

You're hired!

Eight men, eight women, Sir Alan Sugar. Ten thousand people auditioned for this year's series of The Apprentice. Could you be one of them next year?

From housewife to internet entrepreneur, waiter to quantum physicist, this year's contestants on the BBC reality show are wildly different. Aged 23 to 36, they include two single mums and one would-be spy. Busy people with busy lives and one thing in common - the desire to succeed.

Learning a new skill or getting a qualification can improve your job prospects and boost your confidence. If you're 18 and over and living in Scotland, you could get up to £200 towards the cost of learning with ILA (Individual Learning Account) Scotland. The money is not a loan, so you don't need to pay it back.

And from this summer, the upper income limit for the £200 scheme will be raised, from £15,000 to £18,000 – meaning even more people in Scotland will be able to get more funding to help pay for more courses. Those who earn more than £18,000 will still be able to apply for £100 towards the cost of learning.

Leadership, management, business, communications, languages, retail skills, customer service, computer skills – there's a vast range of approved courses, running all over Scotland.

Give yourself the advantage in a job interview. Take a chance on hearing: "You're not a lightweight. You're hired."

Further information, including details of local courses and learning providers, is available from ILA Scotland free on **0808 100 1090** or at www.ilascotland.org.uk