



**Apprenticeship Handbook –
Senior Leader Apprenticeship**

Published December 2022
Version 11

Foreword

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Arden University and I wish you well in your studies.

Arden University is at the forefront of distance and blended learning provision, not only in the UK but also all over the world. It intends to maintain this position as a leader in supported online learning. This means combining appropriate communication technologies and knowledge media with personal tuition and counselling to ensure that you can learn effectively and enjoyably.

Arden University takes its obligations to each of its apprentices very seriously. You have registered for an apprenticeship with particular personal goals in mind; our staff will work closely with your employer to help you achieve those goals successfully.

The purpose of this Handbook is to describe the procedures and policies that are an essential element in sustaining an effective relationship between Arden University and our learners. These policies make explicit the expectations on both sides. I advise you to familiarise yourself with the contents pages and to read any sections that are of interest to you. The Handbook should then be kept for more detailed consultation as particular issues arise. Most of the questions you have about Arden University practices will be answered in these pages.

I trust that you will find your association with Arden University a stimulating and rewarding experience.

**Professor Carl Lygo
Vice Chancellor and CEO
Arden University**

The benefits of undertaking an apprenticeship are clear for both the apprentice and the employer. As an apprentice, you can gain a qualification which provides you with both the technical and academic skills, such as critical thinking, required to operate more effectively within your organisation and provides a viable alternative to a full time degree programme. Employers are also increasingly seeing the benefits of apprenticeships and the impact they can have on their organisation, from both a performance and learning and development perspective.

The Apprenticeship Team at Arden University is focused on supporting you, as an apprentice, and your employer, to get the most of this qualification. As with other Apprenticeship Standards, individual module learning outcomes are linked with the Apprenticeship Standard's Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours, and therefore enable you to get a deeper understanding of how theoretical concepts and models can be applied in the work place setting.

This is an exciting new chapter in your career journey, and we wish you all the best in your studies.

The Apprenticeship Team

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Introduction

Welcome to your apprenticeship programme. In partnership with your employer, Arden University will support your 'on the job' work-based learning to achieve an apprenticeship without leaving your full-time employment.

You will be studying alongside other apprentices, who may be working for a range of different organisations, which will provide for a stimulating cohort of fellow apprentices with whom you can interact. Whilst you are expected to invest time and effort into your studies, assessments will mainly be focused on your own or your company's work, to maximise their value to you and your organisation. We hope that you will find your learning experience to be productive, enjoyable and successful.

The purpose of this handbook is to introduce you to apprenticeships with Arden University and to lay down the standards that the university requires from learners. It also sets out the way in which we operate.

In this document, you will also find guidance on various key aspects of your programme (such as online study, and masterclasses and assessment sessions).

Key Terms

Apprenticeship Standards and Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)	The Apprenticeship Standards outline what an Apprentice will be doing, and the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours required of them, by job role.
Break in Learning (BIL)	A temporary withdrawal from your programme for six weeks or more.
End Point Assessment (EPA)	The final stage of your apprenticeship with an independent panel who determine your final apprenticeship grade of achievement.
End Point Assessment (EPA) Gateway	The point at which you, your employer and Arden University agree that you are competent to be put forward for EPA.
e-Portfolio	An online platform where you will upload evidence and reflective tasks, preparing for EPA.
Extenuating Circumstances	Sudden and/or unforeseen circumstances that prevent you from submitting a module assessment (on the degree). If your claim is accepted, you will be permitted to submit at the next available submission period, without penalty.
Off the Job (OTJ)	As part of your employer's commitment and the requirements under the Apprenticeship Funding Rules, your employer must provide you with a minimum number of hours Off the Job time for study towards your apprenticeship. Your OTJ hours will be planned at your enrolment.
Tri-partite Meetings	Mandatory meetings conducted every 8-12 weeks between the you (the apprentice), your Coach and your employer.

What is an Apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a focused learning programme intent on assisting you to develop new skills and enhance their knowledge. For some it can be an opportunity to "learn whilst you earn", for others it will support your development if you have recently been promoted or been tasked with additional responsibilities or formalise significant occupational experience. At the end of this programme, you will have developed the Knowledge, Skills, Behaviours and experience to gain a nationally recognised qualification that confirms competence in your chosen area.

The Apprenticeship Structure

Error! Reference source not found. illustrates the structure of your apprenticeship, broken down into three interlinking components:

1. Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours.
2. Online scheduled learning
3. Off-the-job (OTJ) training and other activities.

Each component of the apprenticeship will help you to identify and capture evidence of effective implementation of the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours in the workplace required to complete your apprenticeship programme.

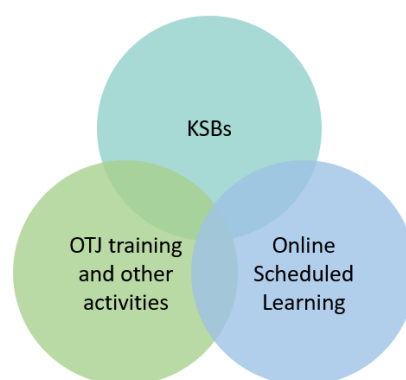


Figure 1: Apprenticeship Structure

The Apprenticeship Journey

Your apprenticeship programme and journey involve several key stages:

1. Application and enrolment.
2. On-programme.
3. End of programme project.
4. Gateway.
5. End Point Assessment.

Stage 1: Application and Enrolment

Induction

Our induction process aims for you to:

- Get to know staff and fellow apprentices.
- Gain a comprehensive understanding of various aspects of your programme of study.
- Access a range of resources to support your study.
- Ask questions relating to any aspect of the learning experience.
- Become acquainted with Arden University procedures and policies.

During your induction, we will introduce you to our facilities and learning resources, and the pastoral support available to you. In addition, we will explain the apprenticeship requirements and delivery model in full. Your timetable, sent to you with your offer letter or separately afterwards, will include details of induction dates and activities.

Skills Scan and Review of Prior Learning

As work-based learning programmes, apprenticeships aim to develop apprentices in their roles and/or to prepare them for roles with additional responsibilities which they are aspiring to achieve, or indeed to formalise occupational experience.

You will complete an initial review of your prior learning and a skills gap analysis and this will help to create your individual learning plan. This shows your key strengths and areas for development, within the context of your role over the duration of the programme.

Functional Skills: English and Maths

To successfully begin the apprenticeship, funding rules require all apprentices to undertake a Functional Skills Initial Assessment and to subsequently achieve level 2 competencies in English and Maths.

- If you already have GCSE, AS- or A-levels (or equivalents) in grades A-C in English/English Language/English Literature and Maths, you must submit evidence of your qualification certificates prior to starting the programme to be eligible for Functional Skills exemptions.
- If you have not previously achieved level 2 Functional Skills or equivalent qualifications, or if you no longer have the qualification certificates as evidence, you must complete diagnostic assessments before starting the programme. You will then complete level 2 Functional Skills qualifications alongside your apprenticeship.

The apprenticeship rules require all apprentices to achieve these level 2 qualifications, and you cannot progress beyond gateway to EPA without evidence of achievement of these qualifications.

Personal Development

Our aim during this programme is to support your development, equipping you with skills that will help you with your future career path and your personal and social development. We will do this in many ways, including by:

- Providing individual coach support.
- Increasing your awareness of key British values such as democracy, mutual respect, tolerance for all and the rule of the law.
- Assessing your personal learning and thinking skills, and providing appropriate support to ensure you are confident in yourself and your abilities.
- Conducting regular review meetings to support you with your plans.
- Working with you to reflect on personal behaviour and the moral responsibility that we all must support others and create a supportive and productive society.

Apprentice and Employer Obligations

The apprenticeship programme requires that you take personal responsibility for scheduling your own study time to ensure that you can complete the required activities and assessments before the deadlines. There are published regulations about how you can progress through your programme which can be viewed at <https://arden.ac.uk/about-arden/our-policies-standards>.

What we expect from you, the apprentice

You must:

1. Attend all scheduled sessions (or communicate with your tutors and Coach if you not able to attend).
2. Complete E-portfolio activities in a timely manner, logging your required off the job time.

What we expect from apprentice employers

Your employer must:

1. Adhere to the commitment statement.
2. Support you with your off the job hours.
3. Attend tripartite meetings throughout the duration of the apprenticeship.
4. Communicate with Arden University if there are issues or concerns that could affect your completion of the apprenticeship.

If these requirements are not fulfilled, including the off the job hours (a funding requirement), we will contact you to see if support is needed and to discuss any difficulties you are having completing the

off the job hours. If we do not hear back from you, we will escalate this to your employer, at which time a decision will be made as to whether you will remain on the apprenticeship programme.

In addition, by embarking on our apprenticeship programme, you confirm your commitment to Arden University's **Student Charter** (Annex 1). We are passionate about supporting people, achieving our best and inspiring progress. To help us support and inspire you to achieve your best, we have created a Charter – it's a set of guidelines that we can all follow, highlighting how we can work together to ensure you have a great learning experience.

Stage 2: On Programme

Key Programme Features and Learning Outcomes

Your programme is mapped to the relevant Apprenticeship Standard:

- Senior Leader.

You can find the Apprenticeship Standards at The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/occupational-maps/>.

The Apprenticeship Standard outlines the key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour that you will acquire as part of your apprenticeship.

Off the Job Hours

Apprenticeship programmes are designed to allow you to study alongside your work commitments, with your employer's support. Your employer has committed to allow you a minimum amount of your time off the job (OTJ).

You will discuss how and when you will complete and record your OTJ hours with your employer/line manager and Coach at your first coaching meeting. You may agree that you spend a full day each work week as your OTJ or you may agree to spread your hours out over the working week.

The following activities would count towards your OTJ hours so long as they take place within your normal working day and have relevant outcomes to meet the standards of your apprenticeship programme. Work towards your apprenticeship completed in your personal time (such as evenings or weekends) does not count. It is important to capture and record all your OTJ activities.

1. Attendance at online scheduled sessions.
2. Online training.
3. Coaching sessions.
4. Performing new elements of the job.
5. KSBs assessments.
6. Testing.
7. Assignment development.
8. Mentoring.
9. Job-related projects/secondments.
10. Conferences.
11. In-work placements.
12. Industry visits.
13. Shadowing a colleague.

Portfolio and E-Portfolio System

Your apprenticeship will be assessed, in part, by a portfolio of evidence. This evidences how you have met all the requirements of your Individual Learning Plan and the apprenticeship standard which lists all the required Knowledge, Skills and Behavioural outcomes.

You will have access to Arden's online E-portfolio system to help you build your portfolio. At application, you will receive an email to create your E-portfolio account and password and complete all information required for your application.

Coaching

At the start of your programme, we will assign you to a Coach who will support you throughout the duration of your programme.

Your Coach will support you with the Apprentice E-Portfolio, building evidence against the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours for your programme. This portfolio of evidence will then be assessed when you reach End Point Assessment (EPA), when the Independent Assessor will assess that you have successfully implemented the KSBs within your place of work.

The first meeting allows you, your line manager/employer and your Coach to get to know one another, and:

1. Go through the Skills Scan and agree targets.
2. Discuss and agree the importance of the Off the Job (OTJ) hours necessary to complete the apprenticeship, with examples of OTJ activities (see more details below).
3. Completing an apprenticeship system health-check, ensuring you have the required access needed for your apprenticeship.

Tripartite Meetings

You will attend a tripartite meeting every 8-12 weeks, with your line manager/employer and your Coach. It is mandatory for all of you to attend these meetings.

Tripartite meetings take place and provide an opportunity to discuss your progress and next steps on the programme. It is also an opportunity to raise any areas of concern or ask for additional support to help you complete your E-Portfolio.

Your Coach will make the arrangements with you to book your tripartite meetings in.

Each tripartite meeting must be logged within your E-Portfolio, confirming that it has taken place and what you discussed. All parties must sign this record.

Library Resources

To support your studies, you have access to our extensive Digital Library which contains more than 35,000 journal titles, thousands of eBooks and a range of academic and industry databases.

Assessments

There are several types of assessment within the apprenticeship programme:

1. Portfolio of evidence.
2. End of programme project.
3. End Point Assessment (EPA).

The portfolio evidences how you have met all the requirements of your individual learning plan or Apprenticeship Standard, which lists all the required Knowledge, Skills and Behavioural outcomes.

Stage 3: End of Programme Project

As you near the end of the programme, you will complete a project. The theme will be agreed between you, your employer and the university, ensuring that support mechanisms are in place to help you complete it. You will first identify what is required and present the Terms of Reference and initial plan for agreement with your employer and Arden University.

Stage 4: Gateway

Table 1: Gateway Requirements

Programme	Gateway requirement
Senior Leader Apprenticeship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve English and mathematics Level 2 • Submit a portfolio of evidence • Submit end of programme project proposal title and scope (EPAO must sign this off)

After you have finished the required pre-Gateway activities, we will hold a meeting with you and your line manager to confirm you have met the requirements of the KSBs and the occupational competency expected from the programme outcomes that you have met all the learning outcomes required to meet the standards as outlined in your apprenticeship. All parties must agree before you may proceed through the Gateway towards EPA (End Point Assessment). If you need any reasonable adjustments for EPA, we will notify the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) at this stage, so that they can put a support plan in place.

Stage 5: End Point Assessment

Table 2: EPA Requirements

Programme	EPA method (stage 1)	EPA method (stage 2)
Senior Leader Apprenticeship	End of programme project proposal (4000 word +/- 10%), presentation (20 mins) with questioning (40 mins)	Professional discussion (60 mins) underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

End Point Assessment (EPA) is the final stage towards completing your apprenticeship. You will be independently assessed by the awarding body (End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO)) that regulates the Apprenticeship Standard that you are studying.

The appointed EPAO will take the lead on your EPA. The EPAO will contact you and your line manager to arrange a call to discuss the schedule of your EPA and how it will be carried out. The call will confirm the date and the arrangements for your EPA.

During the final couple of months of your apprenticeship, your Coach will ensure that you and your line manager are fully prepared for the EPA.

On successful completion of the EPA, the EPAO will award you an apprenticeship grading and you will receive your apprenticeship completion certificate.

Getting Help and Support: Learner Welfare

You will receive lots of support whilst studying with us. Once you enrol, you will have access to a range of services all designed to give you a head start, including a wide range of online resources.

Apprenticeships Team

The Apprenticeships Team will ensure that you are progressing well in your studies and assist with any administrative queries you may have. The team will offer confidential support and will listen and help you to discuss anything that may be worrying you, causing anxiety or affecting your ability to study.

You should also notify the team if you have any change in your circumstances, including if your name or contact details change.

Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700
Email: apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk

Special Educational Needs Support

Provide support to any apprentice with a diagnosed Special Educational Need.

Tel: +44 (0) 24 76 515700
Email: sen@arden.ac.uk

Coach

Your Coach will guide and support you for the duration of your programme, helping you to plan your studies and set up your portfolio using the Apprenticeship portfolio system.

Your Coach will provide support and advice to you including:

- Providing guidance and support throughout your Apprenticeship.
- Working with you and your line manager (or mentor) to develop your individual learning plan.
- Helping you capture your learning journey through reflections and an E-Portfolio and prepare for your End Point Assessment.
- Holding regular meetings with you via videocall, to support work-based learning with your line manager or mentor.
- Monitoring your participation and progress as well as signing off workplace evidence once uploaded to your E-portfolio.
- Providing a response to your queries, typically within 2 working days.

You will meet with your Coach regularly in scheduled one-to-one sessions throughout your programme. Within each session, you will discuss your progress towards evidencing the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour as your Coach supports you to generate this evidence and complete your Apprenticeship portfolio for final EPA.

Your Coach will also regularly communicate with your employer regarding your progress, and to seek their feedback in terms of the continuous improvement of the programme and Arden's Apprenticeship delivery model.

Facilitators

Facilitators are approved subject specialists who provide academic advice and guidance, and answer your questions of an academic nature. They will support your academic progress.

Your Employer

Your Apprenticeship is fully funded by your employer via the Apprenticeship Levy (if they are a levy payer) or partly funded if they are a non-levy payer.

Your employer has committed to provide you with the resources and time to be able to complete your programme of study successfully.

If you experience any problems with the support from your employer, for example if you are not being given appropriate study time, or have trouble gaining reasonable access to organisational information or data that you wish to use for your assessments or final project, you should discuss this with your employer in the first instance, but feel free to also raise any such issues with your lecturer(s), Coach or the Apprenticeships Team (apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk).

Peer Support

We believe success on the programme will be enhanced through the development of a supportive learning community. You will have the opportunity to undertake group tasks with other apprentices. As an apprentice, you will normally remain with your initial cohort throughout your programme of study, and you will meet and interact with your fellow apprentices.

Careers Advice and Employability Skills

You will have access to an online Careers' portal with comprehensive personal and career development resources to assist you in developing your career.

NUS Apprentice extra card

NUS Apprentice extra card is a discount card for UK apprentices, featuring discounts from hundreds of companies in-store and online.

The card costs £11 and is valid for 12 months. To buy a card, visit <https://www.apprenticeextra.co.uk/buy-now.aspx>

Change of Circumstances or Personal Details

If your circumstances or personal details (such as your name, address, contact details) change, you must:

1. Request a CHOC (Change of Circumstances) Form **within 14 days of the change**, from apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk.

If you change employer during your apprenticeship, **at least 30 days prior to your new employer start date**, you must:

1. Inform your Coach and apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk
2. Complete a CHOC Form.
3. Confirm your new employer is prepared to support the remainder of your apprenticeship.

Failure to inform Arden of the change of employer may result in suspension or withdrawal from your apprenticeship programme.

Safeguarding, Prevent and Fundamental British Values

We are committed to the safety and welfare of all our students and apprentices. Our policies around safeguarding, Prevent and Fundamental British Values seek to ensure that all students and apprentices:

- Have a positive and enjoyable experience at Arden University.
- Have the opportunity to study in environments, including the workplace, where they are safe, listened to, respected and valued.
- Are supported to challenge discrimination and promote the right to equal protection, and are protected from any form of abuse whilst participating in all forms of learning sessions, work-based activities and online discussions.

- Are actively encouraged to notice and manage their own wellbeing, and supported to address any issues of wellbeing and mental and physical health.

All Arden staff are trained to support you and can find appropriate advice and guidance when issues arise, to ensure that we can meet the ambitions set out above in all learning settings.

We will also work with employers to ensure that they are taking responsibility for apprentices' welfare in the workplace. This will mean that they will need to understand and apply relevant regulations and have an awareness of when and where issues might arise. As an apprentice in the workplace, you should feel protected and able to raise any concern with your employer.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a broad term requiring processes and policies to protect and prevent the harm of individuals against harm, abuse and neglect, such as:

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| • Physical abuse | • Discrimination |
| • Emotional abuse | • Neglect |
| • Sexual abuse | • Self-neglect |
| • Financial abuse | • Self-harm |

Safeguarding in practice should ensure that all students and apprentices are protected, regardless of age, gender, religious beliefs, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. In the case of apprentices, this means that this protection is available in education settings at university, online and in the workplace, and that these settings have in practice a culture of support that reflects statutory responsibilities.

Arden University's role in safeguarding is to:

- Ensure that the safeguarding policy is applied to all learning settings.
- Ensure that apprentices understand the aims of safeguarding how it protects them and how they can access support
- Promote a culture which promotes safeguarding, reducing the potential for harm to be caused or threatened.
- Ensure that university staff working with young or vulnerable people have had an appropriate check completed with the Disclosure and Barring Service.
- Work with employers to ensure that they are aware of their obligations, as well as the University's so that apprentices are protected in all cases.
- Work with employers when concerns are raised, ensuring that outcomes are reached and implemented to protect the apprentice(s) involved.
- Be available for apprentices to ensure they feel they can always raise concerns that they have.
- Ensure that any external speakers are approved.

The apprentice employer's role in safeguarding is to:

- Ensure that they are aware and understand relevant government legislation.
- Understand what safeguarding means in practice at their organisation, in the context of the responsibilities they have for the people they employ.
- Promote a culture which promotes safeguarding, reducing the potential for harm to be caused or threatened.
- Ensure that any people working with young or vulnerable people have had an appropriate check completed with the Disclosure and Barring service.
- Ensure that staff working with apprentices are aware of their Safeguarding duties and that they present no concern to the apprentices with whom they work.
- Be available for apprentices to ensure they feel they can always raise concerns that they have.
- Identify a person responsible for safeguarding.

We believe that safeguarding applies to everyone, not matter their age, job role or position. Being safe, well and protected from harm is a fundamental right whatever your point in your education or career. Arden's staff, programmes of study, systems and processes are all built with this in mind.

The nature of the risk of harm may differ, depending on a learner's specific situation and point in their career or life. Arden is committed to recognising the context of learner's situation and ensuring our approach to supporting their health, wellbeing and safety is in context, relevant and appropriate.

In the event of any concern of a safeguarding nature, an apprentice or chosen representative should contact the Designated Safeguarding Person by emailing safeguarding@arden.ac.uk or otherwise by contacting:

Suzanne Mitchell, Student Experience Director
smitchell@arden.ac.uk

Prevent

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 places a duty on specified authorities, including universities, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is known as the Prevent Duty.

The Prevent Duty is about keeping people and communities safe from the threat of terrorism. Apprentices should be protected from being radicalised or exposed to extremist views. As such as a part of your learning, you will be required to attend a session around this topic.

Arden University's role in the Prevent Duty is to:

- Ensure that all staff are aware of the Prevent duty and the obligations they are required to meet to enable this.
- Have rigorous processes and procedures to ensure that they meet statutory requirements and government guidance.
- Provide clear channels for apprentices to discuss and raise concerns, so that these can be considered in a non-discriminatory, open environment.
- Ensure prompt response to any concerns raised.

The apprentice employer's role in the Prevent Duty is to:

- Demonstrate a commitment to the Prevent Duty.
- Seek support and guidance if concerns are raised through contacting the University Safeguarding Team, or their local police force or dialling 101.

In the event of any concern relating to Prevent, any apprentice, student, staff member or other individual should email prevent@arden.ac.uk or contact the Prevent lead:

Steve Clayton, University Registrar
sclayton@arden.ac.uk

Fundamental British Values

As part of our commitment to Equality and Diversity and to ensure Arden University meets its safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities, it is important that we promote Fundamental British Values. These are defined by the Department for Education as being:

- Democracy.
- The Rule of Law.

- Individual Liberty.
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith.

Arden University's role in promoting Fundamental British Values is to:

- Promote British values throughout our apprenticeship programmes.
- Create opportunities for apprentices to apply their learning to relevant situations and contexts.
- Encourage apprentices to respect each other and their differences, including with regard to protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act 2010.

Online Safety

Online delivery is central to Arden University's method of academic delivery. As such, we take the online safety of all of our apprentices seriously and have robust measures in place to ensure this. Our Acceptable Use and Social Media Policy for Students, details how we achieve this.

In any event and if you have any concerns or queries around these issues, please do not hesitate to contact your Arden Coach or manager at work so that issues can be managed efficiently.

An 'At Risk' Apprentice

There are many ways in which we look to support you throughout your programme, but if you show a lack of commitment, as recognised in tripartite meetings, having shown: low/non-attendance at scheduled online sessions, failure to attend/cancellation of review meetings and 1:1's and/or failure to evidence completion of OTJ training activities in the e-portfolio, you will be recognised as an 'at risk' apprentice.

If there are any concerns at any point, the Apprenticeships Team (apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk) and/or your Coach will first look to work with you to overcome any barriers. If this means additional support and check-in meetings, we will look to implement this.

If at any point we feel that your employer needs to be aware or consulted, we will inform you of this. Ultimately, we will look to work together to promote continuation and completion of the programme.

Break in Learning (BIL)

You can apply for a 'Break in Learning' for long-term planned absences such as medical treatment, maternity or paternity leave and other personal reasons. A BIL does not include annual leave or redundancy.

Your manager must agree to the BIL prior to you applying and a proposed date of return will need to be discussed.

We will notify the apprenticeship funding body if you choose to take a formal BIL, so that funding will be paused until you return to study.

To apply for a Break in Learning:

1. Contact the Apprenticeships Team (apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk) or your Coach to discuss your circumstances.
2. Complete the 'Break in Learning' form and return this to the Apprenticeships Team (apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk) with a signed and dated letter or email of approval from your employer.

We will then process your request.

While you are on your Break in Learning, the Apprenticeship Team will keep in touch with you, to help facilitate your return.

Depending on the length of your Break in Learning, upon your return, you may have to join a different cohort.

Withdrawing from your studies

If you wish to withdraw from your programme, you should contact the Apprenticeships Team to discuss what has led to your decision and if there is anything that can be put into place to see you remain on the programme.

If you still wish to withdraw following any intervention put in place, you should complete and return a Withdrawal Form. We will formally process this, removing you from your apprenticeship programme, and we will also notify the ESFA.

Your Feedback

We are committed to providing you with the best possible service and we believe the best way to improve is to listen to your views.

We value your feedback and encourage you to pass on your comments, compliments or concerns.

If you have feedback on a particular module, the best way to share this is by completing the **Module Evaluation Survey**. This will appear on your module page. We also run end of module **focus groups** where you can provide feedback.

You can also provide feedback at any time to the Apprenticeships Team via apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk.

Please note that all feedback will be dealt with in strictest confidence and wherever possible anonymity will be maintained. Your feedback will also be considered at Arden University's Apprenticeship Programme Management Committee.

Appeals and Complaints

CMI Appeals Policy

CMI recognises that all apprentices should have access to fair and reliable assessment in which they play an active part. Apprentices therefore have a right to appeal against end point assessment decisions which are unclear or seem unfair. There are 2 stages detailed in the Apprentice Appeals Procedure and each stage must be exhausted before proceeding to the next one.

The main reasons for appeal are likely to be:

- Apprentices do not understand why they are not regarded as competent, due to a lack of, or unclear feedback from CMI.
- Apprentices believe they are competent and that the Independent Apprenticeship Assessor has either misjudged them or has failed to use some vital evidence.

If an apprentice wishes to make an appeal then they must email epa@managers.org.uk within 10 working days of receiving their final grading result (FAIL, PASS, MERIT, DISTINCTION) to advise that they wish to appeal. There are 2 stages to an appeal and the EPA Quality Manager decision for each stage is final.

The first stage requires the original EPA to be reviewed by CMI's EPA Internal Quality Assurance Representative who will make a recommendation. This recommendation will be sent to the EPA Quality Manager to agree on a final decision. This final decision will be sent to the Apprentice within 15 working days. The Apprentice will then have a further 10 working days to advise if they want to move to Stage 2.

The second stage of appeal requires the Apprentice to resit their EPA. This second EPA will be arranged for a suitable date/time and with a different IAA and must be selected for internal quality assurance. The overall grading is then sent to the EPA Quality Manager whose decision is final.

The cost to appeal a grading decision is **£250** (wef 1st April 2019).

If an apprentice does not notify CMI that they wish to appeal their final grading within the 10 working days after receiving their result, then this is the result that will be recorded within Skillsure and advised to the ESFA.

Complaints Procedure

If you have a complaint relating to any aspect of your educational experience, it is recommended that you contact the Apprenticeships Team (apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk) in the first instance. Wherever possible, the University would wish to see any complaint resolved as close as possible to its origin, and with a minimum formality.

For full details of the complaints procedure, please refer to the [Complaints Procedure](#).

In addition, if you're unhappy with the outcome you can complain to the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) about how your complaint was handled.

You must contact the ESFA within 3 months of getting a decision from your organisation. Email or post your complaint to the ESFA complaints team.

ESFA will acknowledge your complaint within 5 days and will let you know what will happen next.

If you're unhappy with the ESFA response, you can write to the complaints adjudicator to decide on your case if you're unhappy with how the ESFA has dealt with your complaint.

ESFA complaints team

complaints.ESFA@education.gov.uk

Complaints team
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

Complaints adjudicator

Legal and Information Compliance
Education and Skills Funding Agency
Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry
CV1 2WT

GDPR

Arden University takes the protection of your personal data very seriously and are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. The General Data Protection Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 give people the right to know what information is held about them and requires Arden University to ensure that personal information relating to living individuals is handled properly, held in confidence and is protected from inappropriate disclosure to third parties. As part of our legal obligations we have published a Privacy Policy which you may find in the following link; <https://arden.ac.uk/privacypolicy>

Equality and Diversity

We are committed to providing equal opportunities for staff, learners, applicants and all persons with whom it deals and will not tolerate any discriminatory behaviour with respect to ethnicity, race, religious belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, pregnancy, maternity, age or disability, including mental health. These characteristics align with the protected characteristics defined in the Equalities Act 2010. For further information, please refer to Arden's [Equality and Diversity Policy](#).

Annex – Our Charter

At Arden University, we are passionate about supporting people, achieving our best and inspiring progress. To help us support and inspire you to achieve your best, we have created a Charter – it's a set of guidelines that we can all follow, highlighting how we can work together to ensure you have a great learning experience.

To ensure you have a great learning experience, we ask that you:

- Treat everyone that works or studies with Arden with respect and comply with our policies and regulations
- Engage positively with your programme, your lecturers and fellow learners to make the most of the learning opportunities we provide
- Help us understand your motivations, personal schedule and targets so that we can help you achieve your goals
- Keep your lecturers and Coach updated on your progress, how you are feeling and if you have any concerns that may be holding you back
- Commit to your studies by attending and taking part in scheduled activities
- Seek help and advice when you need it and make the most of the support available to you
- Complete and hand in assessments on time, with diligence and honesty, whether or not they count towards the final mark and take on board the feedback we provide to help you succeed
- Be an 'Arden ambassador' and promote good, positive behaviour at all times
- Tell us what you think by providing helpful feedback through evaluations, surveys and your Student/Apprentice Representatives.
- Keep up to date about your rights and responsibilities and work with your Student/Apprentice Representatives.

To help you have a great learning experience, we will:

- Provide a warm welcome and be respectful and professional at all times
- Continually deliver high quality, engaging teaching and learning opportunities and access to a wide range of online learning materials
- Publish clear and accurate information about your programme and our policies, procedures and regulations
- Support you on your journey by actively encouraging you to engage with and successfully complete your programme
- Work with you to clarify your career aspirations and give you the tools to achieve your goals
- Give you helpful and timely feedback on your assessments, offering guidance for improvement and supporting your development
- Equip you with the resources and academic and pastoral support needed to achieve the learning outcomes for your programme
- Help you develop a set of personal and professional skills over and above your academic studies as laid out in our 'graduate attributes' (explained in your Programme Handbook)
- Create opportunities to work with others and network with learners from all around the world
- Boost your employability by building on your transferable skills throughout your studies
- Encourage you to develop professional ethics, to strive for equal opportunities and to value diversity
- Listen and respond to constructive feedback and support you to participate in the development of the University.