



Apprenticeship Handbook

L5 Operational Manager

Version 2

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Welcome to your Programme

Whether you are just starting out in the world of work, wish to progress in your career or are looking to gain improved knowledge and skills, Apprenticeships are an excellent way to achieve your goals.

Apprenticeships are closely aligned to real job roles and built to enhance your professional capabilities and industry understanding. Throughout your apprenticeship journey, you'll be supported by both your employer and your Arden University Coach, who will offer expert guidance to help you grow personally and professionally and prepare for the next stage in your career.

This handbook provides a useful guide to everything you need to know about Apprenticeships and your journey as a learner, as well as containing information on getting the most out of your programme.

We recommend taking some time to browse through the contents and referring to it whenever you need to as many of the common questions apprentices have will be covered here.

Whatever your goals and aspirations, we're here to support you every step of the way, helping you develop, progress, and succeed and we're delighted to welcome you to Arden University and wish you every success as you begin your apprenticeship journey

The Apprenticeship Team

Introduction

What is an Apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a great option whether you are starting out in your career, already in employment and looking to develop professionally, stepping into a new role with greater responsibility, or considering a change in career direction.

Apprenticeships combine paid employment with structured learning, allowing you to develop new skills, knowledge, and behaviours that are directly relevant to your job role, industry, and long-term career goals.

During your apprenticeship, part of your contracted working hours will be dedicated to learning. The remainder of your time will be spent applying what you have learned in the workplace, helping you to build confidence and competence in your role as you progress.

Apprenticeships:

- Are occupation focused. While some apprenticeships are mapped to job roles and may include a relevant qualification, they are not qualification-led.
- Focus on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours you need to demonstrate by the end of your apprenticeship.
- Are assessed through an independent End Point Assessment (EPA), which allows you to demonstrate your occupational competence at the conclusion of the programme.

Apprenticeships also:

- Support your professional, personal, and social development, equipping you with transferable skills that will benefit your future career.
- Increase your awareness of Fundamental British Values (FBVs), including democracy, mutual respect, tolerance of others, and the rule of law.
- Support the development of your personal learning and thinking skills, with tailored guidance to help you grow in confidence and recognise your strengths.

Key contacts

- Your Apprenticeship Coach
 - Your dedicated coach's details will be shared with you at the start of your programme
- Apprentice Support (all general enquiries)
 - Email: apprenticesupport@arden.ac.uk
 - Tel: +44 (0)2476 515 700
- Functional Skills Tutors:
 - Email: functionalskills@arden.ac.uk
- IT Support:
 - Email: help@arden.ac.uk
- Academic Skills, Library & English Language Hub:
 - [Website](#)
 - Email: library@arden.ac.uk
- Careers and Employability:
 - [Website](#) & [Career Advice | Arden University](#)
 - Email: careers@arden.ac.uk
- Student Wellbeing Services:
 - [Website](#)
 - Email: wellbeing@arde.ac.uk
- Students' Association:
 - [Website](#)
 - Email: studentvoice@arden.ac.uk
- Safeguarding & Prevent:
 - [Website](#)
 - Email: safeguarding@arden.ac.uk
 - Email: prevent@arden.ac.uk

Programme Expectations

At Arden University, we are passionate about supporting you to achieve your best. To help us do this, we have outlined clear expectations below. These set out how we work together to support your success, wellbeing, and safety throughout your programme.

Our programme principles

Our programme is underpinned by the following principles. We aim to:

- Prioritise excellent learning, teaching, and support
- Champion respect and inclusion
- Provide meaningful support
- Foster engagement and a sense of community
- Empower your student voice

What you can expect from Arden University

We will:

- Deliver high-quality, engaging teaching and learning opportunities, with access to a wide range of online learning materials
- Support you throughout your journey by communicating in a timely, transparent, and clear way
- Provide the right coaching, academic, and pastoral support to help you achieve, and listen to your feedback to support your development
- Create opportunities for you to interact and network with other learners
- Celebrate and protect the diversity of our students, staff, and wider community
- Encourage you to speak up and help influence and improve how the University develops
- Ensure you are treated fairly and respectfully, and that you are aware of your rights and responsibilities

What Arden University expects from you

You are expected to:

- Treat everyone at the University with respect
- Adhere to University policies and regulations, which are designed to maximise the quality of the experience for everyone

- Engage fully with all elements of your programme, including working with your coaches and lecturers, collaborating with fellow apprentices, and completing assessments and learning activities.
- Commit to your studies by attending and actively participating in all scheduled activities
- Complete apprenticeship portfolio activities in a timely manner
- Monitor and manage your off-the-job (OTJ) training requirements, ensuring this is documented and reviewed regularly
- Seek help and advice when needed and make full use of the support available to you
- Notify us if you have any additional needs or require extra support at any point during your programme
- Contribute to a positive, inclusive, and diverse University community
- Provide meaningful feedback about your experience to help drive positive change at the University

What Can You Expect from Your Employer?

Your employer plays a key role in supporting your success on the apprenticeship. In addition to meeting their contractual obligations, they are expected to actively support your learning and development in the workplace.

Your employer should:

- Meet the commitments outlined in the apprenticeship training plan to ensure agreed responsibilities are fulfilled
- Support you in completing your off-the-job (OTJ) training hours, providing flexibility to allow sufficient time for learning
- Attend tripartite meetings with you and your Arden University coach throughout the apprenticeship to review progress, set goals, and address any challenges
- Communicate promptly with Arden University about any issues or concerns that may impact your ability to complete the apprenticeship
- Provide opportunities for you to apply your learning in the workplace, enabling you to translate theory into practice through real-life projects, leadership challenges, or operational improvements
- Provide access to relevant tools, resources, and data to support the achievement of apprenticeship learning objectives
- Offer mentorship, feedback, and coaching on workplace behaviours, leadership skills, and operational decision-making

- Encourage reflective practice to help you identify what is working well, areas for improvement, and links between workplace experience and apprenticeship learning
- Support the development of transferable skills such as communication, problem-solving, project management, and team leadership, aligned to Level 5 learning outcomes
- Promote a culture of continuous learning, where innovation, experimentation, and professional growth are encouraged

Working in Partnership

We work closely in partnership with your employer to support your progress throughout the apprenticeship. If you experience difficulties or begin to fall behind in your studies, we will contact you directly to discuss your support needs and identify ways to help you get back on track.

If we do not receive a response, it may be necessary to inform your employer so that, together, we can agree the most appropriate next steps. At this stage, a decision may be made regarding your continued participation in the apprenticeship programme, always with the aim of ensuring you are given every opportunity to succeed.

Policies

These are the core documents to help you understand and navigate your way through your experience at Arden University. They are designed to help you get the right support and be aware of your student rights. Our full list of relevant academic policies can be found [here](#).

The Managing for Operational Success Apprenticeship

All apprenticeship programmes are underpinned by an industry developed Apprenticeship Standard. Your programme is based on the Operations Manager Apprenticeship Standard, which can be found on the Skills England website [HERE](#). The Standard includes:

- The types of occupations and roles the programme is suitable for.
- The key Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) that you will acquire as part of your apprenticeship
- The requirement of your programmes End Point Assessment (EPA)

By using this apprenticeship standard, Arden University has developed a unique, inter-disciplinary and integrative educational programme for those seeking to develop and consolidate their managerial achievements to become more effective managers, while also delivering professional progression to Chartered Manager status. You can find your programme specification [HERE](#).

The purpose of your programme is to provide you with:

- The opportunity to demonstrate competence and professional growth, benchmarked against the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours from the L5 Operations Manager Apprenticeship Standard.
- A sound platform from which to successfully progress to Apprenticeship End Point Assessment
- A detailed understanding of leadership, with both operational and project responsibilities.
- The essential employability skills and tools to be effective ethical practitioners in a business environment.
- The opportunity to create and take ownership of a work-based project, relating to a real business application and benefit to the apprentice's occupation
- A stimulating and flexible online learning environment, which is based upon the values of openness, ownership, and professional development.

Both during and on completion of the programme, you will bring back tangible benefits for your organisation including your ability to:

- Lead teams and manage projects effectively.
- Drive organisational performance and change.

- Apply operational and people-management skills to deliver measurable business results.
- Navigate complex environments across sectors (public, private, third sector).

The programme is designed to stretch you and equip you to apply management skills in practice, adapt to new scenarios and support the development of effective solutions in their workplace.

Pathways, Routes, and Your Apprenticeship Journey

You will choose one of three pathways, relevant to your industry and role:

1. **Business** – Achieving Business Excellence
2. **Health and Care** – Inclusive Leadership in Health and Care
3. **Sustainability** – Driving Sustainable Operations

The programme is designed to enable you to master the skills, knowledge, and behaviours required for your managerial role, and is centred around the practical, work-based application of the apprenticeship standard KSBs.

There is also the option to include an academic element via the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) written assessments. Before enrolment to the programme, you will be required to choose one of three routes within your chosen pathway:

1. **Apprenticeship only route** – No CMI unit written assessment submissions
2. **Apprenticeship plus CMI Award route** – One CMI unit written assessment submission
3. **Apprenticeship plus CMI Certificate route** – Three CMI unit written assessment submissions

We recognise that academic study is not for everyone, which may be why you chose an apprenticeship in the first place. Regardless of the route chosen, all apprentices follow the same core learning journey, attend the same sessions, and have access to the same support. The main difference is the requirement to complete additional CMI assessments.

Choosing the Right Pathway and Route

Decisions about your pathway and route are made pre-enrolment during an interview with you and your line manager. During this interview, we will discuss:

- Your current role and responsibilities
- Your career aspirations and intended next steps

- Which pathway and route best align with your goals

This ensures that the training plan accurately reflects your chosen pathway and route. The conversation also helps determine whether you should complete the apprenticeship standard alone or include one of the CMI assessment options, ensuring your learning journey aligns with both your professional development and workplace needs.

Throughout the process, guidance is provided on each pathway, the requirements of the CMI options, and potential career benefits, ensuring apprentices make informed choices.

Programme Duration and Structure

Your apprenticeship journey is approximately 20 months in total:

- **15 months** on-programme learning
- **Up to 5 months** for End Point Assessment (EPA)

The journey consists of four main stages:

1. **Orientation and First Day of Learning** – This marks the official start of your apprenticeship. Day 1 is a live, 2-hour taught learning session, where you will formally begin your programme, engage in learning activities, meet your cohort and tutors, and be introduced to expectations, systems, and support available throughout the apprenticeship.
2. **On-Programme Phases** – delivery of the apprenticeship standard, practical application, workplace projects, and optional CMI assessments
3. **Gateway** – readiness check for End Point Assessment, ensuring all KSBs and work-based requirements are met
4. **End Point Assessment (EPA)** – final synoptic assessment of knowledge, skills, and behaviours

Summary

All apprentices follow a consistent core programme structure with full coverage of the apprenticeship standard KSBs. Differentiation is achieved through Phase 3 work-based projects, contextualised resources, and optional CMI assessments, allowing meaningful application in the workplace while maintaining the integrity of the apprenticeship. The pre-enrolment interview with your employer ensures that each learner is placed on the pathway and route best suited to their current role and professional goals.

Qualifications Awarded

Upon successfully completing End Point Assessment, you will receive:

- L5 Operations Manager Apprenticeship (Awarded by the Department for Education)

If you choose the apprenticeship plus CMI Award route, you will also receive:

- CMI L5 Management and Leadership Award (Awarded by CMI)

If you choose the apprenticeship plus CMI Certificate route, you will also receive:

- CMI L5 Management and Leadership Certificate (Awarded by CMI)

Progression Opportunities and Next Steps

When you successfully complete the Managing for Operational Success (Level 5 Operations Manager) Apprenticeship and pass End Point Assessment (EPA), you may be able to progress onto other relevant Arden University programmes using Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) allows you to gain formal recognition for learning you have already completed before applying for a new programme. This learning may come from previous study or from relevant work and professional experience. RPL can be used to help meet course entry requirements and reduce the amount of study you need to complete, where appropriate.

You may be considered for RPL through:

- **Recognised Prior Certificated Learning (RPCL)** – where you have successfully completed relevant higher education study in the UK or internationally
- **Recognised Prior Experiential Learning (RPEL)** – where your prior learning comes from work experience, in-company training, or professional practice

To achieve an Arden University award, you must study at least one third of the total credits for the qualification (or 50% for Degree Apprenticeships). Previously achieved credit may count towards your award, subject to policy and professional body requirements.

What You Will Achieve

After successfully completing EPA, you will have:

- A **Level 5 qualification**, recognised by Ofqual

- A minimum of **18 months' relevant industry experience**

Using the exemption RPL route, you may be able to:

- Enrol onto Level 6 (final 120 credits) of a subject-relevant undergraduate degree
- Progress to complete the final 180 credits of a subject-relevant Degree Apprenticeship

Additional Progression Routes

In addition to progressing to Level 6, you may also choose to broaden or specialise your professional profile through alternative pathways.

One option is to progress into a specialist apprenticeship or qualification that aligns with your role or future career goals. This type of pathway allows you to develop deeper or more focused knowledge in a particular area, while building on the operational and people management skills gained at Level 5.

Professional Development and Certifications

You may further enhance your professional standing by working towards:

- Chartered Manager status through the CMI
- Project management certifications (such as PRINCE2 or Agile)
- Lean Six Sigma qualifications to support operational improvement

Career Progression Opportunities

Completing the Level 5 Operations Manager Apprenticeship can support progression into roles such as:

- Senior Operations Manager
- Departmental or Divisional Manager
- Head of Operations
- Business Improvement Manager

Ongoing Skills Development

Continuous development is key to long-term success. You may continue to build skills in:

- Strategic leadership



- Change management
- Data-driven decision-making
- Sustainability and responsible leadership

Overall, the Level 5 Operations Manager Apprenticeship provides a strong foundation and opens multiple academic, professional and career progression routes. These include progression to Level 6 qualifications and lateral development through specialist pathways, helping you move confidently towards senior leadership or specialist roles.

Careers Advice and Support

You will have access to a wealth of impartial careers and future planning advice throughout your time on the programme. You will be signposted to the Arden University Careers Advice pages and Arden Futures, ensuring you are aware of the full range of academic, professional and employment opportunities available to you.

Careers guidance, including discussions around destinations and next steps, will form a core part of your Individual Learning Plan (ILP). This includes stretch and challenge conversations, which take place during regular one-to-one coaching meetings and at key milestones throughout the programme.

All progression options will be explored in an impartial and learner-centred way, helping you make informed decisions about your next steps, whether that is further study, professional development, progression within your organisation, or an alternative career pathway.

Stage 1: Orientation and First Day of Learning

This stage marks the official start of your apprenticeship. You are required to attend two, mandatory induction events: a pre-start orientation session and Day 1 of learning (FDOL). These sessions are designed to set you up for success and ensure you are fully prepared for your programme.

1. Orientation: This session provides an overview of your apprenticeship, including key milestones, expectations, and engagement requirements. You will meet the delivery and coaching team, who will guide you on

assessments, attendance, and using the online learning tools throughout your programme.

2. First Day of Learning (FDOL): Day 1 is a live, 2-hour taught session where your apprenticeship formally begins. You will engage in your first learning activities, meet your cohort and tutors, and be introduced to the systems, expectations, and support available throughout your programme. Your individual learning plan will also be activated during this session, with clear guidance provided by the apprenticeship team on next steps.

These sessions are pivotal moments in your apprenticeship journey, providing a strong foundation for your success.

Academic Skills

We recommend attending the Academic Skills support sessions, which are relevant to all apprenticeship routes, not just if you are submitting a CMI unit written assessment. The Academic Skills Team at Arden University offers personalised guidance and practical strategies to help you succeed. Topics include effective study techniques, time management, critical thinking, academic writing, and using AI responsibly for academic purposes.

All sessions are delivered online: Orientation and FDOL sessions via Teams, and Academic Skills sessions via Zoom.

Your Coach

At the start of your programme, you will be assigned a dedicated coach who will provide personal, tailored support throughout your apprenticeship. Your coach is your key point of contact, helping you navigate the programme, build confidence, and achieve your goals. You will meet your coach within the first month, who will work with you to create a structured plan for your learning journey and ensure you stay on track.

Regular coaching sessions are tailored to your individual needs, providing continuous guidance, encouragement, and support for any academic, professional, or personal challenges. Your coach will help you develop effective study habits, reflect on progress, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate your achievements along the way.

In line with apprenticeship requirements, your coach will support you to:

- Complete training to develop the Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) required by this apprenticeship standard.
- Progress towards English and mathematics qualifications, in accordance with apprenticeship funding rules.
- Compile a portfolio of evidence demonstrating achievement of the KSBs.
- Navigate assessments and learning activities with confidence, ensuring you are fully prepared at each stage.
- Access additional resources and guidance, including study strategies, professional development advice, and support with real-world application of learning.

Your coach is not just a mentor, they are a partner in your success, helping you unlock your potential, overcome workplace challenges, and make the most of your apprenticeship experience.

Stage 2: On Programme Phases

Following month one, the programme is delivered over four phases, designed to blend management theory with practical application, ensuring you build core leadership skills, master project delivery, and develop sector-specific skills, all preparing you for End-Point Assessment.



- Phase 1: Ignite Your Leadership
- Phase 2: The Project Playbook
- Phase 3: Pathway-Specific Development

- Phase 4: EPA Success Toolkit

This section of the handbook gives an overview of the programme structure. Your specific learning plan, including a timetable of live workshops, will be provided at the start of your programme.

Phase 1: Ignite Your Leadership

During Phase 1, you will focus on building self-awareness, personal growth, and inclusive leadership foundations in a business environment.

You will attend three, live 3-hour workshops:

1. Applying Management and Leadership Theories
2. Understanding the Organisational Environment
3. Building Effective Management and Leadership Practice

These will be supplemented by five pre-recorded 1-hour webinars:

1. Leading from Within
2. Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth
3. Integrity in Action
4. Shaping Cultures of Belonging
5. Building Strategic Relationships

If you have chosen the CMI Award or Certificate route you will be required to write a 3,500 – 4,000-word assessment for the CMI unit: *Principles of Management and Leadership in an Organisational Context*.

If you have chosen apprenticeship only route, you will not submit this written assessment.

Phase 2: The Project Playbook

During Phase 2, you will focus on strengthening interpersonal effectiveness, collaboration, operational improvement, and project development in business setting.

You will attend three, live 3-hour workshops:

1. Project Fundamentals & Strategic Alignment
2. Planning, Stakeholder Engagement & Risk Management
3. Tools, Problem-Solving & Project Closure

And four pre-recorded 1-hour webinars:

1. Negotiating with Purpose
2. Resolving Conflict with Confidence

3. Budgeting for Sustainable Impact
4. Smarter Ways to Lead

If you have chosen the CMI Certificate route you will be required to write a 3,500 – 4,000-word assessment for the CMI unit: *Managing Projects to Achieve Results*.

If you have chosen apprenticeship only route or the CMI Award route, you will not submit this written assessment.

Phase 3: Pathway-Specific Development

During Phase 3, you will focus on your chosen pathway, focusing on:

- Achieving Business Excellence; or
- Inclusive Leadership in Health and Care; or
- Driving Sustainable Operations

You will attend three, live 3-hour workshops:

Pathway 1: Achieving Business Excellence

1. Understanding the Reasons for Organisational Change
2. Evaluating Change Approaches and Models
3. Planning, Communicating, and Sustaining Change

Pathway 2: Inclusive Leadership in Health and Care

1. Legal and Organisational Approaches to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
2. Inclusive Leadership in Health and Social Care
3. Embedding EDI in Service Delivery and Improvement

Pathway 3: Driving Sustainable Operations

1. Principles of Operational Planning
2. Creating and Leading Operational Plans
3. Monitoring, Measuring, and Continuous Improvement

All pathways are supported by the same four pre-recorded 1-hour webinars:

1. Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes
2. From Vision to Delivery
3. Thriving in a Tech-Driven World
4. Presenting for Influence

If you have chosen the CMI Certificate route you will be required to write a:

- *Pathway 1:* 3,500 – 4,000-word assessment for the CMI unit: *Managing Change*

- *Pathway 2: 3,500 – 4,000-word assessment for the CMI unit: Managing Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*
- *Pathway 3: 2,500 – 3,000-word assessment for the CMI unit: Creating and Delivering Operational Plans*

If you have chosen apprenticeship only route or the CMI Award route, you will not submit these written assessments.

Regardless of pathway and route, you will also attend four, pre-recorded 1-hour webinars:

1. Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes
2. From Vision to Delivery
3. Thriving in a Tech-Driven World
4. Presenting for Influence

Phase 4: EPA Success Toolkit

The final phase of your programme is designed to fully prepare you for your End-Point Assessment (EPA) while ensuring all apprenticeship requirements are met. You will have access to recorded webinars, participate in two interactive one-hour live lessons, and can join a CMI EPA Toolkit webinar to gain practical guidance, tips, and strategies.

During this phase, your learning will focus on:

- Finalising any outstanding Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs) to ensure your portfolio is complete and meets the apprenticeship standard.
- Practically applying your learning and consolidating your knowledge to feel confident for your EPA.

These sessions are designed to build confidence, reinforce your skills, and provide structured support so that you can approach your EPA fully prepared, knowing your portfolio is complete and your learning journey is on track.

Workplace Project

Your workplace project runs across Phases 2, 3, and 4 and gives you the chance to apply your learning to a real organisational challenge. This project allows you to demonstrate your practical skills, knowledge, and professional behaviours in a meaningful way.

Through the project, you will:

- **Analyse and solve a real operational problem or opportunity** within your workplace.
- **Apply core management knowledge and skills**, such as planning, performance analysis, change management, and resource management.
- **Demonstrate professional behaviours** expected of an Operational Manager, including leadership, decision-making, and strategic thinking.

In addition to developing your skills and confidence, the workplace project forms part of your End-Point Assessment (EPA), supporting one of the assessment methods and showcasing your ability to deliver impact in your role.

Programme Structure Overview

Phase	Months															
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
	Phase 1: Ignite Your Leadership					Phase 2: The Project Playbook				Phase 3: Pathway-Specific Development				Phase 4: EPA Success Toolkit		
Content	On-boarding and Academic Upskilling	Live Workshops: 1. Applying Management and Leadership Theories 2. Understanding the Organizational Environment 3. Building Effective Management and Leadership Practice Optional CMI Unit Assessment: 501: Principles of Management and Leadership in an Organisational Context			Portfolio building Optional assignment submission	Live Workshops: 4. Project Fundamentals & Strategic Alignment 5. Planning, Stakeholder Engagement & Risk Management 6. Tools, Problem-Solving & Project Closure Optional CMI Unit Assessment: 513: Managing a Project to Achieve Results			Portfolio building Optional assignment submission	Live Workshops: 7. Route specific workshop 1 8. Route specific workshop 2 9. Route specific workshop 3 Optional CMI Unit Assessment: Route specific			Portfolio building Optional assignment submission	Mock EPA & Gateway		
									Workplace Project - Learners to start their project at month 9 and complete by month 15							
Monthly 1 hour recorded webinars	Leading from Within	Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth	Integrity in Action	Shaping Culture of Belonging	Building Strategic Relationships	Negotiating with Purpose	Resolving Conflict with Confidence	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Smarter Ways to Lead	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	From Vision to Delivery	Thriving in a Tech-Driven World	Presenting for Influence	Portfolio Development & Evidence Mapping Mock EPA		

Monthly Learning Cycle

Each month, you will progress through a structured learning cycle designed to build your knowledge, skills, and confidence in a practical, applied way:

- **Diagnose** – Assess your current understanding, identify emerging knowledge, and evaluate confidence in the topic.
- **Develop** – Explore and learn the topic in depth through focused activities and resources.
- **Demonstrate** – Apply your learning to real-world tasks, linking theory directly to your workplace practice.
- **Debrief** – Reflect on improvements, changes, and insights gained, and plan how to embed these into your work.

Throughout the cycle, your tutors and coach will provide guidance and support, helping you make the most of activities such as:

- Short quizzes to reinforce learning

- Workplace scenarios to apply knowledge in practice
- Self-assessments and reflective exercises
- Small projects or planning tasks to develop practical skills
- Gathering feedback or testimonies from managers to support growth and evidence portfolio development

This approach ensures your learning is not only theoretical but directly relevant to your role, helping you grow professionally while achieving measurable progress each month.

Online Learning Platforms

Your apprenticeship is supported through four key online platforms, each designed to help you learn, apply, and track your progress effectively:

- **BUD** – The central hub for your learning journey. Here you will follow the Diagnose, Develop, Demonstrate, Debrief cycle, apply your learning in the workplace, and build your portfolio of evidence over time. BUD is also where you will record your off-the-job hours.
- **iLearn** – This platform hosts key learning content and interactive knowledge checks that mark the end of each monthly learning cycle. iLearn helps you consolidate your learning throughout the programme and provides links to live workshops and pre-recorded webinars.
- **Zoom** – All live workshops and Academic Skills sessions are delivered via Zoom, giving you interactive, real-time learning experiences.
- **Teams** – Your orientation, first day of learning, and ongoing coaching sessions take place on Teams, providing a space for collaboration, support, and communication with your coaches and cohort.

During your orientation, you will receive a full introduction to each platform, ensuring you know how to access and make the most of the tools available throughout your apprenticeship.

Ongoing Support

Coaching Sessions

After your initial meeting with your dedicated coach at the start of the programme, you will take part in regular coaching sessions tailored to your individual needs. These sessions:

- Track your progress and achievements
- Encourage reflection on your learning and development

- Apply learning directly to workplace tasks and projects, ensuring theory is reinforced through practical experience
- Set clear action plans for the next steps

This structured support ensures continuous learning, professional guidance, and accountability, helping you apply your learning effectively in the workplace. Your coach will also assist you in building a portfolio of evidence against the Apprenticeship Standard's Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSBs), as well as preparing you for your End-Point Assessment (EPA).

Quarterly Tripartite Reviews

Every 8–12 weeks, you will participate in a mandatory tripartite review with your Line Manager and Arden Coach. These meetings:

- Review your progress and achievements on the programme
- Identify next steps and any additional support required
- Provide a safe space to raise questions or concerns
- Allow everyone to connect theory to workplace tasks, ensuring your learning is applied practically and aligned with organisational objectives

Each tripartite review is formally logged, with all attendees confirming it has taken place. Your coach will coordinate and schedule these meetings to ensure they fit seamlessly into your learning journey.

This combination of coaching and structured reviews guarantees that you are supported, guided, and empowered throughout your apprenticeship, turning learning into measurable professional growth.

Logging off the job (OTJ) training time:

Apprenticeships are designed to allow you to study alongside your work commitments, with your employer's support. As part of this programme, your employer has committed to provide a minimum amount of off-the-job (OTJ) training time each month.

What is OTJ training?

OTJ training is any learning that:

- Introduces you to something new in the workplace,
- Supports the development of your knowledge or skills,
- Is directly relevant to your apprenticeship and job role, and
- Is undertaken **away from your normal day-to-day work duties.**

Your employer is responsible for ensuring you have time to complete OTJ training. Your Arden Coach will support both you and your employer in identifying suitable activities.

Examples of OTJ training activities:

- Attending scheduled classroom or online sessions
- Work shadowing colleagues
- Industry or inter-departmental visits
- Independent study
- Research relevant to your role or apprenticeship
- Coaching sessions with your Arden Coach
- Completing online learning modules

OTJ training can be completed in different ways, for example, a few hours each day or a full day once a week. The important thing is to log your OTJ hours weekly and reflect on the learning you have gained.

Developing a portfolio of evidence

During your programme, you must compile a portfolio of evidence that demonstrates your knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) as outlined in the apprenticeship standard. Each piece of evidence should be mapped to one or more KSBs. A qualitative approach is recommended, focusing on the quality of evidence rather than quantity.

Sources of evidence may include, but are not limited to:

- Workplace policies and procedures
- Witness statements from colleagues or managers
- Annotated photographs
- Short video clips of workplace activities

Important guidelines:

- The portfolio should not include reflective accounts or self-assessment methods.
- Any employer contributions should focus on direct observation of your performance (e.g., witness statements), rather than personal opinions.
- All evidence must be valid and attributable to you, with a statement from both you and your employer confirming this.

The portfolio itself is not formally assessed as part of your End Point Assessment (EPA). However, it informs the EPA, helping your End Point Assessor understand your evidence and shape professional discussions.

Working with your Arden Coach:

- Your coach will help you identify which KSBs are being addressed by each part of your programme.
- You and your coach will agree on which KSBs to focus on at key milestones throughout the programme.
- This cyclical process allows you to build a clear plan to cover all KSBs before Gateway.

Generating evidence:

Evidence can be created in several ways:

1. Coach-led activity: Producing work-based products under guidance.
2. Self-directed learning: Producing work-based products independently through your own learning and development.

By following this process, you will gradually compile a robust, current, and reliable portfolio of evidence that demonstrates your competence across all KSBs.

Stage 3: Gateway

Gateway takes place at the end of the on-programme phase. It marks the point at which your learning is complete and confirms your readiness to undertake the End Point Assessment (EPA).

The purpose of Gateway is to:

- Ensure you are not entered into EPA before you are ready.
- Protect you from failing unnecessarily.
- Maintain quality and consistency of outcomes across apprenticeships.

Employer Responsibility

Before Gateway, your employer must be satisfied that you are occupationally competent meaning you are working at or above the level set out in the apprenticeship standard and are ready for EPA. Your employer may consult your training provider for advice, but the final decision rests with them.

Gateway Meeting

At the Gateway meeting, you, your employer, and your training provider must all agree that you are ready to be assessed.

Requirements to pass through Gateway

To enter Gateway for this programme, you must:

- Confirm that you are ready to undertake the EPA
- Have completed your required Off-the-Job (OTJ) training hours
- Have achieved the required English and mathematics qualifications in line with apprenticeship funding rules
- Have completed your on-programme project, which will form the basis of your written project report in the EPA
- Have submitted your portfolio of evidence for the professional discussion

Once all these requirements are met, we will submit your Gateway evidence to the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) to confirm your readiness for EPA.

Stage 4: End Point Assessment

Your coach will provide guidance on all elements of the End Point Assessment (EPA).

The EPA should be completed within an EPA period lasting typically 5 months.

This EPA consists of two assessment methods:

1. **Project with report**
2. **Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence**

Each assessment method is graded as Fail, Pass, or Distinction.

The grades from both assessment methods are combined to determine the overall apprenticeship grade, which will be one of the following:

- Fail
- Pass
- Distinction

Assessment Method 1: Project with Report

Overview

The written project report requires you to complete a significant and defined piece of work that has a real business application and benefit. The project must meet the needs of your employer's business and be relevant to your occupation and apprenticeship.

This assessment method has two components:

1. A **4,000-word written project report**
2. A **20-minute presentation**, followed by **40 minutes of questions and answers**

Delivery

The research and project activity will be completed on-programme and before Gateway. However, you must begin writing the written project report after Gateway. Examples of projects that could be used for the written project report include, but are not limited to:

- Introduction of a new process, service, or product to the operational area
- Identification and implementation of a change plan to improve efficiency or achieve direct savings (e.g. percentage decrease in direct costs, reduction in headcount)
- Implementation of a performance improvement plan for the operational area that required significant collaboration with wider stakeholders
- Evaluation of an internal communications project involving the communication of change to different stakeholders

You may work as part of an internal team to complete the project; however, you must complete your written project report and presentation unaided.

Component 1: Written Project Report

The written project report must include at least:

- An executive summary
- An introduction
- The scope and business need of the project (including key performance indicators, aims, and objectives)
- Research and analysis outcomes
- Project outcomes (including whether the project delivered the intended benefits and was completed to time and cost)
- Discussion of findings
- Recommendations and conclusions
- References from external resources
- An appendix containing mapping of KSBs to the report

The written project report must have a word count of 4,000 words. A tolerance of 10% above or below is allowed at your discretion. Appendices, references, and diagrams are not included in this total.

You must produce and include a KSB mapping within an appendix, showing how the report evidences the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

You must complete and submit the written project report and any presentation materials to the End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) by the end of week 12 of the EPA period.

Component 2: Presentation with Questions

You must prepare and deliver a presentation to an independent assessor. Following the presentation, the independent assessor will ask questions relating to your project, written project report, and presentation.

The presentation should cover:

- An analysis of the internal and external factors that impacted the choice of project
- A critical evaluation of the project activity, justifying the reasons for the project
- Details of the impact the project has had since completion

The presentation with questions must last **60 minutes**.

This will typically include:

- A **20-minute presentation**
- **40 minutes of questioning**

The purpose of the independent assessor's questions is to:

- Verify that the activity was completed by you
- Seek clarification where required
- Assess those KSBs that were not demonstrated within the written project report (these should be kept to a minimum)

You must submit any presentation materials to the EPAO at the same time as the written project report, by the end of week 12 of the EPA period.

Assessment Method 2: Professional Discussion Underpinned by a Portfolio of Evidence

Overview

The professional discussion is a formal two-way conversation between you and an independent assessor. It provides you with the opportunity to demonstrate the KSBs mapped to this assessment method.

You may refer to and illustrate your responses using evidence from your portfolio of evidence.

Delivery

The professional discussion will be structured to give you the opportunity to demonstrate the mapped KSBs to the highest available grade.

The purpose of the professional discussion is to assess your competence against the following themes:

- Managing and leading a team
- Organisational governance
- Operational planning
- Stakeholder relationships

You may refer to and illustrate your answers with evidence from your portfolio; however, the portfolio of evidence is not directly assessed.

The professional discussion must last **60 minutes**.

KSB Mapping

The table below shows how each Knowledge, Skill and Behaviour (KSB) will be assessed, and where it is covered within the programme through the pre-recorded webinars.

	Knowledge/Skill/Behaviour	Mapped to Recorded Webinar	Primary EPA Assessment Method
Knowledge			
K1	Presentation skills and methods.	Presenting for Influence	Project with report
K2	Relevant regulation and legislation requirements, and their impact on their team, the individual, their role and the organisation.	Integrity in Action	Professional discussion
K3	Legislation and organisational policies relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in the workplace and their impact on the organisation and stakeholders	Shaping Cultures of Belonging	Professional discussion
K4	Approaches to people management, for example recruitment, performance management, reward, and talent management and resource planning.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Professional discussion
K5	IT and software tools used to support the current and future needs of the organisation, including advances in technology.	Thriving in a Tech-Driven World	Professional discussion
K6	Methods for researching, analysing, interpreting and evaluating data to inform judgements and enable decision making.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Project with report
K7	Financial management techniques and implications of decisions for budgets.	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Project with report

K8	How to identify and manage organisational improvement opportunities.	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	Project with report
K9	Project management tools and techniques.	From Vision to Delivery	Project with report
K10	Methods used to identify, manage and prioritise stakeholder relationships.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
K11	The current and future needs of the sector and the impact on their organisation.	From Vision to Delivery	Project with report
K12	Problem solving and decision-making techniques.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Project with report
K13	Influencing and negotiation models and techniques.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
K14	Conflict resolution and mediation processes.	Building Strategic Relationships	Professional discussion
K15	Communication techniques and approaches.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
K16	Ethics and values-based leadership theories and principles, for example employee wellbeing.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
K17	Change management concepts and methods for implementing change within the organisation.	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	Project with report
K18	Leadership and management tools and techniques.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
K19	The sector in which the organisation operates and its impact on their role.	Building Strategic Relationships	Professional discussion
K20	The continuous development requirements and learning needs of their team.	Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth	Professional discussion

K21	Business continuity principles, including risk assessment, contingency planning and disaster recovery.	Thriving in a Tech-Driven World	Professional discussion
K22	Organisational policies and procedures, for example health and safety.	From Vision to Delivery	Professional discussion
K23	Responsible organisation policies and practices covering social, environmental, and economic factors, including sustainability.	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Professional discussion
K24	Coaching and mentoring techniques.	Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth	Professional discussion
K25	The strategic direction of the organisation and the impact on operational plans.	From Vision to Delivery	Professional discussion
Skills			
S1	Communicate and present information to stakeholders using different types of media.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
S2	Identify problems and provide solutions.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Project with report
S3	Manage and set goals and accountabilities for individuals and teams.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Professional discussion
S4	Analyse performance data for individuals and teams to identify areas for improvement.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Professional discussion
S5	Manage and influence project activity to deliver within budget and resource requirements.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Project with report
S6	Lead and influence the team and individuals to support an inclusive culture of equity, diversity, and the promotion of well-being.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
S7	Motivate team members and individuals through collaborative activities, for example one-to-one coaching and team meetings, to achieve organisational goals.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion

S8	Use digital tools to analyse information and monitor performance and budgets to drive the implementation and delivery of plans and projects.	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Project with report
S9	Research, interpret and analyse information to inform the implementation of business plans or projects.	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	Project with report
S10	Evaluate the impact of outcomes from organisational plans or projects to drive the decision-making process.	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Project with report
S11	Interpret and implement the practical application of regulation, legislation and organisational policies for stakeholders.	Integrity in Action	Professional discussion
S12	Manage continuous improvement and change for their team and organisation.	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	Project with report
S13	Analyse and prioritise organisation activities in response to the operating environment.	Evolving Systems for Better Outcomes	Professional discussion
S14	Implement business continuity plans, including risk assessment, contingency planning and disaster recovery, to ensure the uninterrupted operation of critical functions.	From Vision to Delivery	Professional discussion
S15	Identify and respond to external factors that may influence the future landscape and evaluate their impact on the organisation.	Thriving in a Tech-Driven World	Project with report
S16	Influence and negotiate with stakeholders to shape and agree goals and outcomes.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
S17	Manage relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders.	Building Strategic Relationships	Professional discussion
S18	Deliver sustainable services and solutions which allow the organisation to respond to changes in social, economic and environmental factors.	Budgeting for Sustainable Impact	Professional discussion
S19	Manage and facilitate learning and continuous professional development for their team.	Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth	Professional discussion
S20	Coach and mentor individuals within their team.	Self-Leadership & Lifelong Growth	Professional discussion

S21	Develop and implement operational plans that align with the strategic direction of the organisation.	From Vision to Delivery	Professional discussion
Behaviours			
B1	Acts professionally, ethically and with integrity.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
B2	Supports an inclusive culture, treating colleagues and stakeholders fairly and with respect.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
B3	Takes accountability and ownership of their own and the team's tasks and workload.	Building Strategic Relationships	Project with report
B4	Seeks learning opportunities and continuous professional development for self and the wider team.	Leading from Within	Professional discussion
B5	Works flexibly and adapts to circumstances.	Smarter Ways to Lead	Project with report
B6	Works collaboratively with others across the organisation and stakeholders.	Shaping Cultures of Belonging	Project with report

Programme Evaluation

Phase Surveys

Apprentice feedback is collected at each phase of the programme. You will be asked to complete a survey containing a series of scored questions to rate your level of satisfaction, alongside free-text questions where you can expand on your responses or provide additional comments.

Your feedback is important to us. The results of these surveys are anonymised and reviewed by our programme teams to understand what is working well and to identify areas where improvements can be made. Your views directly inform how the programme develops and improves over time.

Programme Committees

Programme Committees meet on a quarterly basis to review data and feedback from apprentices, staff, and End Point Assessment Organisations. Any actions required to enhance the programme or address identified issues are recorded within an action plan, which is monitored and updated throughout the year.

Annual Monitoring

Annual monitoring is carried out through the university's internal Apprenticeship Self-Assessment Committee (ASAC). This process reviews the delivery of the programme over the previous year, including apprentice outcomes, apprentice feedback, and relevant programme-level data.

The findings inform any necessary improvements or changes to the programme. Reports from ASAC are reviewed by the Apprenticeship Management Committee and the Quality and Standards Committee, which agree and oversee institutional-level action plans to support enhancements across multiple apprenticeship programmes, where required.



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