Apprenticeships at the University of Cambridge

A Guide for Managers





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# Introduction

The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Apprenticeships at the University support this mission by attracting, recruiting and retaining the right people and contributing to the personal and professional development of staff.

Apprenticeships offer exciting opportunities for new and current members of staff to develop their careers and gain a nationally recognised qualification. Apprentices of all ages can benefit from tailored learning and develop their professional skills whilst helping to meet the current and future needs of the University.

This guide has been developed for managers who are considering employing apprentices in their departments or who wish to support existing staff to complete an apprenticeship.

A flowchart to support this guide can be found in the Useful Resources section of the Apprenticeships website.

## What is an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a real job with training, which meets an approved national standard or framework. It is a way for individuals to earn while they learn, gaining valuable skills and knowledge in a specific job role. Through their apprenticeship, apprentices gain the technical knowledge, practical experience and wider skills they need for their immediate job and future career. The apprentice gains this through a wide mix of learning in the workplace, formal off-the- job training and the opportunity to practise new skills in a real work environment.

Apprenticeships are for individuals who are over the age of 16, living in England and not in full time education.

An apprenticeship is a ‘genuine’ job by which we mean that:

* The apprentice must have a contract of employment which is long enough for them to complete the apprenticeship successfully.
* The cost of the apprentice’s wages must be met by the University as their employer.
* The apprentice must have a job role (or roles) within the University that provides the opportunity for them to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to achieve their apprenticeship.
* The apprentice must have appropriate support from within the University to carry out their job role.

Apprenticeships can be offered to new or existing members of staff.

## The apprenticeship levy

The apprenticeship levy came into effect in April 2017 to support the Government’s commitment to 3 million new apprentices by 2020. The levy applies to employers in England, who have an annual pay bill above £3m. The levy is charged at a rate of 0.5% of an employer’s pay bill and for the University this equates to approximately £2m per annum.

The levy is collected by HM Revenue and Customs monthly based on Pay as You Earn (PAYE). It can then be accessed by employers through an online Digital Service Account (DAS) to pay for apprenticeship training, which is limited up to certain maximum funding bands. The government automatically adds 10% to the funds in the DAS.

Levy funds expire 24 months after they appear in the DAS if they have not been used, and are transferred back to government funds.

The DAS is administered by the Apprenticeships Team and Finance.

## Using levy funds

| Levy money can be spent on:  | Levy money cannot be spent on:  |
| --- | --- |
| * apprenticeship training and progress reviews
* apprenticeship end-point assessment
* equipment used to achieve the apprenticeship
* accommodation costs for residential modules
* registration and examination (including certification) costs associated with mandatory qualifications
 | * apprentice/staff wages
* recruitment and induction
* travel and subsidiary costs
* traineeships
* work placement programmes
* cost of setting up or running an apprenticeship programme
* personal protective clothing and safety equipment
* additional training not required to achieve the apprenticeship
* time spent by employees or managers supporting or mentoring apprentices
 |

## Funding bands

All apprenticeship standards are placed in one of 15 funding bands ranging from £1,500 to £27,000, which is the maximum amount of Levy funds that can be used for the off the job training and assessment for each apprenticeship.

The funding band takes into account the length, level and nature of training for each apprenticeship standard.

A training provider may charge a price in excess of the funding band, in which case the department would need to pay the difference between the funding band maximum and the total negotiated price. In most cases it is unlikely that this will happen.

A full list of funding bands can be found at [Apprenticeship Funding Bands](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands)

## Additional funding

In recognition that there are some additional costs to training younger apprentices, particularly around pastoral care and supervision, government funding is available to employers who take on apprentices through the Apprenticeship Levy, who are 16-18 years at the start of their apprenticeship. Funding is also available for 19- 24 year olds who have an Education and Health Care plan.

A payment of £1,000 will be paid to the relevant department in two equal instalments at 3 months and 12 months. These payments are made in to the relevant department/school bank account from the training provider and come direct from the government, rather than via DAS.

## Benefits of hiring an apprentice

1. Apprenticeships have a central role in enabling the University to develop and retain its talent, especially where recruitment is difficult in increasingly competitive markets.
2. Apprenticeships can support the development of new skills for both new and existing staff and help institutions with staff succession planning.
3. Training and development, including apprenticeships, contributes to a motivated, skilled and qualified workforce, and increased productivity.
4. The Levy enables the University to increase training opportunities for staff without increased costs, and at the same time, raise the qualifications profile of staff.
5. Apprenticeships have the potential to improve staff perceptions of career development and progression, where scores from staff surveys can be low.
6. Better talent management and retention reduces recruitment costs, reduces unnecessary turnover and retains expertise in the University.

# Preparing to employ an apprentice

## Workforce planning

If you are considering recruiting an apprentice, or if the University requires an existing member of staff to complete an apprenticeship, then this provides you with the opportunity to align apprenticeships with your strategic workforce planning. You should think about the future skills that will be needed in the department as a whole, as well as the development needs of individuals.

## Guidance note for selecting existing staff for apprenticeships

At a Staff Review and Development meeting, or regular development meeting, you should explore if an apprenticeship meets the staff members’ development needs and aspirations, and is the right development solution for both them and the department.

Consider the following:

* Is there a sizeable gap in the skills and knowledge that they currently hold in this area, and the skills and knowledge that you would like them to hold to be fully competent and confident in the role?
* Does the apprenticeship address this gap or would another form of training be more appropriate?
* Would the staff member be fully committed to completing the apprenticeship?
* Does the staff member have a ‘genuine job’ that will meet the apprenticeship eligibility criteria (see page 3)
* How will you accommodate the requirements of the apprenticeship e.g. spending 20% of their working hours in off-the-job learning?
* Are there other individuals within your team who would benefit from completing an apprenticeship and would wish to do so?
	+ If this is the case then you will need to ensure that a fair and transparent application process is in place for members of staff. For example you may ask individuals to complete an application form that includes a supporting statement indicating why they want to complete the apprenticeship, how it meets their professional and personal development objectives and how they see the department benefitting from them completing the apprenticeship.

Remember an apprenticeship is not a suitable solution to address performance management issues.

If you do decide that having an apprentice is the right approach, then all initial enquiries should be made to the Apprenticeship Team.

You will need to consider areas such as:

* Is this a new or existing post
* Apprenticeship Standard or Framework (if known)
* Preferred training provider (if known)

**Please note that you cannot access Levy funds without contacting the Apprenticeship Team.**

## Selecting an apprenticeship standard or framework

The next stage in the process of having an apprentice in your department is to identify a suitable Apprenticeship Standard or Framework. Standards are gradually replacing older existing frameworks and the government is phasing the withdrawal of apprenticeship frameworks as employers take on apprentices on the new standards

The standards outline what an apprentice will be doing and the skills, knowledge and behaviours required of them, by job role. Each standard also includes an approved assessment plan. The standard also sets out the level of the apprenticeship and it is important that their job role gives them the right opportunities to meet the standard. A framework will include the list of constituent qualifications.

| Name | Level | Equivalent educational level |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Intermediate | 2 | GCSE (A\* - C) |
| Advanced | 3 | A level |
| Higher | 4,5,6 and 7 | Foundation degree and above |
| Degree | 6 and 7 | Bachelor’s or master’s degree |

A full list of current apprenticeship standards can be found at [Apprenticeship Standards](https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/)

A full list of current apprenticeship frameworks can be found at [Apprenticeship Frameworks](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/removal-of-apprenticeship-frameworks)

If you cannot find an appropriate standard then please contact the Apprenticeship Team.

It is important to ensure that any training courses you commit to are eligible for funding through the Levy.

## Selecting an approved training provider

Once a suitable apprenticeship standard has been identified, the next step is to select an approved training provider to deliver the training for the apprenticeship. The training provider will work closely with you to ensure that the apprenticeship offered is the most appropriate for the individual’s job role, whilst reflecting your needs and those of the learner.

The role of the training provider is to:

* Work in partnership with you to develop and deliver an apprenticeship programme that meets your needs.
* Tell you the level of government funding available for the apprenticeship programme.
* Administer some elements of the funding.
* Discuss timescales for the training and develop training plans to fit your and the apprentice’s needs.
* Help you advertise your vacancy.
* Provide training to the apprentice.
* Provide ongoing assessment, support and advice throughout the training period to you and your apprentice.
* Work with you to select an independent organisation to deliver the end-point assessment for the apprenticeship. This is an assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours which your apprentice has learnt throughout an apprenticeship standard.

The University has undergone a tendering process with training providers and has approved the following providers who have the capability, quality and financial health to deliver high-quality apprenticeship training.

* Anglia Ruskin University
* Babington
* Cambridge Regional College
* College of Animal Welfare
* Corndel
* Cranfield University
* CSR Scientific Training
* Firebrand
* First Intuition
* Lifetime Training
* Nottingham Trent University
* Skills4Stem
* Tate
* West Suffolk College

The Apprenticeship Team will be able to support you in selecting the right provider for you and your apprentice. Please email the Apprenticeship Team for support and advice.

If the approved training providers listed do not offer the apprenticeship standard or framework that you wish to use then please contact the Apprenticeship Team who may be able to source another provider on your behalf.

When in discussions with training providers you will need to cover the following:

* Apprenticeship standard or framework
* Levy funding band
* Price of apprenticeship - what is included
* Eligibility of apprentice including impact of previous qualifications and experience
* Role profile of apprenticeship post – to ensure that the apprentice will have the opportunity to develop the necessary skills in the workplace. You will need to write a role profile for a new apprentice or review the existing role profile for new employees.
* Duration of apprenticeship
* Entry requirements
* Proposed start date
* Structure and content of programme, including agreement of project topics to ensure they are relevant
* Training delivery methods
* Names, background and relevant experience of tutors
* Arrangements for 20% off-the-job learning
* Quality assurance of training
* Support for apprentices, including specific learning needs
* Identification and arrangement of end point assessment
* Frequency of contact with department/line manager
* Dealing with problems/issues

Where there is a lot of interest in a particular apprenticeship standard, then the Apprenticeship Team may be able to coordinate a cohort across several departments

# Employing an apprentice

## Overview

To employ an apprentice, you need to check and meet the following terms and conditions.

Your apprentice should:

* Be 16 years old or older and not in full time education.
* Be a new or current employee.
* Have the right to work in England.
* Have been resident in the UK for 3 years.
* Work enough paid hours each week to undertake sufficient training to achieve their apprenticeship (the minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on an apprentice working 30 paid hours a week or more. This includes any off-the-job training they do. If an apprentice works less than 30 hours a week then a minimum of 16 hours must be worked and the apprenticeship will take longer to complete).
* Not hold a qualification higher than the level of the apprenticeship. An individual can undertake an apprenticeship at the same level as, or at a lower level than, a qualification they already hold, if the apprenticeship will allow the individual to acquire substantive new skills and you can evidence that the content of the training is materially different from any prior qualification or a previous apprenticeship.
* Inform you if they do not hold a grade C or above in GCSE maths and English (or equivalent), in which case they will complete a functional skills qualification as part of their apprenticeship.

You must:

* Give your apprentice a contract of employment which is at least long enough to allow them to complete their apprenticeship successfully, this must last for at least one year.
* Pay the cost of your apprentice’s wages.
* Give your apprentice a genuine job role (or roles) that enables them to gain the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to achieve their apprenticeship.
* Allow your apprentice to combine learning in the workplace with formal off-the-job learning which usually takes place outside the normal working environment. Apprentices need to learn substantive new skills and spend at least 20% of their working hours on off-the-job learning.

If these terms and conditions are not met the training will not be eligible for funding through the Levy.

## Apprentice is an existing member of staff

If a member of staff does start an apprenticeship they will remain on their existing contract and salary and have an apprenticeship Commitment Statement in place (see page 12 3.6). If they are on a fixed-term contract then you must ensure that this covers the length of the apprenticeship. The Amendment Team, within HR, will issue the apprentice with an Apprenticeship Agreement Letter which sits alongside their existing contract of employment for the duration of the apprenticeship, and sets outs the terms and conditions of the apprenticeship.

## Apprentice is a new role

Once approval to recruit has been obtained, apprentices should be recruited following the University’s standard recruitment and selection process.

Please see the HR Recruitment Guidance site for further information at [Recruitment guidance](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/recruitment-guidance)

## Salary

The chart below sets out the salary scale points that should be used for new apprentices, depending on the level of apprenticeship they are completing.

| Apprenticeship level | Point on scale | New apprentice to undertake Level 2 or 3  | New apprentice to undertake Level 4 or above |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Apprentice 4 | Point 23 |  | Progression after Yr 2 |
| Apprentice 3 | Point 19 | Progression after Yr 2 | Progression after Yr 1 |
| Apprentice 2 | Point 15 | Progression after Yr 1 | Starting salary  |
| Apprentice 1 | Point 11 | Starting salary  |  |

Departmental Administrators can agree salaries using this chart. There may be occasions where it is appropriate to offer a higher salary scale to those shown in the chart, for example in particularly competitive areas where vacancies are difficult to fill.  In such circumstances please contact the Apprenticeship Team to discuss and to ensure a consistent and fair approach.

## Advertising an apprentice vacancy

1. ‘Recruit an Apprentice’ is the official service for posting and managing apprenticeship vacancies in England. This is the recommended route for advertising apprenticeship vacancies. Your training provider will advertise the apprenticeship on this government site for you.

‘Recruit an Apprentice’ automatically feeds through to ‘Find an apprenticeship’ and ‘Universal Jobmatch’ which are services offered through Government Gateway for job seekers.[Find an apprenticeship](https://www.findapprenticeship.service.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsearch) .

1. Advertise the vacancy on the University vacancies website and all other relevant routes

Please contact the Apprenticeship Team if you would like any support with your job advert.

## Selecting an apprentice

University advice on selection and appointment should be followed, and can be found at [Recruit and select](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/recruitment/step-3-recruit-and-select). In addition departments need to take into account that the apprentice may be a school leaver and therefore new to the workplace, so the selection process can be as much about introducing them to what you do, as well as selecting the best candidate. They might not have the same confidence and ability to communicate their skills and strengths as more experienced employees and will have little or no work experience to use as examples at interview. You may therefore want to consider running an assessment centre as well as carrying out individual strength based interviews, rather than a traditional competency-based interview. Using existing apprentices to support the assessment process can also be helpful.

Annex 1 contains some example apprenticeship interview questions.

## Recruitment administration

Once you have selected your apprentice you will need to ensure that their qualifications and/or experience meet those required for the apprenticeship; you should also liaise with the approved training provider if additional Maths or English support is required.

When all eligibility criteria have been confirmed you will need to create an Apprenticeship Conditional Offer Letter, through the Web Recruitment System.

Once the offer is accepted, you can complete the offer and Appointment Request through the Web Recruitment System. The New Appointment Team will generate the apprentice contract.

Apprentices will be recruited on an apprentice contract and have the same rights and responsibilities as any other employee. The contract will have a defined end date as the apprenticeship is for a fixed term.

The contract of employment is normally for a minimum of 30 hours, but where this is not possible an absolute minimum of 16 hours must be met and the duration of the Apprenticeship must be extended. Apprentices under the age of 18 must not exceed 8 hours a day or 40 hours per week. They are also entitled to paid holidays and rest breaks of at least 30 minutes if their shift lasts more than four and half hours.

It is important to be aware that, although apprentices should be treated like normal members of staff, they should be given the necessary time and means to complete their studying and training.

**You must also inform the** Apprenticeship Team **about your apprentice so that they can ensure that they are recorded on the DAS in order to access Levy funds.**

The Apprenticeship Team will need the following information:

* Name of apprentice
* Date of birth
* Apprenticeship Standard or Framework (including level)
* Planned Training Start date
* Planned Training End date
* Total Agreed Apprenticeship Price (excl VAT)
* Training Provider

## Commitment statement

For both new and existing staff members, the approved training provider will ask the apprentice to complete an application form and the start date for the apprenticeship training can be agreed.

Finally, for all apprentices, a Commitment Statement needs to be completed.

The Commitment Statement is provided by the training provider and sets out how you will support the successful achievement of the apprenticeship. The commitment statement must be signed by you, the apprentice, and the training provider (assessor/course tutor), and all three parties must keep a current signed and dated version.

At the meeting to sign the Commitment Statement you will also cover all practicalities around the apprenticeship including - mandatory/optional units; day release arrangements; frequency of meetings; 20% off the job learning.

You must send a signed copy of the Commitment Statement to the Apprenticeship Team.

# Supporting an apprentice

To ensure the success of your apprenticeships programme, you need to put the apprentice at the heart of the programme and build in effective and appropriate support mechanisms. In particular, very young apprentices with no prior experience of the working environment will need extra support and pastoral care.

## Apprentice induction

Research by the Institute for Employment Studies for ACAS has found that providing a well-thought-through induction is not only valuable for employers in helping an apprentice adapt to the workplace effectively; it is also a source of support that is generally appreciated by the apprentice themselves.

 A good induction should aim to:

* Help the apprentice settle into the University and make them feel comfortable in their new surroundings.
* Provide a good induction to the apprentice’s role and how they fit in the wider team.
* Provide practical guidance in areas such as working time, breaks, pay, working conditions, dress codes and health and safety.
* Help the apprentice understand their duties and clearly explain the line of authority, including an introduction to the roles of the supervisors and managers.
* Provide reassurance about where they can go for help if difficulties arise.
* Give the apprentice opportunities to get to know their colleagues and to integrate effectively into the wider workplace culture.
* Provide plenty of opportunities for the apprentice to ask questions.

For more information on Induction see [Induction guidance for managers](http://www.induction.admin.cam.ac.uk/guidance-managers)

The apprentice will be subject to a probationary period during which they will have regular review meetings with their line manager and the training provider to monitor progress made, giving positive feedback on what has been done well and helpful advice on how to make improvements and/or develop aspects of the job.

For more information see [Probationary Arrangements](https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/policies-procedures/probationary-arrangements/probationary-arrangements-assistant-staff) on the HR website.

## Role of the line manager

Providing the right practical support and guidance to an apprentice will help ensure they settle in well, develop within the University and help contribute to its success.

You can do this by:

* 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 workplace experience needed to develop the skills and knowledge included in their apprenticeship.
* Allowing time for their 20% off-the-job 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.
* Putting a workplace mentor in place to further support the apprentice.

There may be times when you will delegate oversite of a particular task to another member of staff, in which case you must ensure that the staff member is fully briefed so that they can support the apprentice appropriately.

## Role of the mentor

One of your more experienced members of staff should act as a mentor for the apprentice throughout their time with you. A mentor can provide the apprentice with advice and further objective feedback, outside the more formal relationship with their manager.

Their role will include:

* active listening
* questioning
* building rapport
* offering constructive feedback
* offering support and guidance
* signposting
* acting as a role model

The mentor acts as a guide by listening, supporting and encouraging the apprentice to manage their own learning, and to encourage the apprentice to develop their skills and maximise their potential.

Acting as an apprenticeship mentor can provide other staff within the team with excellent development opportunities.

Providing apprentices with mentors has been shown to be a key factor in contributing to a successful apprenticeship with a particularly positive effect on levels of engagement.

A Guide for Mentors can be found in the Useful Resources section of the Apprenticeship website.

## Working with the approved training provider

The training provider is responsible for the formal training, qualification and ongoing assessment of each apprentice, providing the line manager with feedback as to the progress of the apprentice. You need to develop a long-term relationship with the training provider which is based on trust, transparency and honesty. We suggest that you meet regularly with the training provider to foster that relationship and to keep up to date with apprentice progress.

Frequency of meetings will vary according to the type of apprenticeship and the training provider, however standard arrangements could include on-site assessments with the apprentice every 4 – 6 weeks and a formal review with all 3 parties every 8-10 weeks.

Whilst most of the apprentices learning is on-the-job, off-the-job learning accounts for 20% of the apprenticeship and how this is delivered will depend on the occupational area, the training provider and your requirements as the employer.

**Off-the-job learning** is defined as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. This can include learning that is completed at the apprentice’s normal place of work but must not be part of their normal working duties.

The 20% off-the-job learning must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard or framework and could include the following:

* The teaching of theory, for example: lectures, workshops, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning or manufacturer training.
* Practical training: shadowing; mentoring; industry visits and attendance at competitions.
* Learning support and time spent writing assessments/assignments.

It does not include:

* English and maths (up to level 2) which is funded separately, if the apprentice does not have a grade C or above in GCSE Maths and English.
* Progress reviews or on-programme assessment needed for an apprenticeship standard.
* Learning activities which take place outside the apprentice’s paid working hours.

A Guide to Off-the-Job Learning can be found in the Useful Resources section of the Apprenticeship website.

# Completion of an apprenticeship

## End-point assessment

All apprenticeship standards must contain an end-point assessment. An independent organisation must be involved in the end-point assessment of each apprentice so that all apprentices following the same standard are assessed consistently. Frameworks do not contain an end-point assessment.

Your training provider will work with you to select an independent organisation, and a full list can be found at [Register of Organisations](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/631652/Register-List_of_Organisations-July2017.csv/preview).

The end-point assessment is separate to any qualifications or other assessment that the apprentice may undertake during training. The apprentice will not be able to achieve the apprenticeship without passing the end-point assessment.

The end-point assessment organisation will, in line with the assessment plan:

* Design and develop the content of the end-point assessment. For example, test questions, project topics or interview scripts.
* Check and verify that the apprentice has completed any prerequisites to endpoint assessment, including any mandatory qualifications.
* Conduct end-point assessment of apprentices.
* Quality assure the end-point assessments they deliver.
* Adhere to the external quality assurance arrangements.
* Ensure end-point assessment is synoptic and independent.
* Identify and record when the apprentice has passed the end-point assessment.
* Apply and pay for the apprenticeship certificate.

## Employment opportunities

There must be a genuine job for the duration of the apprenticeship and the apprenticeship must last for at least one year.

When the apprenticeship is achieved, if the apprentice was an existing staff member then they would continue in their role, working with their line manager to embed their learning and explore further development opportunities.

Where the apprentice was a new member of staff they should remain with you, where a job opportunity continues to exist and where the apprentice wishes to remain with you. Where this is not possible, you and the provider must support the apprentice to seek alternative opportunities.

Further information about redeployment assistance can be found at [Redeployment guidance](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/hr/policy/redeployment/assistance.html)

# Annex 1: Example apprenticeship interview questions

Below are some sample questions that you may want to use when interviewing a prospective apprentice. It is important to remember that this may be the person’s first job interview, so they may need guidance and support through the interview.

• Tell us why you have applied for this apprenticeship

• What do you think we are looking for in an apprentice?

• The training for the apprenticeship includes undertaking qualifications while working, and may at times be demanding. How would you organise yourself to balance your study and job, and ensure you complete your work on time?

• How would you rate your organisational skills on a level of 1-5 (1 being the lowest)? Can you give an example to illustrate this?

• Can you give an example of when you have had to work independently and use your initiative either through study or work?

• Can you give an example of when you have had to deal with a difficult situation either in work, life or school, and how you managed it?

• Can you tell us about something new that you have learned in the last 6 months and what you have gained from it?

• What do you understand by a customer-focussed service, and how do you think it will apply to this job?

• What do you understand by working in a team, and what are 3 important attributes of a good team player?

• Where do you see yourself in 3/5 years’ time?

* Can you tell me about any hobbies or interests you have that are relevant to the apprenticeship that you are applying for?

• Is there anything we haven’t asked you that you would like to tell us about yourself to support your application?