



# Work, earn, learn

Higher and degree apprenticeships  
learners' guide

University of  
Hertfordshire **UH**

**An apprenticeship is a work-based programme that combines full-time work with an industry-designed qualification. It provides you with the skills to be highly employable and offers the best of both worlds; a rewarding job, a salary and a recognised qualification. You will be employed for a minimum of 30 hours per week in the workplace and spend 6 hours of your week dedicated to off-the-job training.**

The University provides higher and degree apprenticeships which can be studied from levels 5 to 7. Level 5 is equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma or a Foundation degree, level 6 is equivalent to a Bachelor's degree, and level 7 is equivalent to a Master's degree. Apprenticeships take between one and five years to complete.

This handbook is designed to tell you everything you need to know about apprenticeships; from what criteria you need to meet in order to become a learner, through to the support you'll receive, to ensure you get the best out of the apprenticeship. If you haven't found an apprenticeship with an employer, you can search at [www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship) for more details. We also recommend checking company websites.

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# Learner requirements

## To study for an apprenticeship at the University, we require you to:

- Be employed with a contract that lasts for the full duration of the programme.
- Have the right to work in England.
- Confirm you have not studied an equivalent programme before commencement of the programme you are applying to.
- Be at least 18 years old.
- Have achieved GCSE mathematics and English Language at grade 4/C or equivalent, and provide evidence of that achievement.
- Meet the University's specific entry requirements for your chosen programme. This may include academic requirements and also relevant experience.
- Confirm your commitment to develop the knowledge, skills and behaviour required to achieve the apprenticeship.
- Notify the University and your employer of any change in circumstances which may impact on the apprenticeship, and keep a record of your off-the-job learning.



# The recruitment process

- The first step in the process involves your employer putting you forward as a potential apprentice to the University's Apprenticeships and Professional Programmes Team via this [form](#).
- A member of our Apprenticeships and Professional Programmes Team will then have an informal discussion with you and your employer to discuss your suitability for the programme.
- You will then be invited to complete an online Learner Eligibility Form and your employer will complete an Employer Instruction Form.
- Once it's agreed that you are, in principle, suitable for your chosen programme, your employer will complete and sign the legal documentation.
- You will be invited by the University to formally apply for the course.
- The University will assess your academic eligibility. If you meet the requirements, you will be invited to attend an interview.
- As long as your application demonstrates that you have met the relevant entry criteria, the University will make you an offer to study on the programme, subject to completion of all necessary legal documentation and any other programme-specific requirements.
- If you need support with your application, get in touch with the employer or the Apprenticeships and Professional Programmes Team and we can support.



# Support for you and your employer

## Learner support

We are committed to providing all students with outstanding levels of support. Learners will have ongoing academic and pastoral support from our tutors. As well as access to a wide range of professional on campus services, including:

- Student wellbeing: counselling, disability and mental health services.
- Disability support.
- A multi-faith chaplaincy.
- Students' Union.
- Hertfordshire Sports Village.

Learners will also have access to our extensive Learning Resource Centres, and StudyNet, our online virtual learning environment where they can access teaching materials, resources and assignments.

We expect employers to provide as much support as possible to their learner when they're in the workplace, mainly through their mentors. This should include ensuring they have the time and resources needed to complete their assignments, and offering advice and guidance.

## Work based learning tutor

The work based learning tutor is the first point of contact for the employer and learner. They will be responsible for maintaining communication with the employer and learner, and will be expected to:

- Hold regular progress review meetings with the learner and the employer.
- Discuss and set goals with the employer for the learner to complete in the workplace to achieve learning outcomes.
- Visit the learner's workplace regularly to review and monitor their work in practice.
- Feedback to relevant University staff to address any matters that may arise.
- Ensure the learner updates and maintains their e-portfolio.

## Programme leader

The programme leader is a member of academic staff who has overall responsibility for the apprenticeship programme. They will be responsible for:

- The day-to-day management of the programme, including supervision of any personal tutors.
- Arranging support for the learner and counselling individuals, particularly with regard to academic progress.
- Leading the dissemination of experience and good practice across the programme.
- Taking a pro-active role with the monitoring of academic standards.
- Working with learner representatives to promote active learner participation in the management of the programme.

## Employer support

Relationships and support are a key factor in a successful and enjoyable apprenticeship journey. A strong relationship with good communication and support between the employer, learner and the University is vital, and we are dedicated to providing that support. You will be introduced to an work based learning tutor who will support you throughout.

# Supporting off-the-job learning

**Off-the-job learning is taken outside of day-to-day work duties and must focus on achieving the apprenticeship. The minimum requirement is an average of 6 hours per week across the duration of the programme.**

There are regular discussions between the line manager, the University, and the learner, known as progress review meetings, to decide at what point during the apprenticeship the training is best delivered.

Off-the-job learning will include the time the learner spends on University learning, some of which will be timetabled, and some will involve independent study. Some programmes have regular teaching sessions, and others make use of blocks of teaching or practical elements.

The remainder of time to be spent on off-the-job learning can be scheduled flexibly throughout the apprenticeship to meet the needs of the business and the learner.



## Learning the theory of professional knowledge

- Classes and workshops
- Lectures
- Online learning
- Webinars
- Masterclasses
- Relevant reading
- Research
- Lunch and learn sessions
- Role playing
- Simulation exercises

## Learning the skills and behaviours

- Job shadowing
- Mentoring
- Attending meetings
- Project work
- Professional networks
- Events
- Competitions
- Visits to other departments
- Visits to wider parts of the organisation
- Visits to industry

## Learning the theory of professional knowledge

- Writing self-assessments
- Writing assignments
- Reflective journals
- Revision
- Peer discussions
- Preparation for assessments
- Preparation for exams
- One-to-one tutorials that contain guided learning or support

# The learner journey



## Recruitment

Interested applicants will undergo a robust application process to define their suitability to undertake the desired apprenticeship programme. This includes checks that they meet Education Skills Funding Assessment eligibility criteria and academic entry-level criteria for the relevant programme. This step also involves completion of relevant apprenticeship documents, such as an agreement form with the employer, commitment statement and an initial needs assessment.



## Initial needs assessment

Before the start of their programme, the learner will take part in an initial needs assessment with the University, which may also involve their line manager or workplace mentor.

The aim of this is to agree a skills, development and training plan, for each learner, which will be captured in the commitment statement.

It's also an opportunity for your business to specify any additional training requirements, for example, if you need your employee to learn a specific technology or computer programming language.

## Induction

At the start of each programme, we run induction sessions for learners and their employers, where we'll explain the programme in more detail, as well as introduce our facilities and support services.



## Individual learning plan

Your learner will have an individual learning plan that requires them to keep a summary record of their learning and the hours spent doing off-the-job learning. Learners also need to collate evidence of their progress towards achieving the apprenticeship standard. The plan is agreed by all parties and updated regularly through progress reviews.

## Teaching and learning

The learner studies at the University on day/block release, through our virtual learning environment StudyNet, and through their normal duties in the workplace.

As an employer, you should make sure your learner has the time, support and resources to complete their assignments as part of their off-the-job learning.

## Progress review meetings

Reviews are a formal requirement of the apprenticeship programme and take place quarterly as a minimum. Progress review meetings are key opportunities for the employer, learner and the work based tutor to review the learner's progress. The meeting should cover and review their competencies, evidenced development, and off-the-job training. Additional support needs should also be identified, where applicable, through individualised action plans, to help the learner achieve their full potential.



## Assessments

Learning is assessed by tutor set assignments; typically through coursework such as reports, and practical assessments such as presentations.

You may want to discuss ideas for your assignments with your employer to find out whether you can carry out your assignments in the workplace or use workplace materials, taking into account confidential or commercially sensitive information.

The final stage of the apprenticeship is the End-Point Assessment (EPA). Some apprenticeship standards require the employer to be involved in the EPA process. Learners must complete the EPA in order to pass the apprenticeship and achieve their certificate.



## Gateway requirements

The employer, learner and the University must all confirm and agree that the learner is fully competent and ready to undertake a formal End-Point Assessment (EPA). This review must be scheduled in good time to confirm booking arrangements with an EPA organisation if the apprenticeship requires a separate EPA.

An apprenticeship is not completed until the learner undertakes (and ultimately passes) the EPA. For integrated apprenticeships this is included within the achievement and awarding of the degree itself, but for apprenticeships with a separate EPA, the learner must pass the required element of the on-programme delivery first before undertaking their EPA with the selected EPA organisation.

The EPA acts as an independent and impartial assessment to verify that the learner has met all the competencies (knowledge, skills and behaviours) entailed by the apprenticeship standard.



## Completion

The completion of an apprenticeship is a key milestone to be celebrated. As a University and apprenticeship training provider, we take particular care and pride in enabling success and career progression of our learners, and continue to nurture a relationship with them when they graduate.



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