

# Apprentice of the Year



## 2026 Entry Form

The **Apprentice of the Year Award** celebrates an outstanding apprentice across our industries who demonstrates dedication, and passion for their craft.

This award recognises an apprentice who is not only excelling in their training but also making a positive impact in their workplace and in the industry.

### Prize

**\$2500**  
towards professional  
development



A certificate  
and  
engraved trophy

### Timeline

- 14 August **Entries close**
- September **Finalists announced**
- November **Winners announced at HITO Graduation and Awards ceremonies**
  - Central** Wellington 1 Nov
  - Southern** Christchurch 8 Nov
  - Northern** Auckland 22 Nov

## Entrant Details

Full name

Workplace Name

Address

City

Postcode

Region

Northern

Central

Southern

Phone

Email

Are you a current HITO apprentice?  Yes  No

Instagram Handle (optional)

## Rules of Entry

By entering you agree to abide by the competition rules:

- Entrants must be a current HITO Hairdressing, Barbering or Beauty Therapy Apprentice
- Entrants must be meeting HITO progression requirements and have a current training plan.
- The judges' decisions are final, and judges will be unable to provide individual feedback.
- All information received and submitted is confidential.
- Apprenticeships fees must be up to date.
- Entry form, written reference, release form and submission are **due by 14 August 2026**. No entries will be accepted after this date.
- Finalists will be announced in September 2026. Due to the number of entries, only finalists will be notified of the status of their entry via email.
- The winner will be announced at the 3 regional HITO Graduation and Awards ceremonies.

# How to enter

## Entry Criteria

To enter the competition submit a **VIDEO** or **WRITTEN ENTRY** and answer the following questions.



**TOP TIP** The judges will judge on the 6 topics below.

### Share your passion for your craft

Explain who or what inspires you.



### Skills and growth

Showcase a training skill you have learned and found difficult and explain how you overcame this challenge.

*Demonstrate the skill alongside a model, colleague or customer*



### Professionalism and customer service

Showcase features of your day-to-day in the workplace.

*How do you ensure every customer has an amazing experience?*



### Engagement with HITO and your apprenticeship experience

What has your HITO apprenticeship meant to you?



### X-factor - What makes you the best?

Explain what motivates you to excel and what makes you stand out as an apprentice?



### Future goals and industry impact

Tell us what are your future goals?

How do you plan to make a difference in the industry?



Please submit a high resolution, horizontal (landscape) photo of yourself with your entry.

The video must not be any longer than **4 minutes**. Written entries must not exceed **1500 words**.

## Please note

The video can be created on any platform and does not have to be publicly shared but must be sent through to HITO in high resolution.

Your video should be engaging and highlight your skills, expertise, and passion for the industry. You can use a mixture of visual and audio overlay, choose the format that you believe will best capture your apprenticeship experience.

Finalists will be asked to sign a release form. The winner's submission may be presented at the HITO Graduation and Awards ceremonies.

## References

One written workplace reference is required. Please ensure references are from your employer, senior stylists, clients and/or someone who knows you well.

References should reflect the qualities we look for in the Apprentice of the Year, verifying the statements by the apprentice.

### References provided to answer the question below:

*Why should your apprentice win the HITO Apprentice of the Year award?*

## Judging Process

At all stages, judges score independently of other judges.

- **Stage one** of judging is carried out by HITO representatives. HITO will verify your apprenticeship learning progress and achievements upon receipt of entry.
- **Stage two** of judging is carried out by hair, beauty, and barbering industry representatives. During this stage, a shortlist of finalists is identified.

## Submissions

All entries must be received by **Friday 14 August 2026** and accompanied by a completed entry form.

Please submit your entry by sending the file to **marketing@hito.org.nz** with your full name stated in the subject line.

### File too large to email?

If the video file is too large, we recommend using **WeTransfer.com** to create a link. Please submit your downloaded link to **marketing@hito.org.nz**



## Is your submission complete?

Your completed entry should include ✓



Completed entry form



4-minute video or written entry



1x written reference



Photo of you high resolution + landscape

## Have a question?

Please email **marketing@hito.org.nz** if you have any questions regarding the entry criteria and format of the entry.