



LIVERPOOL
HOPE
UNIVERSITY

1844

STAFF APPRENTICESHIP

SCHEME GUIDELINES

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APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships are comprehensive work-based training programmes lasting a year or more.

More employers are realising that optimal learning occurs within the workplace, where individuals engage in a blend of genuine job-related encounters and experiences. This approach empowers them to make decisions, tackle challenges, and derive insights from errors. Employees also derive knowledge from their interactions and relationships, including coaching, and collaborative learning.

Apprenticeships align perfectly with this hands-on learning philosophy, integrating practical experiences with formal learning components in their programmes. As the significance of workplace-based education grows, apprenticeships emerge as a fitting solution for holistic skills development.

For current employees, apprenticeships offer structured development and career pathways for those seeking alternatives to traditional education and present a cost-free way to acquire a qualification and apply new skills in a practical setting, enabling them to learn while they earn. With a diverse range of programmes on available, individuals can explore opportunities, whether it is in general business and management or honing specialised skills to excel in their current role.

THE BENEFITS OF APPRENTICESHIPS

Staff retention: Apprenticeships attract those seeking development-focused employers, yielding engaged and satisfied employees who stay longer with the employer.

Productivity: Apprenticeships cultivate motivated, skilled, and qualified team members. Many apprentices are keen to apply what they have learned in their apprenticeship programme, resulting in new and innovative ideas.

Skill Development: Apprenticeships equip staff with essential, up-to-date skills, aligning with technological advancements and contributing to workforce and succession planning.

Tailored Training: Apprenticeships can be tailored to the needs of the organisation or team and specific job roles, with start times spanning the year.

Leadership: Apprenticeships pave the way for leadership roles, aiding succession planning and propelling career advancement.

Cost Savings: Apprenticeship training and assessment costs are already covered by the apprenticeship levy, minimising expenses for departments and the learner.

HOW ARE APPRENTICESHIPS FUNDED?

Large employers, whose pay bill exceeds £3 million, contribute to the apprenticeship levy. This levy amount is collected by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC), much like income tax and

National Insurance, and these funds are set aside for apprenticeship training. When it is time to use these funds, the University taps into them through a Digital Apprenticeship Service account and pays the apprenticeship training providers.

This means apprentices and their departments do not have to worry about extra training costs. And importantly, there is no cut in the apprentice's salary because their job contract stays the same.

APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

There is a broad range of apprenticeship programmes available to Liverpool Hope staff, covering a wide range of subject areas and industries. You can find a comprehensive selection of the current offer on: <https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch>

The aim in the first instance is to focus on developing leaders and aspiring leaders which fits into the University strategy.

The apprenticeship must be linked to the apprentice's current role for them to succeed. There are exceptions; for example, if an administrator wants to complete an apprenticeship in Project Management, then their manager will need to confirm exposure and opportunities to project management for the duration of the apprenticeship.

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

If you have any questions on courses, please contact the Staff Development Advisor.

1. Usually this would be discussed at Performance Reviews as part of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The staff member identifies the apprenticeship programme that they are interested in and meets with their line manager to discuss and agree to proceed with the application. Both parties read the relevant sections of the staff apprenticeship scheme handbook.
2. The staff member completes the first stage of the application, the application form, this must be signed by the line manager with a supporting statement which will confirm that they are happy for you to have the 20% time off to complete your studies.
3. The Staff Development Advisor will organise an informal meeting with the applicant (and line manager if required) to answer any questions and confirm eligibility and suitability.
4. The Staff Development Advisor contacts the training provider to confirm details. They will confirm training dates, delivery method, location, end point assessment, and funding allocation. Please note that this process can take a few months.
5. The Staff Development Advisor introduces the training provider to the staff member for initial assessments and confirmations.

START DATES

Some programmes have flexible start dates, allowing apprentices to begin within 8-10 weeks with post funding approval. Meanwhile, others follow quarterly cycles, and higher-level apprenticeships typically feature two intakes per year.

ELIGIBILITY: WHO CAN COMPLETE AN APPRENTICESHIP?

There is a broad range of apprenticeship programmes available to Liverpool Hope staff, covering a wide range of subject areas and industries. You can find a comprehensive selection of the current offer on the <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

The apprenticeship must be linked to the apprentice's current role for them to succeed. There are exceptions; for example, if an administrator wants to complete an apprenticeship in Project Management, then their manager will need to confirm exposure and opportunities to project management for the duration of the apprenticeship. Staff cannot complete an Apprenticeship in a course that they have an equivalent qualification in i.e. If you have a degree in Finance, you can't complete an apprenticeship in Finance Level 6 or below, but you can in a different subject.

Levels of apprenticeship available

Intermediate apprenticeships (level 2)

They're entry-level apprenticeships that provide individuals with basic skills and knowledge in their chosen field. They are typically available in industries such as construction, retail, and hospitality.

Advanced apprenticeships (level 3)

Are more suitable for those with some work experience, designed for individuals who have already completed an intermediate apprenticeship and are looking to further their skills and knowledge. They are available in a variety of industries and typically require a higher level of responsibility and experience.

Higher apprenticeships (level 4 & 5)

Are designed for those looking to take their careers to the next level. They provide individuals the opportunity to specialize in a specific area of their chosen field. This type of apprenticeship is available in industries such as engineering, finance, and management, and typically leads to higher-level positions and greater earning potential.

Apprenticeship units (level 4 & 5)

The UK government has recently introduced a new type of apprenticeship training called "**Apprenticeship Units.**" These are much shorter and more flexible than traditional apprenticeships. They are part of the new Growth and Skills Levy reforms introduced through Skills England.

The 3 new AI Apprenticeship Units

1. AI Strategy & Opportunity (AU0009)

This teaches:

- how businesses can use AI
- identifying AI opportunities
- AI business planning
- AI investment decisions

You learn how AI can improve productivity and services.

2. AI Adoption, Procurement & Governance (AU0010)

This focuses on:

- choosing AI systems
- buying AI tools safely
- AI ethics
- data protection
- governance and compliance

This is about using AI responsibly inside organisations.

3. AI Delivery & Organisational Transformation (AU0011)

This teaches:

- implementing AI projects
- managing organisational change
- workforce impact
- AI project delivery
- monitoring AI systems

It focuses on real-world rollout of AI in businesses.

Most AI units are:

- around 30 guided learning hours
- completed over 4–8 weeks part time
- Level 5 standard (roughly foundation degree level)

Example courses: <https://tessgroup.co.uk/ai-leadership-apprenticeship-unit>

Degree apprenticeships (level 6)

As the name suggests, provide an opportunity to gain a degree while working and earning a wage. They combine on-the-job experience with the opportunity to earn a bachelor's degree.

If you are interested in an apprenticeship, please contact the Staff Development Advisor who will help you source a suitable provider.

Degree apprenticeships (level 7)

From 1 January 2026, Level 7 apprenticeships will only be levy funded for apprentices who, at the start of their apprenticeship training, are either aged 16-21, or aged under 25 and have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan and/or have been, or are, in the care of their local authority

FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Applicants who have not previously achieved grades 9-4 or A*-C in GCSE English and Math's (or equivalent qualifications) will be required to complete functional skills alongside their apprenticeship programme.

Functional skills are an alternative to the GCSE route, with the flexibility to sit assessments all year round. Learning material for functional skills qualifications is based on practical and real-life situations, so Functional Skills can increase confidence and improve both daily life and work performance and productivity.

Functional skills are funded by apprenticeship funding, and the course runs alongside the apprenticeship. These English and/or Math's modules are delivered online for 2-3 hours per week with one subject studied at one time (until exams are achieved), and these must be completed before the end of the apprenticeship programme.

DELIVERY METHODS

There are training providers who can tailor their offerings to match apprentices' individual learning preferences. This might encompass options like attending day releases, engaging in online learning through dedicated platforms, or receiving face-to-face instruction from a tutor or coach visiting the campus. Each delivery method has its own merits and drawbacks, so carefully evaluating what aligns with the apprentice's and the team's needs is crucial.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

Training providers will conduct an initial assessment to check the apprenticeship will be at the correct level, aligned to the apprentice's job role and therefore achievable. The assessment also checks prior learning as part of a skill scan to ensure that training is relevant.

Please note managers' input may be required, especially if the training providers require confirmation the apprentice will be granted access to additional tasks to meet the standard.

APPLIED LEARNING (OFF-THE-JOB TRAINING)

The Education and Skills Funding Agency states that apprentices should spend 20% of their apprenticeship learning and developing off the job, so a full-time working apprentice should allocate at least six hours per week to learning. This time is flexible; it can be 6 hours in a day, 6 hours across a few days, or even a block of time – the training provider tutor/coach will be able to provide guidance.

Applied learning is any activity that is not part of an apprentice's day-to-day role, and which supports their apprenticeship training so it must be dedicated time and agreed upon between the apprentice and line manager. All apprentices must log their learning time as entries are subject to audit by the ESFA.

Taking time out from a busy workload is never easy and often requires planning and agreements in advance but it is flexible. The tutor/coach will also be able to advise.

- Learning new skills at work through shadowing other members of the team.
- Practical training or training in the workplace relevant to the apprenticeship.
- Writing assessments, and assignments and completing projects or activities.
- Personal development discussions to plan new learning.
- In-house training programmes relevant to the apprenticeship.
- Attendance at workshops, training days and webinars relevant to the apprenticeship.
- Completion of online learning through a learning system and/or an in-house system.
- Writing reflective journals.
- Self-study that includes reading researching or watching videos.
- Training on new working practices or new equipment.
- Role-playing or simulation exercises.
- Industry visits/conferences relevant to the apprenticeship.
- Mock assignments to prepare for End point Assessment.

AGREEMENTS AND TRAINING PLANS

Before an apprenticeship commences, the training provider will ask the apprentice to complete an apprenticeship agreement – this is the agreement between the apprentice and employer. They also sign a training plan from the training provider.

The plan sets out:

- Details of all parties involved (employer, training provider and apprentice)
- Relevant policies
- The commitment from each party
- Expectations, roles, and responsibilities
- An agreed plan of training

END POINT ASSESSMENTS

All apprentices must complete an end-point assessment (EPA) consisting of several assessments to pass to complete the apprenticeship. These assessments provide each apprentice with the opportunity to demonstrate all the required knowledge, skills and behaviours outlined in the apprenticeship standard and this assessment is completed by an independent endpoint assessment organisation.

As their employer, managers will need to support and help practice the end-point assessment with the apprentice and may also be asked to sit on the final assessment panel.

STANDARDS

Apprenticeship programmes consist of standards that include skills knowledge and behaviours for which the apprentice will need to be fully competent to pass the endpoint assessment at the end of their apprenticeship.

Standards are occupation focused and are not led by qualifications although some apprenticeships do include qualifications as part of the program. Apprenticeship standards detail what an apprentice will be doing, and the skills needed by them in their job role. More details of the knowledge skills and behaviours of each apprenticeship can be found on the Institute for Apprenticeships: Standards website.

WHAT SUPPORT WILL AN APPRENTICE RECEIVE?

The training provider tutor/coach will provide an overview of the program with the criteria the apprentice will need to achieve. The manager should provide exposure and opportunities to practice the theory they are learning.

Apprentices could initially start by shadowing another colleague to see how a task is completed and then progress to practicing those tasks until they are fully competent, thus allowing theory to be embedded. It is sometimes necessary to ask other colleagues to provide learning opportunities so obtain buy-in and agreement as soon as possible and be mindful of their workloads too.

The most successful apprentices have engaged managers who actively encourage and support their apprenticeship. Most apprentices will be allocated an online portfolio or learning platform and training providers can provide managers with a login too.

The managers' involvement includes:

- Giving apprentices a clear outline of expectations and a safe supportive environment to learn and develop.
- Encouraging them from the start to own and drive their learning targets and to seek regular feedback to self-assess their performance.
- Providing apprentices with the work experience needed to develop the skills and knowledge included in their apprenticeship.
- Allowing time for their 20% applied learning.
- Supporting the completion of relevant projects and portfolio evidence.
- Meeting with them regularly to provide feedback and review progress.
- Being approachable and understanding.
- Liaising regularly with the training provider.

FURTHER GUIDANCE FOR LINE MANAGERS

Many apprenticeships will come about because of a discussion between a manager and an individual during an annual Performance and Development Review, but the process can begin at any time.

Offering an apprenticeship to your existing staff is an accessible and cost-effective way to enhance the knowledge, skillset, and competency of your team. Have you considered the skills that your team/department will need in the next two years, five years, and beyond? Or maybe you have identified a team member who would make a good leader or manager in the future, but needs some training first?

Apprenticeships are an excellent way to invest in your team's development and to bring new talent into the University. They have become an accessible way for people of all ages and backgrounds to upskill and gain valuable qualifications, offering low barriers to accessing high-quality training and stable employment, circumventing major costs and entry barriers to accessing higher education.

In advance of approving a staff apprenticeship scheme request, it is important to consider:

- Is this the right development opportunity for the staff member? What would the apprentice gain from completing this programme? And do they have a clear sense of what they want to achieve, both personally and professionally?
- Does the apprenticeship programme align with the individual's job role, and does the skillset align with organisational or departmental objectives?

- What level of commitment would be required for the staff member to complete the apprenticeship programme, and is it sustainable?

An apprenticeship is a big commitment and requires input – it is not a quick win, especially at the higher levels. Managers should always consider the impact on any SLAs (Service Level Agreement) and other team members, especially if the department has peak work times with deadlines to meet.

KEY POINTS

- For individuals on fixed-term contracts, the contract must cover the apprenticeship duration, including the endpoint assessment.
- Current staff stay on the same grade and contract of employment and all the training and assessment costs associated with the apprenticeship will be met by the apprenticeship levy. There is no cost to the department or apprentice. However, some training providers may charge for exam re-sits, and occasionally books but this will be communicated prior to the programme starting.
- Both the manager and apprentice will need to consider the effect on existing workloads and agree to any changes necessary to facilitate the programme in advance of the start date.

HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR STAFF THROUGH AN APPRENTICESHIP

Ask to meet with the training provider tutor/coach and request an overview of the program with the criteria the apprentice will work through. Plan how to provide exposure and opportunities for the apprentice to practice the theory they are learning. The apprentice could initially start by shadowing another colleague to see how a task is completed and then progress to practicing those tasks until they are fully competent, thus allowing theory to be embedded. It is sometimes necessary to ask other colleagues to provide learning opportunities so obtain buy-in and agreement as soon as you can and be mindful of their workloads too.

The most successful apprentices have managers who are engaged and actively encourage and support their apprenticeship. A quick regular update for the apprentice to explain what they are working on allows managers to make suggestions for additional learning opportunities but most of all it demonstrates the apprentice is supported. Most apprentices will be allocated an online portfolio, and training providers can provide managers with a login too. Please request yours so you can check progress and engage with the programme.

Managers' involvement includes:

- Giving apprentices a clear outline of expectations and a safe supportive environment to learn and develop.
- Encouraging them from the start to own and drive their learning targets and to seek regular feedback to self-assess their performance.
- Providing apprentices with the work experience needed to develop the skills and knowledge included in their apprenticeship.
- Allowing time for their 20% applied learning.

- Supporting the completion of relevant projects and portfolio evidence.
- Meeting with them regularly to provide feedback and review progress.
- Being approachable and understanding.
- Liaising regularly with the training provider.

TRAINING RESPONSIBILITIES

Check with the apprenticeship coach about any training the training provider will provide and identify what can take place within the workplace as soon as you can, ensuring that the apprentice is recording all the job training in their portfolio of evidence. Knowing the timetable of topics to be delivered is useful so everyone is clear on what learning is planned. The training provider will provide theory-based learning, and the apprentice will practice in the workplace. This provides the apprentice with hands-on learning dealing with daily issues and challenges – naturally occurring experiences.

PROGRESS REVIEWS

All training providers should conduct progress reviews during the apprenticeship program – most complete these reviews every 10 to 12 weeks so please schedule these dates in your diary. The apprentice manager should be available to meet with the apprentice, and their tutor/coach as reviews are an ideal opportunity to check on progress made and to keep on top of any problems or issues so that solutions can be found. Manager attendance at these meetings demonstrates support to the apprentice and the training provider.

During the review, the tutor/coach will often check health and safety and safeguarding, and these are a requirement of the funding from the ESFA, to ensure the safety of all apprentices on the programme.

- signposting
- acting as a role model

ADDITIONAL INPUT

Some apprenticeships require the apprentice to complete a work-based project. This might mean engaging with other stakeholders within the University and is an ideal opportunity to complete a project that is useful to the organisation whilst also allowing the apprentice to practice and learn new skills.

Please engage and support this as the project is often part of the endpoint assessment and therefore crucial to the success of the apprenticeship. It might be the chance for thinking out of the box, for exploration of ideas and concepts, please collaborate with the tutor/coach for guidance.

Any additional questions and application submissions can be sent to:

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