



Apprentice Handbook



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS



Welcome to University of Leeds Apprenticeships

Purpose of handbook

This handbook should be used by any University of Leeds apprentice who wishes to understand more about their programme. It will provide an overview of some of the core topics and terminology used on apprenticeships and will guide new apprentices to useful sources of information.

- Engaging with the Community
- Sustainability
- Climate Action
- Research Integrity
- Commitment to Fairtrade

To find out more about these underpinning foundations please see [University values and responsibility](#).

University background on apprenticeships

The University of Leeds was founded in 1904 and has delivered a wide range of Higher Education programmes over the years. Now, with the creation of Degree Level apprenticeships in the UK, the University has begun to offer work-based programmes tailored to meet the needs of local and national employers. These apprenticeships have been developed to provide students with the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to be successful within their chosen career and are offered in a wide range of professions, from computing to healthcare.

University Values

The University holds its ethos of professionalism, inclusiveness, integrity, community and academic excellence at the heart of everything we do. With these in mind we have developed a wide range of values that encompasses the institution's principles, these are:

- Making a Difference to Society
- Building Relationships
- Equality and Inclusion

University Strategic Aims for Apprenticeships

The University's strategy for apprenticeships is to develop its higher and degree level apprenticeships to the same level of excellence as its traditional programmes. The five aims that drive the strategy are:

- The development and strengthening of new and existing employer partnerships
- Conversion of traditional University programmes into apprenticeships to meet the needs of employers and students
- Addressing the changing nature of funding streams within HE and specific employment sectors
- Utilisation of digital technologies to meet the needs of on campus and geographically dispersed apprentices
- The implementation of an apprenticeship focussed infrastructure that maintains the high standards of delivery at the University

Code of Conduct

University Expectations on Behaviour

An apprenticeship is a professional training programme and we expect all of our apprentices to act accordingly. This means regular and punctual attendance, showing respect to fellow students and staff, engagement with the learning activities set and following health and safety guidance within certain areas of the University e.g. labs.

Student Contract

Your admission to the University is subject to the requirement that you adhere to the University's procedures for registration and enrolment. You must comply with the terms and conditions set out in the [student contract](#) including the provisions of the University's Ordinances and Regulations, guidelines, rules, policies, codes of practice, protocols and procedures ("University rules"). Unless agreed to the contrary you will be expected to comply with the latest versions that are in force at the time.

Absence Reporting

To get the most out of your time at the University you will need to attend all of your timetabled sessions, however we do understand that occasionally this will not be possible. If you have to miss a learning activity due to sickness, or another unforeseen circumstance, the University is here to support you. To find out what to do in the case of an absence please refer to our [attendance and absence information](#).

As your employer pays for your time spent at the University, please speak to your line manager or HR representative in the organisation to understand their expectations of reporting an absence in the case of a missed learning activity.

Safeguarding

The University is committed to ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the safety of children, young persons and adults in vulnerable circumstances who are on its property or who are engaged in University activities at any location. See further information on our [responsibilities and safeguarding policy](#).

Equality and Diversity

As an international, research-intensive University with a strong commitment to student education we have created an inclusive environment that attracts, develops and retains the best students and staff. In addition to complying with all our legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, the University will advance equality and inclusion by:

- providing an inclusive environment where everyone feels included and involved;
- ensuring that our strategies, policies and practices are inclusive to students and staff from all backgrounds;
- working in partnership with our students and staff to increase the engagement of the whole University community with equality and inclusion;
- providing a clear framework which enables any unwanted conduct, behaviour or practice to be reported and which assures our students and staff of a robust process of investigation and appropriate action;
- demonstrating senior leadership visibility and accountability for equality and inclusion.

Please take the time to familiarise yourself with our [full list of E&D policies](#).



Plagiarism and Academic Malpractice

The University takes instances of cheating, plagiarism, malpractice and fraudulent or fabricated coursework very seriously and this can result in the permanent exclusion from the University. You will be supported throughout the programme on correct academic practice and referencing by your school, to avoid any accidental breach of University regulations, and will be asked to undertake an academic integrity test prior to the submission of your first assessment. However, we would also advise you to take the time to read the guidance on the website with regards to [academic malpractice](#).

If you are ever unsure about any aspect of the information discussed above, we recommend that you refer to your [school induction page](#) or speak with your personal tutor or relevant faculty staff.

Prevent & British Values

What is the Prevent duty?

The Prevent strategy, published by the Government in 2011, is part of the UK's overall counter-terrorism strategy, [CONTEST](#). The aim of the Prevent strategy is to reduce the threat to the UK from terrorism by stopping people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. In the Act, this is expressed as the need for education providers to “prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”



Prevent at the University of Leeds

The University's response to the Prevent duty is guided by our institutional values of inclusiveness, integrity and community and our commitment to ensure that everyone on campus is treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and in a supportive and welcoming environment.

The University's approach to fulfilling the Prevent duty is based on the following judgments:

- (a) that the greatest protection against students being drawn into terrorism, or quasi-terrorist activities, is to ensure that as a community, we celebrate diversity and difference and that, through our culture and our curriculum, we inculcate the values of global citizenship and tolerance;
- (b) that, in an institution of learning, the most effective ways of countering views that might draw people into terrorism is through open debate and dialogue; and
- (c) that in the UK people are more prone to being drawn into terrorist activities when alienated from society and their local community.

See further information on the University's approach to [Prevent](#).

What are British Values?

British values are a government initiative to embed the cultural values of the country into the curriculum of education institutions. The four values defined in the initiative are:

- **Democracy** – The belief in freedom and equality between people, in which power is held by elected representatives, or directly by the people themselves.
Examples in the workplace: Democracy can be seen in multiple facets of the working world. The right to vote and elect the government in power determines the funding available to businesses, directly (such as the NHS or council) or indirectly (through grants, tax breaks, etc.) and the budget for education programmes (including apprenticeships). Companies may also have union representatives that are elected into position by their peers to represent them in discussions that may infringe upon their rights.
- **Individual Liberty** – The right to act, believe, and express oneself in a manner of one's own choosing, free from unjust or undue control, concern or violence of others including the government.
Examples in the workplace: Individual liberty is the protection of a person's rights and the rights of those they come into contact with. In employment this relates to the choice and consent of an individual to not undertake any task or duty that infringes on their beliefs and/or human rights.
- **The Rule of Law** – The principle that all people, organisations and the elected government are subject to and accountable to law that is fairly applied and enforced.
Examples in the workplace: There are numerous laws in place within the UK that are specifically for the protection and wellbeing of those in employment. These include; working time regulations, minimum wage, maternity/paternity pay, holiday entitlement and many more.
- **Mutual Respect and Tolerance** – The acceptance that other people having different faiths or beliefs to oneself (or having more) should be accepted and tolerated, and should not be the cause of prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour.
Examples in the workplace: Mutual respect and tolerance is usually clearly evidenced within an employer's Equality and Diversity policy, which governs the behaviour and attitudes of its staff during their time at work. It is not the limitation of different ideas and thoughts, but the process of structuring these debates in a professional manner, whilst avoiding discriminatory or prejudicial behaviour.

The above examples are not an exhaustive list of the implementation of these values within the workplace, but act as a starting point to develop further throughout the apprenticeship programme.

Health and Safety

University of Leeds Health and Safety

The safety of all students at the University of Leeds is one of our utmost priorities. As an apprentice we will follow our [Health and Safety guidelines](#) to ensure your safety on campus and also discuss potential risks in the workplace with your employer to minimise the chance of an incident occurring.

How to stay safe at University

To feel at ease when attending a new place of learning you need to feel safe. University staff are on hand to help you integrate into life on campus, but you also need to be aware of your surroundings and, like in any big city, take precautions, where necessary.

- **Protect yourself** – by using well lit streets or public transport at night. Or checking that your house/ accommodation has working smoke alarms.
- **Protect your possessions** – check that windows and doors are locked before leaving home and keep laptops, phones and bags with you at all times on campus
- **Protect your identity** – check emails for potential scams/ phishing and shred any documents with personal details on them.

Relevant Health and Safety Links

The following links provide further information on some key Health and Safety topics relevant to your apprenticeship:

[Student Safety](#)

[University of Leeds Safe Car Scheme](#)

[How to keep yourself safe online](#)

Health and Safety in the workplace

As an employee, you have a responsibility to care for your own safety in the workplace and those around you. You must cooperate with your employer to ensure that their Health and Safety policies are met and not deliberately misuse equipment or actively interfere with the welfare of other staff or visitors.

If you believe that there is a Health and Safety issue within your workplace, in the first instance report it to your employer and escalate it to the University, if required. You may also consider contacting a third party, such as the [Health and Safety Executive](#) (HSE), if you feel that the situation has not been resolved.

Common causes of accidents

Unfortunately, there will never be a way to eradicate risk entirely within the workplace. As an apprentice you need to be aware of potential risks in your job role so you can minimise the chances of an incident occurring. HSE found that the top five causes of injury within the workplace are:

- Slips, trips and falls
- Manual handling
- Struck by moving object/ equipment
- Acts of violence
- Falls from a height

You should familiarise yourself with the above when entering a new environment to spot any potential hazards that could affect your safety and identify ways to minimise them, in line with your organisation's policies.



Introduction to Apprenticeships

What are apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are employment based training programmes designed to develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours for someone to succeed within their chosen job sector. The apprentice will be contracted to a minimum of 30 hours per week which will be split between training at the University and working at your employer's premises. At least 20% of these contracted hours must be spent on Off the Job training (further details on this can be found on page 9). Whilst studying on an apprenticeship, the apprentice will be granted the same benefits as anybody else employed by the organisation such as annual leave entitlement or statutory sick pay.

Levels of Apprenticeships

The University of Leeds offers higher and degree apprenticeships across a variety of sectors. These are:

Level 5 – programmes that equate to (and may contain) a foundation degree, higher national diploma or industry specific qualification.

Level 6 – this level of apprenticeship is equivalent to a full bachelor's degree. On some apprenticeships you will be required to complete a University degree before being able to achieve your apprenticeship.

Level 7 – the highest apprenticeship level the University offers and is the equivalent of a Masters qualification/postgraduate study.

To find out more about the apprenticeship programmes we offer please visit the University of Leeds Apprenticeships site.

Initial Needs Assessment

Every apprenticeship is tailored around the individual undertaking the programme. At the University of Leeds our team will complete an initial needs assessment with every potential apprentice to understand what previous experience/ qualifications they already have to determine a suitable starting point for them. This means that each apprentice receives training that is useful to them throughout the apprenticeship and are not just revisiting knowledge or skills that are already held.

Commitment Statement and Enrolment

To enrol onto an apprenticeship all three parties (the employer, apprentice and training provider) must sign a contract known as a commitment statement. This document outlines the duration and content of the apprenticeship alongside the expectations and requirements of all parties to ensure the fulfilment of the programme. This needs to be completed before the start of the training programme and will be accompanied by an Apprenticeship Agreement.

Delivery Model (day or block release)

All of the apprenticeship programmes at the University of Leeds involve scheduled teaching sessions with academic staff (both on site and remote). These may be for one day per week or delivered in a study block. Upon enrolment, a timetable will be issued with all planned teaching hours for your first semester. These will have been agreed with the employer and apprentices should be paid at their usual hourly rate/ salary for attending these sessions.

Maths and English

If an apprentice cannot provide evidence of previous attainment in Maths and English at Level 2 (GCSE Grade C/4 or above) then they will be required to achieve Functional Skills during the apprenticeship. This will require the attendance of teaching sessions with one of the University's third-party subcontractors and the completion of invigilated exams. Your employer will need to give you time to attend these sessions during your regular working hours, in addition to the 20% Off The Job allocation.

See a full list of [acceptable qualifications for exemption](#) from the English and Maths requirement.

Off the Job (OTJ) Training

As discussed earlier in the handbook, at least 20% of an apprentice's total paid hours should be spent working towards their apprenticeship through "Off the job" training. A majority of this will be covered during the teaching sessions with the University, but also complemented with a range of activities in the workplace. All OTJ hours must be logged in the apprentice's PebblePad portfolio using the Activity Log. Some examples of Off the Job activities are:

- Mentoring sessions with a senior colleague
- Shadowing experienced staff in a similar role
- Completing project/ assignment work
- Attending industry specific workshops/ seminars
- Networking with other apprentices to share good practice
- Roleplay or simulation of workplace situations
- Writing a reflective account of a workplace experience
- Attending training sessions on key industry topics

Role of a workplace mentor

Every apprentice should be allocated a workplace mentor throughout their programme. The title of these people may differ depending on their sector (e.g. practice assessor in healthcare), but their purpose should be relatively similar across all apprenticeships. Mentors are there to help apprentices contextualise and apply their University learning within their job roles and to support them with any additional guidance they may need.

Tripartite reviews

Throughout the apprenticeship the University, employer and apprentice will meet to discuss the amount of progress made and discuss/ resolve any issues that have occurred up until that point. These tripartite review meetings will take place once a term and are a great opportunity for apprentices and employers to feedback their thoughts on the apprenticeship.

Gateway & EPA

All apprenticeships involve an End Point Assessment (EPA) that measures the apprentice's capabilities across the skills, knowledge and behaviours of the standard. To be put forward to sit an EPA, the apprentice must meet all gateway requirements set out in the assessment plan. These can vary across programmes, but usually involve the award of a HE level qualification and evidence of achievement for English and Maths at level 2.

A full breakdown of gateway requirements and EPA details for each apprenticeship can be found on the [Institute for Apprenticeships website](#).



Preparation for the workplace

Workplace policies

As an apprentice you have the exact same rights and responsibilities as all other employees within the organisation you work for. This means that you should familiarise yourself with all of the workplace policies that are applicable to your role. This may come in the form of a organisation induction with your employer, with regular training updates, or it may require you to spend some time reading through the required documentation. Either way, if you are ever unsure of a certain policy you should speak with your line manager or HR representative.

Contract of Employment

All employees, including apprentices, should have a contract with their employer. These are different to the apprenticeship contract, that lay out the terms of the training programme, and instead set out an employee's rights, responsibilities, duties and employment conditions. These are usually issued prior to the start date of the role and require a dated signature from both the employer and the employee.

These documents may not include all terms of employment and will rely on certain legal requirements to be implied. For example, employees should not steal from their employers.

Probationary Periods

Probationary periods allow employees to see if the job role and organisation are a good match for their skills, personality and career goals, before making a more long-term commitment. They usually last for around three months (although this should be checked in your contract of employment) and during this time you should have scheduled performance reviews with your employer to discuss your development within the role and how you feel you are settling in.

Working Time Regulations

By law, you should not work more than 48 hours a week (on average) unless you meet one of the following [exceptions](#). On shifts lasting more than six hours, workers have the right to one uninterrupted break lasting twenty minutes and should be granted at least eleven hours rest between shifts (e.g. if you finish work at 9:00pm then your next shift should not begin until at least 8:00am).

Annual Leave

Full time workers are legally entitled to 28 days paid holiday a year (calculated on a pro rata basis for part time staff). Some employers may offer more than the legal requirement and details of this should be written within the contract of employment. Holiday entitlement is still accrued when the employee is absent due to sickness and during maternity/ paternity/ adoption leave.

Minimum Wage

Every worker within the UK is entitled to a minimum wage ([See National Minimum Wage Rates](#)) dependant on their age and whether or not they are an apprentice. You should initiate a conversation with your employer if you believe that you are not receiving the correct payment. Alternatively, you can seek confidential guidance on this issue from [ACAS](#).

Changing Employer

We understand that over the duration of the apprenticeship you may change employers. If you are in the position of moving companies, you must notify the University of this change prior to the switch. This allows us to transfer the training across to your new employer and ensure that your apprenticeship can continue without a delay. Please speak with your school contact as soon as possible to discuss this process.



Who will support you on this apprenticeship?

Teaching Staff

You'll study among inspirational academics – experts who share your passion for the subject. Some may even have written textbooks and research articles you'll use on your course. They'll challenge you to explore, question and discover, so you become an independent critical thinker and successful within your chosen industry.

Personal Tutor

Your personal tutor is an important contact within your academic department and will organise meetings with you to discuss your academic progress. They will listen to any issues you may face and help signpost you to relevant services and support to resolve these issues, as appropriate. In some cases, they may also complete the tripartite reviews with yourself and your employer.

Workplace mentor

Although the title of these may differ within employment sectors, the role of a workplace mentor is to support apprentices to embed the learning undertaken at the University within the workplace, by sharing their knowledge and expertise. The individual may be your line manager or a designated colleague with relevant experience.

Students' Union

Leeds University Union is a not-for-profit charity run by members, for members. In simple terms, the students' union is an independent organisation that exists to represent you and your interests to the University. If you're new to Leeds, they also manage over 300 different clubs and societies for you to meet new people who share your interests and views.

Careers Guidance

The University has a careers centre that offers one-to-one appointments with fully qualified and experienced guidance staff. They will help you to develop a career plan on what to do once you have completed your apprenticeship and provide you with support on how to achieve your goals.

Pastoral Support

The University has a network of [support and pastoral care](#) to help you make the most of your time here and to assist with any difficulties you may have. Our services will work together to ensure any problems are dealt with as quickly as possible. No matter what the problem is, there's always someone who can help.

Support for Disabled Students

If you have an impairment, health condition (including mental health conditions) or a specific learning difficulty, like dyslexia, it's important you contact our Disability Services as soon as possible. It's better if you contact us before you start your course, so we can discuss your support needs and get everything in place. To access additional support, you will need to complete our [online sign-up form](#).

Learning Enhancement Team

The Learning Enhancement team are in place to ensure that the quality of your apprenticeship programme is outstanding. They may contact you throughout your time at the University to ask for feedback on how you feel the apprenticeship is going and any changes you feel would be beneficial to our students. This will help the University to continuously improve our apprenticeship programmes.



Useful contacts/ links

HMRC

<https://www.gov.uk/contact-hmrc>

ACAS

<https://www.acas.org.uk/advice>

Samaritans

<https://www.samaritans.org/>

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/contact/>

National Union of Students (NUS)

<https://www.nus.org.uk/>

Citizens Advice Bureau

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/>

University of Leeds Student's Union (LUU)

<https://www.luu.org.uk/>

UoL Student Support

<https://students.leeds.ac.uk/#Support-and-wellbeing>

UoL Disability Services

https://students.leeds.ac.uk/info/10710/disability_services

UoL Accommodation

<https://accommodation.leeds.ac.uk/>

UoL Social Media

Facebook - [uolcurrentstudents](https://www.facebook.com/uolcurrentstudents)

Twitter - [@UoLStudents](https://twitter.com/UoLStudents)

Instagram - [Universityofleeds](https://www.instagram.com/Universityofleeds)

Youtube - [Universityofleeds](https://www.youtube.com/Universityofleeds)

Learning Enhancement Team

apprenticeships@leeds.ac.uk



Apprenticeship Glossary

Activity Log – where the apprentice logs a record of completed Off The Job learning hours in their ePortfolio (via PebblePad).

Apprenticeship – an apprenticeship is employment with training to industry standards in a recognised occupation. It will involve a substantial programme of on and off-the-job training.

Break in Learning – is a break in training where an individual is not currently continuing with their apprenticeship, but has told the employer and training provider beforehand that they intend to resume their apprenticeship in the future.

Commitment Statement – summarises the obligations of the training provider, the employer and apprentice for the apprenticeship programme. It will be updated with relevant information throughout the apprenticeship. All parties will hold an accurate and up-to-date, signed copy.

Education and Skills Funding Agency – agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults.

End Point Assessment – rigorous, robust and independent assessment undertaken by an apprentice at the end of training to test that the apprentice can perform in the occupation they have been trained in and can demonstrate the duties, and knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the occupational standard.

End Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) – an organisation approved to deliver end-point assessment for a particular apprenticeship standard. EPAOs must be on the register of end-point assessment organisations.

Gateway – takes place before the EPA can start. The employer and training provider review their apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to see if they have met the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship standard, and are ready to take the assessment.

Knowledge, skills and behaviours – the set of criteria an apprentice will need to evidence their competency against to prove their readiness for EPA.

Lectures – A lecture is usually a talk or a presentation by a member of academic staff and is timetabled as a formal part of a module. Normally, it is not interactive (although some lecturers may invite questions).

Minerva – is the University's Portal and Virtual Learning Environment. Minerva provides quick access to the systems you'll need and is also where you'll find online materials for your modules.

Ofsted – Ofsted's role is to make sure that organisations providing education, training and care services in England do so to a high standard for children and students. They undertake physical inspections of education providers and talk with their students to ensure they meet this standard.

PebblePad – Is the University of Leeds e-portfolio tool. It helps students create and keep together records of learning, progression and achievement that is underpinned by personal, professional and academic development.

Practical Period – The period for which the employer and apprentice agree that the apprentice will work and receive training on their chosen programme. This does not include end-point assessment.



Seminars – A seminar is also timetabled as a formal part of a module you are enrolled on. It usually involves fewer apprentices than a lecture and is usually interactive, in that apprentices are expected to contribute, either by preparing an item to present to fellow peers or joining in with a question/answer session arising from a presentation.

Training provider – any organisation that delivers apprenticeship training. For example, a college, higher education institution, private training organisation. Training providers delivering training for apprenticeships must be on the register of apprenticeship training providers. The University of Leeds is your training provider.

Tutorials – Tutorials are interactive meetings between a lecturer and a small group or an individual. They are not timetabled as a formal part of a module but are arranged at intervals during a course; sometimes they will be part of a programme, sometimes part of a module.



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