HIGHER AND DEGREE APPRENTICESHIPS

A brochure for employers
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EXCELLENCE IN APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING

Increasingly, employers recognise that hiring apprentices at higher or degree level is an excellent investment. They can upskill their existing workforce, attract talented people, boost workplace diversity and fill skills gaps using their apprenticeship levy or government funding through co-investment.

For apprentices, the benefits are clear: they make contacts, develop skills and earn a wage. They gain a university qualification without having to pay tuition fees.

An apprenticeship is a real job, combined with training and academic study. Develop your apprenticeship scheme with Kent, and we’ll work with you to select and devise the best programmes of study and training plans for your apprentices.

Since spring 2017, larger employers in England have been required to pay an apprenticeship levy. Employers of all sizes may access government funding. This new system means organisations, whether levy-paying or not, have access to apprenticeship training funds and want to make the most of them.

The University of Kent can help you do this, from initial advice to a fully managed service.

We’ve been working with leading companies for more than five years to deliver successful higher apprenticeships, and look forward to doing the same for your organisation.

Dr Scott Wildman
Director
Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
University of Kent
APPRENTICESHIPS OVERVIEW

Higher and degree apprenticeships offer candidates the opportunity to combine working with studying for a high-level work-based academic or vocational qualification.

Higher apprenticeships typically lead to the award of a certificate or foundation degree (starting at Level 4 of the government’s qualification classification system).

Degree apprenticeships lead to a Bachelor’s degree (Level 6) or a Master’s degree (Level 7).

There are several rules governing apprenticeships. The main ones are:
• the apprentice must be employed in a real job; they may be an existing employee or a new hire
• the apprentice must work towards achieving an approved apprenticeship standard
• the apprenticeship training must last at least 12 months
• the minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, including any off-the-job training they undertake*• The apprentice must spend at least 20% of their time on off-the-job training.

The focus of an apprenticeship is to equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge required for specific job roles, future employment and progression.

Higher and degree apprenticeships with the University fully test the apprentice’s wider occupational competence and academic learning, using either:
• a fully integrated degree (co-designed by employers and Higher Education Institutions); or
• a university qualification plus separate end test of professional competence (end-point assessment).

Our current apprenticeships
Kent has a number of existing apprenticeships, with more under development. For the latest information, see: www.kent.ac.uk/apprenticeships/current-apprenticeships.html

The University is also expanding its portfolio of apprenticeship standards to match its areas of expertise. Please contact us if you’re interested in any of the areas below:
• architecture
• arts, culture and heritage
• business-to-business sales
• children, young people and families
• digital marketing
• drug and alcohol treatment
• healthcare science practitioner/associate
• laboratory science
• management
• public sector commercial
• retail management
• social work
• tax and accounting
• town planning.

Eligibility for apprenticeships
Individuals over the age of 16 who live in England and are not in full-time education can apply for an apprenticeship.

You can enrol both current employees and new staff on your apprenticeship programmes.

Using your apprenticeship funds to train existing staff brings a range of benefits:
• helps avoid the need to fund additional salaries
• enhances employee skills, motivation and job satisfaction
• reduces absenteeism and staff turnover, in turn reducing recruitment costs
• improves staff performance and customer service
• increases productivity and efficiency
• improves risk management
• improves perception of the organisation from the point of view of partners, suppliers and potential future applicants.

As our academic programmes are mainly delivered online, your employees can access their modules wherever they are, including when travelling for work within the UK and abroad.

We can support apprentices who spend part of their apprenticeship working outside of the UK – for example, from one of your offices abroad.

And we can deliver the knowledge element of our apprenticeships to employees based outside of England – please contact our team to discuss this.

*If the apprentice works fewer than 30 hours a week, the provider must extend the minimum duration of the apprenticeship (pro rata) to take account of this. This will also apply to any temporary period of part-time working.

Working fewer than 30 hours a week or being on a zero-hours contract must not be a barrier to successfully completing an apprenticeship.

LEVELS OF APPRENTICESHIP

At Kent, higher and degree apprenticeships lead to the awarding of an accredited university qualification at Level 4 or 5 (certificate or foundation degree) up to Level 6 (Bachelor’s degree). In some cases, apprenticeships lead to the award of Level 7 (Master’s degree) qualifications. We can also facilitate apprenticeship training at Levels 2 to 3 with partner institutions – please contact our team for more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Apprenticeship level</th>
<th>Equivalent to or leading to</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Delivered by</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree apprenticeship (Levels 6 and 7)</td>
<td>Bachelor’s degree Master’s degree (in development)</td>
<td>36 months+</td>
<td>The University of Kent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher apprenticeship (Levels 4, 5 and 6)</td>
<td>Foundation degree</td>
<td>24 months+</td>
<td>The University of Kent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced apprenticeship (Level 3)</td>
<td>Two A levels</td>
<td>18-24 months</td>
<td>Partner institutions</td>
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<td>Intermediate apprenticeship (Level 2)</td>
<td>Five GCSEs at grades A* to C (or Levels 9 to 4)</td>
<td>12-18 months</td>
<td>Partner institutions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW APPRENTICES BOOST YOUR BUSINESS

There are many advantages to employing apprentices at higher and degree level, from attracting and developing staff to increasing productivity.

**Attract higher-calibre staff**
Offering apprenticeships can help your organisation attract staff from a wider talent pool, increasing workplace diversity, motivation and commitment.

**Develop existing employees**
Current employees may be eligible to apply for apprenticeship roles so you can develop staff with potential and improve employee retention.

**Meet your business needs**
As apprentices learn at work, they’re able to develop the specific knowledge and occupational skills demanded by your organisation.

Employing apprentices can also help you fill higher-level skills gaps, enhancing your organisational performance and growth.

Apprenticeships offer clear work-based progression routes, and Kent prepares higher and degree apprentices for highly skilled positions.

**Increase productivity**
Apprentices can help keep your business up-to-date with the latest technology and techniques, and bring fresh ideas into the organisation.

**How apprentices benefit**
Our apprenticeship programmes are for people looking to start a new career or employees wanting to improve their knowledge and skills in their current role. Apprentices:
- study with a leading UK university and achieve a recognised qualification, without having to pay tuition fees
- have a real, paid job with a top organisation
- gain experience working alongside industry experts
- boost their career prospects – building skills and knowledge and making contacts.

WORKING WITH THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Work with Kent to develop your higher and degree apprenticeships, and you have the reassurance of partnering with a leading UK university.

Our academics have a passion and a talent for inspiring students – our outstanding teaching was rated Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework*.

We consistently receive top ratings in national surveys and tables such as The Guardian University Guide 2018 where Kent is ranked 22nd in the UK.

In the most recent Research Excellence Framework, 97% of research at Kent was found to be of international quality. We are committed to transferring our knowledge into the work environment through successful partnerships with employers.

The launch of the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships in 2016 means we can work with more employers to develop a wider range of apprenticeships both locally and nationally.

*The University of Kent’s Statement of Findings can be found at www.kent.ac.uk/tef-statement

“As an organisation, we’re finding that apprentices are very motivated. They’re really bright sparks, energising the departments they join.”

Nicci Smith
Early Talent Programme Manager,
R&D UK, GlaxoSmithKline
WHAT WE OFFER

Our dedicated team at the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships will support you every step of the way with your apprenticeship scheme, from planning to delivery and assessment.

Apprenticeship Management Service

The Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships at the University of Kent offers employers a full apprenticeship management service, from initial advice and discussions about skill shortages to assisting with contracts and levy payments.

These services also include: advice on funding, advertising, screening and recruitment, workplace competency monitoring and collaborative research opportunities.

Our service covers the whole apprenticeship journey, from employer enquiry and application through to enrolment, on-programme support, completion of studies, graduation, and successful achievement of the apprenticeship award.

As well as working with employers we co-ordinate apprenticeships within the University, working with faculties, schools and central support services to ensure apprentices are well supported over the course of their apprenticeship.

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The University is also expanding its portfolio of apprenticeship standards to match its areas of expertise. Please contact us if you’re interested in any of the following areas:

• architecture
• arts, culture and heritage
• business-to-business sales
• children, young people and families
• digital marketing
• drug and alcohol treatment
• healthcare science practitioner/associate
• laboratory science
• management
• public sector commercial
• retail management
• social work
• tax and accounting
• town planning.

Delivery and assessment

We work with you to map the required knowledge, skills and behaviours detailed in the relevant apprenticeship standard to the degree we provide and the on-the-job training you provide. This helps to ensure that all components of the standard are achievable. We also work with you to follow the assessment plan matching the relevant standard.

Blended learning

Our apprenticeships are delivered through blended learning – a mixture of online and face-to-face study. Blended learning uses online channels to replace much of the traditional face-to-face teaching associated with a university qualification.

It means the apprentice can study in a flexible way, without having to have set days away from the workplace. The learner can interact with University academics in a variety of ways.

The apprentice is also required to undertake some face-to-face learning, either as part of a summer school or block release. However, as we work flexibly with employers, we can discuss this mode of study further with you.

Off-the-job training

Apprentices are required to spend 20% of their contracted hours on off-the-job training. This is defined as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day-to-day working environment.

This can include training that is delivered at the apprentice’s normal place of work but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties. The mapping document we create with you helps to ensure the apprentice is developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours to meet the required standards.

Regular reviews

Throughout the apprenticeships, the University works alongside you to monitor the apprentice’s progress. We send a University representative to your workplace once every three months to see the apprentice and feed back to you on achievements and any issues or concerns if they arise.

End-point assessment

Once the apprentice has gained the knowledge, skills, and behaviours required, they undertake a rigorous and robust end-point assessment. The University can help you choose who should undertake this assessment from the Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations (RAAO).

WHY WORK WITH US?

Central team

At the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships, we have a dedicated central team co-ordinating apprenticeships across the University and offering a full range of support to employers.

Flexible approach

Kent offers multiple start dates throughout the year. We also offer blended learning (a mixture of online and face-to-face teaching) according to organisational needs, which permits flexibility for both the employer and the apprentice.

Leading UK university

We offer research-led teaching by subject experts, backed up by award-winning learning support services. If successful, apprentices gain a qualification from Kent – a leading UK university.
EMPLOYER CASE STUDIES

Pfizer and GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) are two of the leading companies which have worked with Kent on their apprenticeship programmes.

**Pfizer**

**Dr Katherine Barclay is Director, Academic Liaison at Pfizer UK. The company has worked with Kent on its apprenticeship scheme since 2016.**

**Why did you choose to work with Kent?**

Kent was one of the few universities able to offer the laboratory scientist apprenticeship with a chemical sciences pathway. Our apprentices do most of their learning online, and an advantage of working with Kent is that one of their tutors comes on site to support them.

**Tell me about your current Kent apprentices?**

Five of our apprentices are doing their training at Kent. They are all new staff – school leavers or fairly new to the industry. They are at Level 5 and, for the right candidates, there would be an opportunity to progress through to a Level 6 for a full degree qualification. The benefit of taking on a group of apprentices together is that they support each other.

**How does Pfizer help develop apprentices’ work behaviours?**

Work behaviours are an important part of apprenticeship standards and the workplace. So we link up with Toastmasters, an organisation which supports the development of public speaking and leadership skills, as there’s a group on site at Sandwich.

We’ve also designed a week-long programme specifically for the apprentices with The Outward Bound Trust in the Lake District. It’s focused on team working and has helped them push themselves and take ownership of their apprenticeship.

**What benefits do apprentices bring to Pfizer?**

To have someone with a fresh perspective challenges the status quo and I think that’s what we need. They bring innovation and creativity to the business and help increase the diversity of our workforce.

Apprenticeships help to attract a different type of candidate; someone who is highly talented but has chosen not to take the traditional academic route into science.

**GlaxoSmithKline**

**Nicci Smith is Early Talent Programme Manager, R&D UK at GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). The company has been working with Kent since 2012.**

**How long do your apprenticeships last?**

Our Kent intake are on three-year apprenticeships at Level 5 and some of our first apprentices graduated in 2016. They were all new staff, hired on apprenticeship contracts. There’s potential for the right apprentices to go further and do their Bachelor’s degree.

**How do the apprentices study?**

The apprentices are studying by distance learning and have one day per week as study leave. Some of the apprentices form study groups on site, and others prefer to study at home. They also attend a residential week at the University.

**How have higher and degree apprentices helped your business?**

Our apprentices work on scientific and technical projects in our R&D pipeline, and the fresh ideas and skills that they bring are extremely energising to our departments. The apprentices are developing their skills where organisationally GSK may have gaps. Most become Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) ambassadors and visit schools to inspire the next generation to consider a STEM career.

The reputation of the apprentices is very positive among line managers and this is showing through the numbers we’re hiring.

**What does GSK do to support the apprentices?**

For many of the apprentices, joining an organisation like GSK is a transformational change and so we put a strong support team around them, including their manager, an existing apprentice ‘buddy’, a mentor and the programme team.

The laboratory apprentice’s manager supports the development of the apprentice’s competence in all aspects of lab and written work.

Apprentices can also challenge us to keep up to date with things like the latest communications technology. It’s also good mentoring and line management experience for existing staff.

**Do you consider apprentices for employment after their apprenticeship finishes?**

If there’s a permanent vacancy then the apprentice would be eligible to apply for it.

**What do apprentices get out of the scheme?**

Apprentices get a good knowledge of the business, and what roles they could go into. Pfizer’s a huge global organisation and the apprentices interact with so many parts of it. They can shadow people and develop a really extensive professional network.

**What would you say to an employer considering employing apprentices?**

Apprentices bring a lot to an organisation – creativity, innovation, and different ways of thinking. It takes effort on the part of the employer and the apprentice but it’s definitely worthwhile.

As well as developing their scientific and technical competence, every year, all apprentices participate in a week-long, off-site event to develop their personal and business skills.

For example, the first-year apprentices go to the Lake District for a week with The Outward Bound Trust. They develop their self-awareness and confidence, and skills such as communication, problem solving and team building. We aim to develop the apprentices as business people as well as scientists.

**What would you say to employers considering taking on an apprentice?**

As an organisation, we’re finding that apprentices are very motivated. They’re really bright sparks, energising the departments they join. It’s so positive – there really isn’t a negative aspect to it.

On completion of their apprenticeship, they are typically landing into Associate Scientist roles in GSK R&D and continuing their studies with Kent to top up their FdSc to a BSc.
KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND FUNDING

Certain aspects of your apprenticeship scheme need to be considered at an early stage. These include candidate eligibility, length of apprenticeship, hours of work and payment.

Eligibility
To be eligible for an apprenticeship, potential applicants must be 16 or older; they can be a new or current employee.

They must also have the right to work in England, spend at least 50% of their working hours in England and meet the other Educational and Skills Funding Agency rules on eligibility status.

We ask employers to ensure that the successful candidates have achieved the required entry criteria in order to study the specific knowledge element of the apprenticeship standard.

For Level 4 and above, this usually requires A levels or equivalent qualifications in the relevant subject areas, or work experience in a specific role. The candidate should also have five GCSEs at grade A* to C (new grading 9-4), including Maths and English.

Students without traditional qualifications are considered on an individual basis. Please request our individual apprenticeship leaflets for specific information.

Length of apprenticeship
Each apprenticeship varies in length. Typically, the University of Kent apprenticeships take from 18 months (Level 4) up to five years (Bachelor’s degree – Level 6) to complete. In all cases, the government imposes a minimum length and a funding time limit to each apprenticeship.

Hours of work
The minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, including any off-the-job training they undertake.

If the apprentice works fewer than 30 hours a week, the provider must extend the minimum duration of the apprenticeship (pro rata) to take account of this. This will also apply to any temporary period of part-time working.

Working fewer than 30 hours a week or being on a zero-hours contract must not be a barrier to successfully completing an apprenticeship.

Wages and benefits
All apprentices must receive the same benefits as other employees and must be an employee on their first day of their apprenticeship, having signed an employee/employer contract.

They must also be paid at least the minimum apprenticeship wage consistent with the law for the time they are in work and in off-the-job training. After the first 12 months, apprentices aged 19 and over should be paid the National Minimum Wage for their age group. The rates are updated in October each year. For further information, go to: www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage

HOW APPRENTICESHIPS ARE FUNDED

Apprenticeship levy
Since April 2017, employers in England with a pay bill of more than £3 million have been required to pay an apprenticeship levy. The funds are held in a digital account with the Apprenticeship Service.

Funds can only be spent on apprenticeship training, with the government adding an additional 10%. The government’s funding rules for all employers, levy-paying or non-levy paying, changed in May 2017. For more information, visit the Educational and Skills Funding Agency website: www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-technical-guide-for-employers

Government fee retention
The government pays 80% of the funding direct to the University from your digital account in equal monthly installments according to the duration of the apprenticeship.

When the apprentice has undertaken all the learning activity relevant to the apprenticeship, including taking the end-point assessment, the government pays the remaining 20% balance (up to the maximum value of the funding band) direct to the University.

Smaller employers
Employers with a pay bill of £3 million or less do not pay the levy but can access government funding, known as co-investment. See the next paragraph for details.

Employer/government co-investment
Where apprenticeship training is not funded from the employer’s digital account (non-levy-paying employers, and levy-paying employers with insufficient funds), employers will need to pay 10% of the agreed training cost up to the maximum value of the funding band, with the government paying the remaining 90% (known as co-investment). Where the cost of the apprenticeship is above the funding band, employers will need to pay 100% of the difference.

Additional payments
The government will make extra payments to employers to cover additional costs associated with training, if the apprentice is:
• aged between 16 and 18 years old; or
• aged between 19 and 24 years old and has either an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan provided by their local authority or has been in the care of their local authority.

Extra support for small employers
The government will fund all the apprenticeship training costs, up to the maximum value of the funding band, for employers with fewer than 50 staff. This only applies if, on the first day of the apprenticeship, the apprentice is:
• aged between 16 and 18; or
• aged between 19 and 24 years old and has either an EHC plan provided by their local authority or has been in the care of their local authority.

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They must also be paid at least the minimum apprenticeship wage consistent with the law for the time they are in work and in off-the-job training. After the first 12 months, apprentices aged 19 and over should be paid the National Minimum Wage for their age group. The rates are updated in October each year. For further information, go to: www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage

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• aged between 16 and 18; or
• aged between 19 and 24 years old and has either an EHC plan provided by their local authority or has been in the care of their local authority.
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Levy-paying employers
Q1 What can an employer spend their apprenticeship funds on?
Generally, funds in your apprenticeship service account and government co-investment funding can only be spent on apprenticeship training and end-point assessment. This must be with an approved training provider such as the University of Kent, and an assessment organisation. It can’t be spent on associated costs or on wider organisational training.

Q2 How do I pay the levy?
You pay the apprenticeship levy each month through the PAYE process in the same way you pay income tax or National Insurance contributions.

Q3 How do I access my funds?
Once you have declared the levy to HMRC, you access funding for apprenticeships through a new apprenticeship service account.

You will also be able to access an online apprenticeship service to select an appropriate standard, choose a training organisation such as the University of Kent, and advertise vacancies.

Q4 What government funds are available to our organisation?
The government applies a 10% top-up to the funds in your account for apprenticeship training in England. So for every £1 you contribute, you have £1.10 to spend. Additional funding is available for certain categories of apprentice, such as those aged between 16 and 18 and those who have been in local authority care. For details see ‘additional payments’ section on p8.

Non-levy paying employers
Q1 What government funding is my organisation entitled to?
The government pays 90% of apprenticeship training costs, up to the maximum amount of the government funding available for that apprenticeship. Your organisation pays the remaining 10% directly to the provider and you can spread the cost over the lifetime of the apprenticeship. The government refers to this arrangement as co-investment.

You must choose a government approved training provider (such as the University of Kent) and assessor who can deliver to non-levy-paying employers, in order to receive funding. Additional funds are available for certain categories of apprentice – see following question.

Q2 What additional funding is available?
Extra support is available for organisations with fewer than 50 employees, when they take on certain categories of apprentice such as those aged between 16 and 18 and those who have been in local authority care. For details see ‘extra support for small employers’ on p8.

Note: Government rules and guidance on apprenticeships are regularly updated and so the information in this brochure is subject to change. You are advised to check the latest information at www.gov.uk by searching for ‘apprentices’, or contact the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships.

“I’ve grown in confidence during my apprenticeship. When I started, I was quiet and didn’t speak much…but I was put in an environment where I had to give presentations and collaborate with colleagues. It’s good to know that I’ve progressed so far.”

Hajra Bibi
Research & Development laboratory apprentice
GlaxoSmithKline
If you are interested in our apprenticeship programmes and would like to find out more, please contact the team at the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships. We’ll be happy to help.

**Initial meeting**
We talk to you about your organisational needs and the apprenticeship training we can provide.

Our apprenticeship training is based upon apprenticeship standards, which have been developed by employer-led groups (or ‘trailblazers’) and approved by government. The University is actively involved in supporting trailblazers develop new standards aligned to Kent’s areas of expertise.

**Help with recruitment**
The University is here to support you and help find the most suitable candidates for your apprenticeships.

In order to get the best pool of candidates, we can help you advertise your vacancies by placing them on the University and government websites together with other apprenticeship recruitment websites. The Centre also offers other services to help with the process, which include candidate screening and shortlisting.

**Agree on training plan**
During the initial discussions, the University agrees with you the training plan and a provisional price. We ask for documentary proof of employers’ liability insurance and health and safety information. At this stage, we also check your eligibility for any government incentive payments.

**Apprentice sign up**
Once the apprentice has been recruited, we visit the apprentice in their workplace for their induction onto the programme.

At this point, a tri-party apprenticeship agreement is signed which includes a commitment statement, setting out how the University and the employer will support the achievement of the apprenticeship. This is a condition of the Education and Skills Funding Agency funding rules.

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**FIND OUT MORE**

**Contact the Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships at Kent**
Get in touch with our team for support and advice on all aspects of employing, training and assessing an apprentice.

T: +44 (0)1634 888459 or 888467
E: apprenticeships@kent.ac.uk
www.kent.ac.uk/apprenticeships

Centre for Higher and Degree Apprenticeships
University of Kent
Clocktower Building
Chatham Historic Dockyard
Kent ME4 4TE

**Government resources**
www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-higher-and-degree-apprenticeships

www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide/overview

**Apprenticeship hotline**
T: 0800 015 0400
nationalhelpdesk@apprenticeships.gov.uk

**National apprenticeship vacancies**
www.find apprenticeship.service.gov.uk
WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Contact us on:
T: +44 (0)1634 888459 or 888467
E: apprenticeships@kent.ac.uk
www.kent.ac.uk/apprenticeships