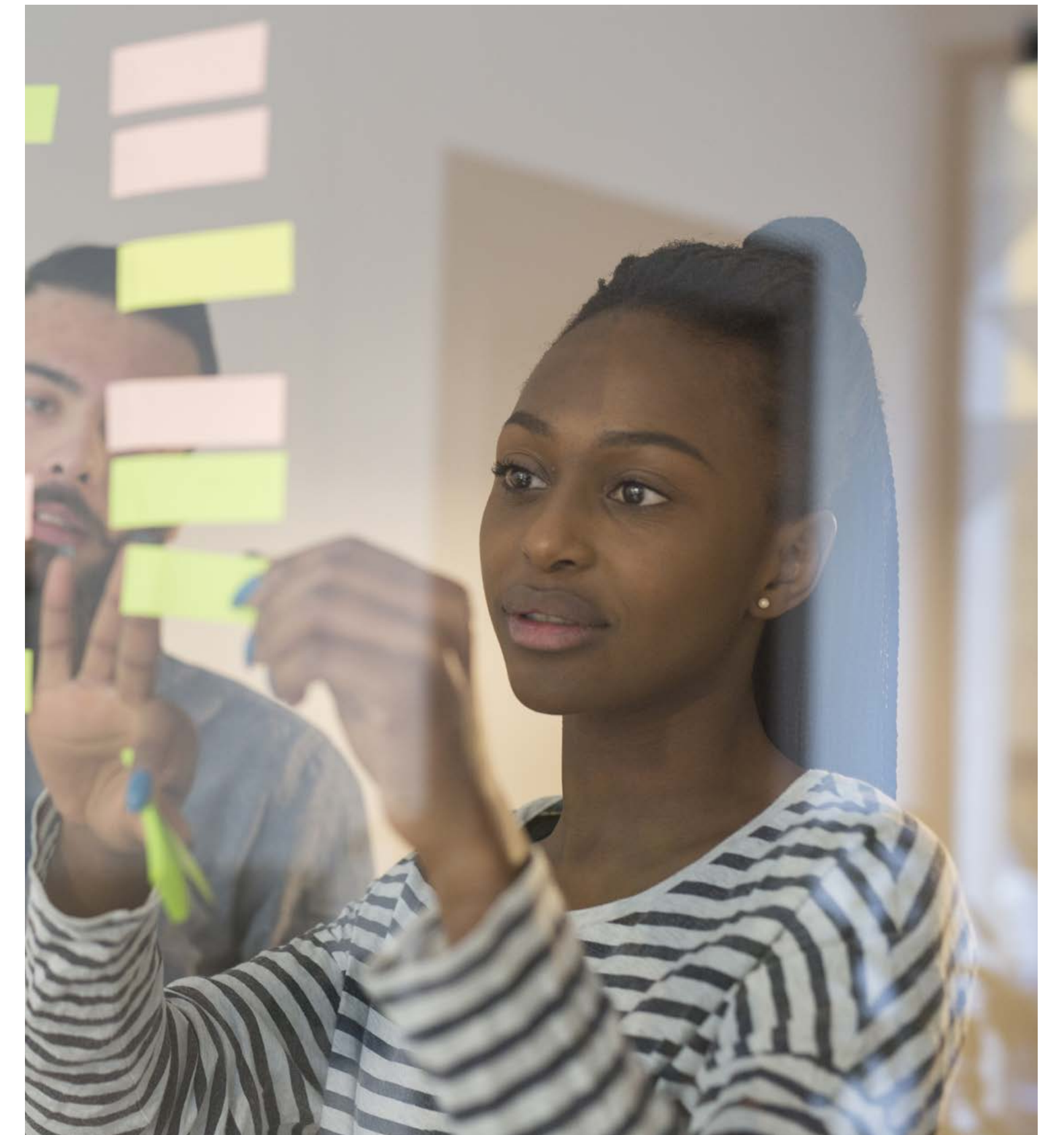
Keeping it fair

Consistency is key. Ensure all candidates are asked the same questions, in the same format. If you're looking to attract diverse candidates, consider developing a series of value-based questions. In other words, decide on the key values that your business looks for and then mark candidates against these. This will make it less likely that decisions will be made on educational or social background – attributes that may exclude more diverse candidates.

Make sure the communication is two-way. Encourage candidates to expand on their answers, and follow up on points of interest with a little background information on yourself or your company.

Remember that most of your interviewees are likely to have limited work and interview experience. Think about ways you can find out more about them, their values and their strengths in ways that aren't necessarily work-experienced based.

Finally, think about ways to make younger and less experienced candidates feel more comfortable and less nervous – this will help you get better interview performances from your candidates, hopefully making your decisions easier.



Selecting

Strong interview questions

You can group interview questions into four main categories: commitment, competency, career progression and values based.

Commitment questions are great for establishing a candidate's interest in the role and their commitment to apprenticeship training. This is an opportunity for candidates to show they have done their research about your company and tell you about their career aspirations and approach to learning.

An example: What do you hope to learn as an apprentice?

Competency questions are designed to give you an idea of your candidate's skills. With apprentice roles, these are unlikely to be technical, so focus on softer skills such as problem solving and taking initiative. Encourage your candidates to give examples based on their experiences in school, or outside hobbies and interests. This will help you determine how confident a candidate is in their own abilities, and how much guidance they might require if offered the role.

An example: Tell me about a time you solved a tricky problem. How did you go about it?

Career progression questions are designed to uncover the candidate's ambitions and aspirations. Apprenticeships are designed to kickstart and develop careers, so start as you mean to go on – in the interview discuss longer term career ambitions. This might give you some insight into how they see the apprenticeship opportunity: is the role just a job, or the start of an exciting career with your company?

An example: What do you want to achieve in your career over the next three years?

Values based questions are designed to help you find candidates who align with the values you prize in your business. Encourage your candidates to talk about the qualities they value and try and to embody themselves. This can help you find people who will be a good fit with your team.

An example: Tell me about a time when you helped someone in need.



Selecting

Strong interview questions

Sample questions

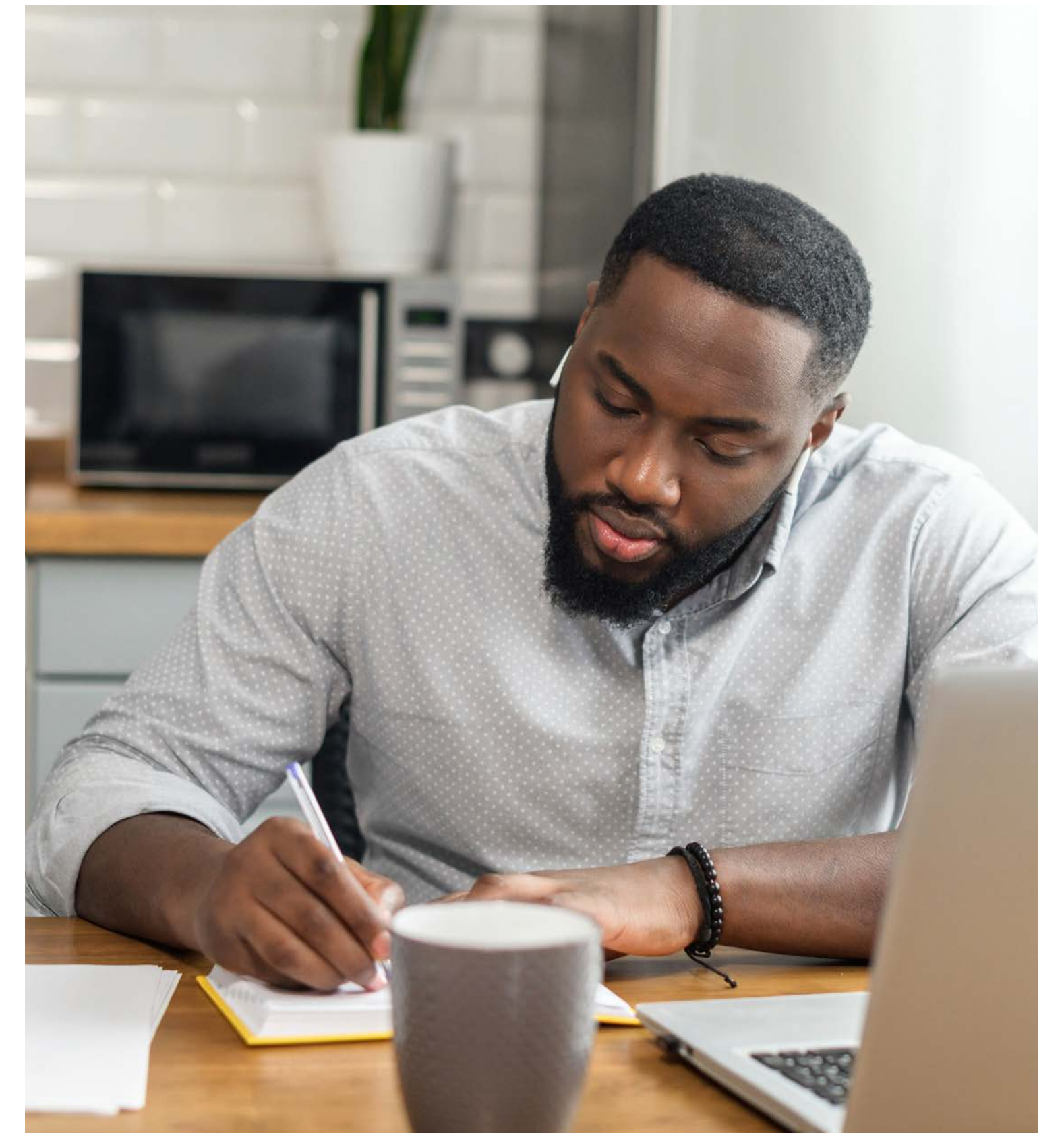
These are just for guidance – you should tailor your own to identify the skills, qualities and values you are looking for.

EXAMPLE

- Why have you chosen the apprenticeship route?
- Why are you interested in insurance? What excites you about the subject?
- Tell me about a time you resolved a problem at home or in college/school, how did you overcome the obstacle?
- What aspects of insurance would you like to learn more about?
- What do you know about our company and our products or services?
- One of our most important values as a company is [x]. Can you give me an example of a time you demonstrated this recently?

EXAMPLE CONTINUED

- When studying, what is your approach to deadlines? What steps do you take to manage your time and get things done?
- Do you like to learn new things and why?
- Can you give an example of when you had to use your initiative to achieve a goal?
- Where do you see yourself in three years' time?



Selecting

Making an offer and contracts

Once your interviews are completed, you should create a shortlist of preferred candidates. This is important, even if you've a clear preference for the position. Remember that your preferred candidate may have other offers that they are considering as well, so you may need to choose the next best candidate on your shortlist.

A formal offer should be sent in writing. Once the candidate accepts, they'll need to sign an apprentice agreement (made with your business and Davies Group) to make it official. Then, you'll need to arrange a contract of employment with them.

Aviva can walk you through everything that needs to happen at this stage.



Onboarding

Before the first day

First impressions count – and that goes both ways. Make sure you're ready for your apprentice and all set to show them how welcoming, organised and efficient you are. The onboarding process for apprentices shouldn't differ too much from other new recruits. Just keep in mind they may need a little more guidance and structure.

Clarify the start date

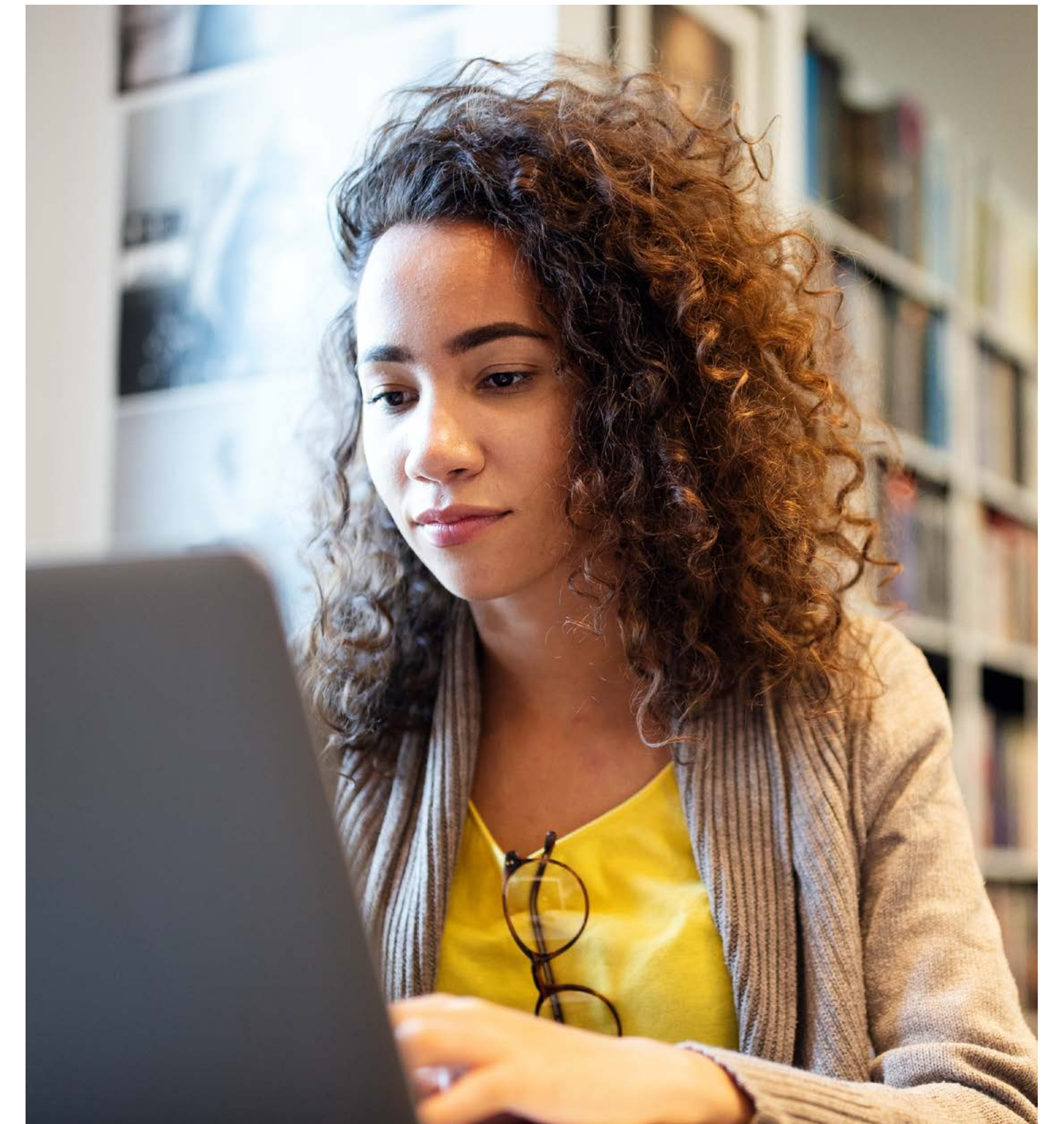
Clearly state the date and time you want your apprentice to start on their first day. You may decide to ask them to arrive a little later than normal to allow everyone to get settled and set up for the day first.

Preparing your apprentice for work

Then it's time to cover the basics. Make sure your apprentice can access your building and let them know who they ask for when they arrive. Let them know about any car parking or parking restrictions. You'll also need to fill them in on working hours for the week. Remember, if your apprentice has just left school or college, they will be used to shorter days and potentially more breaks throughout the day. Be clear on hours and any breaks allowed.

Also bear in mind that your apprentice may have no experience of working in an office. So you should provide clear details of your dress code. Where possible, provide examples of what is and isn't acceptable.

Finally, be sure to remind your apprentice of any documents they need to bring (such as proof of ID and address, or any relevant qualifications).



Onboarding

On the first day

On the first day your apprentice is likely to be feeling quite anxious, so avoid the temptation to overload them with too much information. Here are some key things to cover on the first day:

Make sure you introduce them to the team and also give a brief overview of their role. Show them their desk and how to access their computer and emails – spend time explaining how to log in or get access to the work computer, and make sure they take notes so they can do this themselves the next time. It's often a good idea to take them out for lunch on their first day, to make sure they're settling in well.

Getting to know their desk

You may need to give your apprentice some help with office software like Outlook, Word and Excel. For example, don't expect them to know how to use Outlook. Most will be used to using email providers such as Gmail and Yahoo.

Your apprentice may well have never worked in an office before, so be sure to share any office etiquette guidelines that they may not be aware of. This can be anything from answering colleagues' phones when they're away from their desk, to taking turns to make the tea. Give them any information they need to fit in with the teams as quickly as possible.

Make sure you have made all relevant company policies and procedures clear and provided your apprentice with written copies, if you have them.

Explaining their role

It can really help to create a timetable. This way, your apprentice will know what you expect them to be doing on a day-to-day basis. Establishing a weekly planner for the apprentice can be particularly helpful in managing their (and your) time. It is important to set a clear schedule for your apprentices so they know what they should be doing and when it should be done. Keep in mind many have not worked before and may benefit from a structured approach to work and learning, at least at the beginning of their apprenticeship.



Onboarding

Your apprentice training schedule

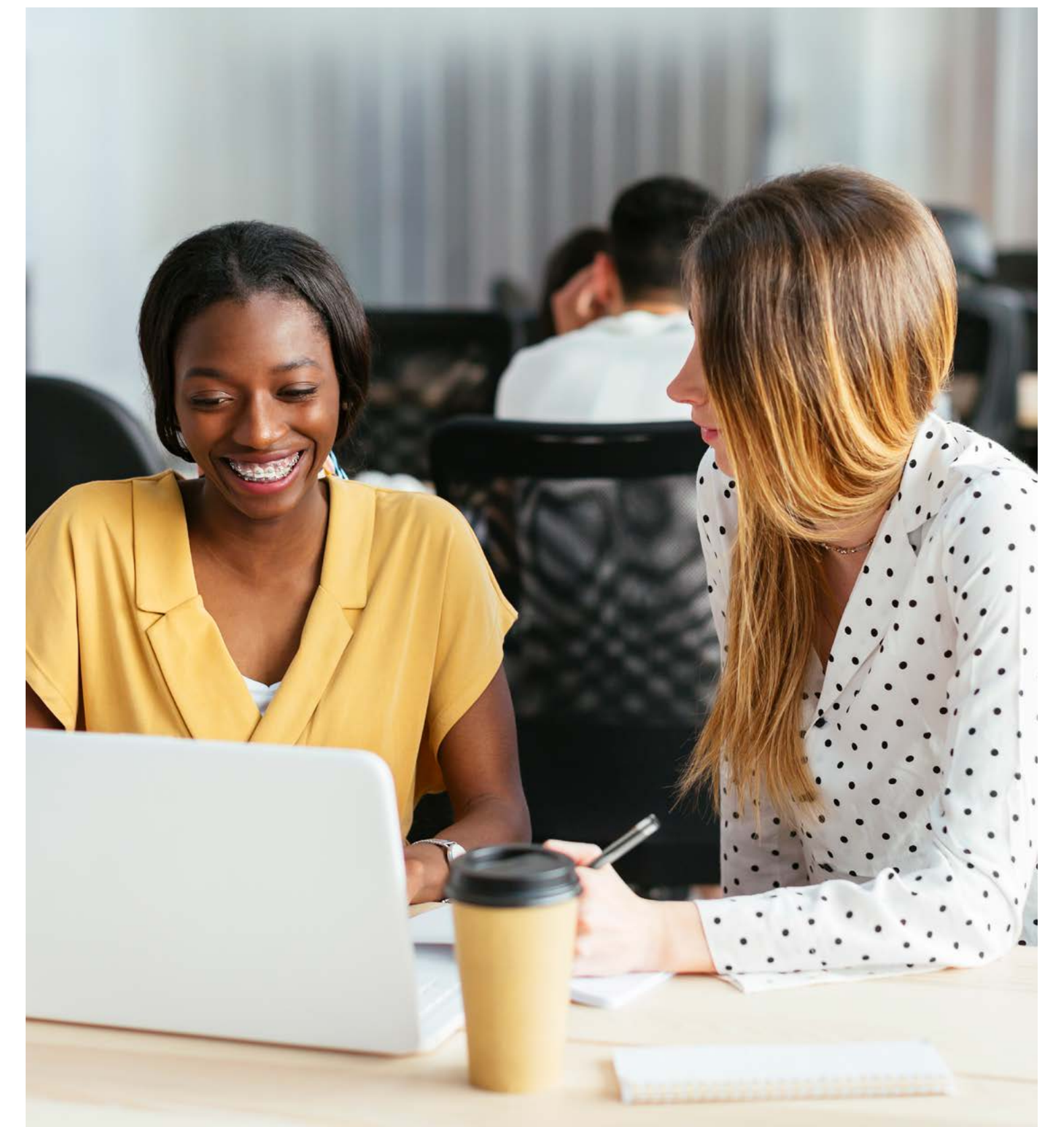
Once your apprentice has had a chance to settle in, go over their training and plan out their programme to ensure they're meeting the requirements of the apprenticeship. You can incorporate a range of different training methods including workshops, shadowing or online learning.

Workshops are a good way to expose your apprentice to some of the technical knowledge they will need to learn. Shadowing on the other hand is a great way for apprentices to experience different roles. During their apprenticeship you should provide several opportunities to shadow different team members in different roles so they can build better experience across the business – perhaps spending a week in each department for example? Online training is more flexible, allowing your apprentice to learn at their own pace. If you offer online

training, such as the Aviva Development Zone, it's still important to set deadlines and monitor your apprentice's progress.

And finally

One of the most important things you can do is manage expectations – not just of the team, but your own expectations too. Be clear from the outset of what you expect from your apprentice. You may also find it useful to set objectives and outcomes for each piece of work in the short term to help guide them in the right direction.



Your step-by-step timeline

Now you know what you need to do, it's time to get going. Here's a reminder of all the important steps, with some approximate timings.

