

GUIDE TO COMPLETE YOUR 2026 ENTRY

TIPS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



START EARLY
You can log in as many times as you like until midnight Sunday 12th April 2026 to complete your entry.

WELCOME TO THE 2026 APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION!

THE ENTRY PROCESS

FIRST, CHECK YOU'RE ELIGIBLE

- Currently employed by/or contracted to a building firm or a builder at the time of the regional competition being judged.
- You may only enter the competition a maximum of two times, provided you are not a national winner the prior year – in which case you may not enter again.
- You have completed at least 18 months of your National Certificate in Carpentry and still be an apprentice at the time of entries close on 12th April 2026.

THEN, APPLY

Update your details –Sections 1–4, 8–12

- Personal contact details, photo & site visit location
- Employer Information and contact details
- Apprenticeship start date and confirmation of employment until June 2026
- Training Advisor Information, Company and contact details

Upload – Sections 5–7

- Information for Employer and Training Advisor References
- Your Project Submission – completed and checked
- Any supporting documents for your Why Me Section (optional)

CONTACT

- Your Apprentice of the Year Regional Coordinator – they will check your entry is complete and let you know if there is anything more to do at this stage. Make sure you send them a copy of your documents as requested on the entry site.
- Give your Employer and Training Advisors a chase-up to get your references done if you haven't got them uploaded already.

View our full entry terms and conditions on our website [here](#).

APPLYING AND NAVIGATING THE ENTRY SITE

CLICK!

You can work through each of the sections of your entry simply by clicking on the boxes

FINISHED SECTIONS

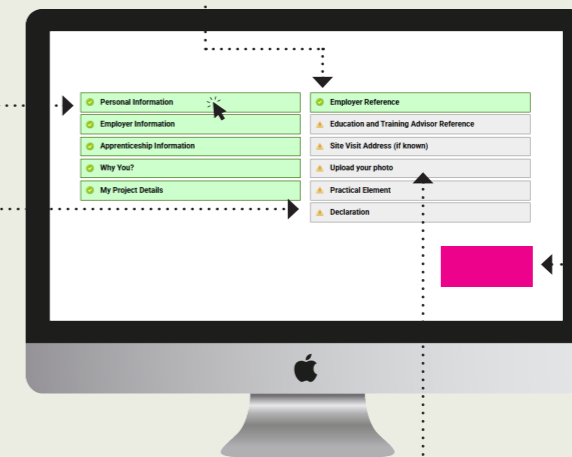
Once you have completed all the fields in each section, the box will change to green, and a tick will appear, so you know which sections you've finished

UPDATE CHANGES

Remember to click the update button after ANY changes

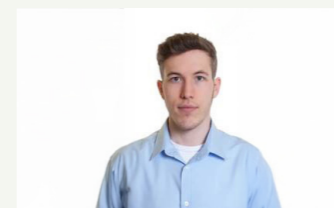
PRINT A COPY

If you want to print your entry out for yourself, go to the Declaration section



DO:

- Provide a head and shoulders photo of yourself
- Take the photo against a plain wall
- Take the photo in landscape (this photo will be used in the awards presentation)



DON'T:

- No hats or sunglasses
- No selfies
- No group shots
- No photos holding props (i.e. fish, beer etc)



OWNED BY



PRINCIPAL PARTNER



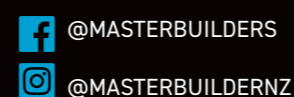
EVENT PARTNERS



REGIONAL SPONSOR



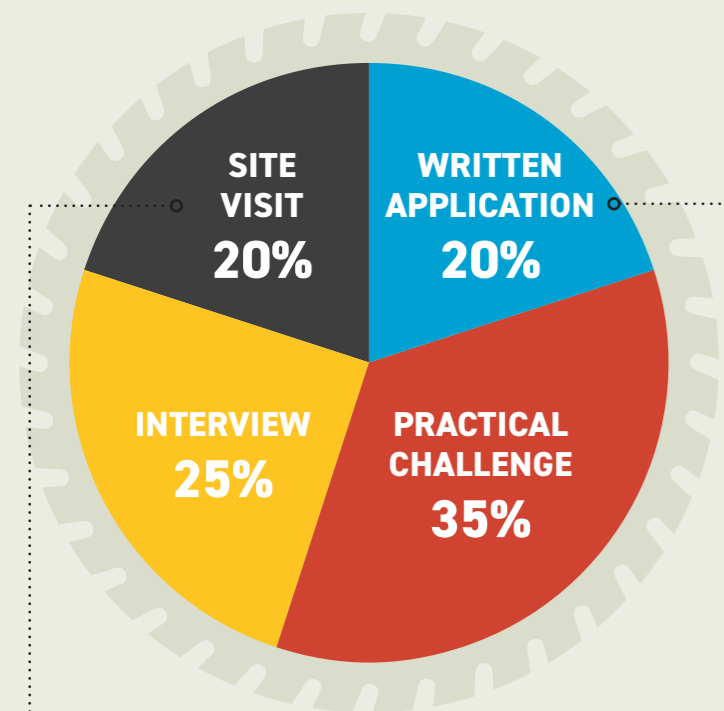
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HOW IT'S SCORED



The competition is scored across four sections, these are combined to give you your total score.



SITE VISIT

This ideally will not be a house people are living in, you will need to confirm access.

WRITTEN APPLICATION

PART 1 WHY YOU? Questions Format (NEW for 2026) 35 points out of 100 for your written application

Tell us what sets you apart from other apprentices. Write about talents like your leadership skills, skills on the tools, your self-motivation and initiative, communication skills and how you work with workmates and clients. You might want to talk about what plans you have for your future career and where you hope your apprenticeship will take you. You are also able to upload supporting documents or a write Why me to the system if you wish to do this instead.

PART 2 MY PROJECT DETAILS 65 points out of 100 for your written application

This section is only for your project submission. Provide details of a project that you are currently working on or have completed while you were training (try to make it a project that the judges can view for your site visit should you progress to Stage 2 of the competition – that way you can tell a story the entire way through the judging process).

BEFORE YOU START

Plan: Check out some of our past winners' project submissions to get an idea of what you are aiming for [here](#).

Prep your tools: Pick a platform that you are comfortable working with to begin your entry – Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Google Docs or other document platforms (entries must be in virtual form). Ensure you will be comfortable knowing how to upload this in a Word or PDF format before you begin.

Check out our templates available if you want to use these to format your entry.

YOU SHOULD TALK ABOUT:

- The advanced skills and learning you used on the project.
- The initiative you showed following plans and working to code specs.
- You can include photos and plans.
- You will need to have your employer's permission, and you might need to get the permission of your client.

QUESTIONS

Don't hesitate to give us a call. Find your local Apprentice of the Year Coordinator for your region [here](#) or email us on AQY@masterbuilder.org.nz. We want you to enter and succeed!



NEXT STEPS



ADVICE FROM JUDGES

- ✓ **MAKE YOUR ENTRY DETAILED BUT CONCISE**
Don't drag on your points for the sake of a long entry – try to keep your entry to around no more than 10 pages unless necessary. Less is more – focus on the specifics.
- ✓ **DON'T RELY ON PICTURES**
Pictures should be supplementary/supportive to your written text but not used as a replacement for your written description or story telling.
- ✓ **BE CREATIVE**
Think outside the box to stand out.
- ✓ **AUTHENTICITY**
Your entry and the tone should reflect who you are.
- ✓ **GET A SECOND OPINION**
Get help from a family member, employer or colleague; get them to read over your entry and give you feedback.
- ✓ **FOCUS ON PERSONAL WORK**
Treat judges like your client – sell yourself not the job.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ **IT'S ABOUT YOU**
Judges want to hear about you, your work, learnings and your goals through your submission. Tell us your personal story and look ahead to share your future plans/goals.
- ✓ **VISUAL AIDS**
Use pictures to tell your story – couple these to support your written text.
- ✓ **KNOW YOUR STUFF**
What make a good apprentice? Convince us.
- ✓ **TELLING THE STORY**
Remember to use a project that the judges can view on your site visit – you can reference work that you can later show them (if successful).

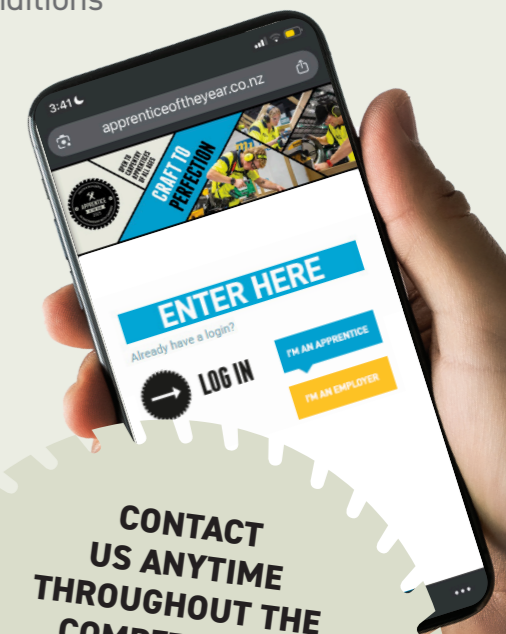
FINAL NOTES

- Once your entry is complete you can check out some of the practical challenges from past regional event to see what you will be building at the practical challenge in June on our website [here](#).
- Your regional Apprentice of the Year Coordinator will contact you if they need anything more from you.
- **Relax and pat yourself on the back for completing part one of the first stage of the Apprentice of the Year competition.**

View our full entry terms and conditions on our website [here](#).

YOU'RE READY!

[CLICK HERE FOR THE ENTRY PORTAL ON OUR WEBSITE TO BEGIN!](#)
GOOD LUCK!



CONTACT US ANYTIME THROUGHOUT THE COMPETITION!
Find your local Apprentice of the Year Coordinator for your region [here](#) or email us on Aoy@masterbuilder.org.nz with any questions or concerns.

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