

POLICY OFFICER HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP

Information for employers



POLICY OFFICER HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP

Higher and degree apprenticeships are a partnership between the University and you, the employer.

At the University of Kent, we offer a Policy Officer Higher Apprenticeship that is tailored for aspiring policy professionals.

Our Level 4 Policy Officer Higher Apprenticeship is a formal qualification for working professionals near the start of their career in public administration or policy-making.

Apprenticeships allow employees to combine paid work, on-the-job experience and training, and gaining recognised qualifications. You employ the apprentice and we:

- provide an off-the-job academic programme of learning for 20% of the apprentice's paid hours
- help you design on-the-job training plans

- support both on- and off-the-job learning and training through regular workplace visits and progress reviews with the apprentice and their employer.

Our commitment to employers

At the University of Kent we recognise the importance of employers being at the centre of apprenticeships. For that reason, we seek early engagement with employers to understand their organisation's culture and values and how they need their apprentice's learning to be structured.

We work with small- and medium-sized, as well as large organisations. We provide induction for line managers, such as training sessions, a line manager handbook, instructional videos and a workplace induction checklist.

Benefits to employers of this higher apprenticeship

- Helps you to utilise your Apprenticeship Levy fund and secure your apprenticeship target
- Can improve employee retention and motivation by attracting talented, loyal staff who are committed to excellence
- Helps you build a diverse and loyal workforce
- Available across England
- High-quality tuition from academics with internationally recognised experience and expertise
- Develops practical skills that can be applied in the context of your organisation from day one
- Leads to a recognised Certificate of Higher Education
- As students of the University of Kent, your employees benefit from the added value of a higher education experience.

Contact us

To talk to us about any aspect of our apprenticeships, just get in touch with our team:

apprenticeships@kent.ac.uk

01634 888459 or 888467

www.kent.ac.uk/apprenticeships

If you would like to discuss the Policy Officer Higher Apprenticeship, please contact the Programme Director:

Dr Lavinia Mitton

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07808 161845

"The University of Kent higher apprenticeship gives aspiring policy professionals the tools to do their job. It equips them for problem-solving, evidence-gathering, policy analysis and working with a wide range of stakeholders, all with integrity and objectivity."

Dr Lavinia Mitton
Programme Director

The University's Digital and Lifelong Learning was described as a 'Good Provider' of Higher Apprenticeships following a full inspection by Ofsted.

Supporting you to develop the next generation of policy experts

This apprenticeship is particularly suited to the following roles:

- Policy Officer
- Policy Manager
- Policy Adviser
- Policy Analyst
- Political Affairs Manager.

The responsibilities of those working in such roles encompass the development, implementation and evaluation phases of policy-making, and may include: researching and understanding the political environment in order to support the continuous, uninterrupted development of a policy; gathering evidence and being objective to support the influencing and negotiating of new policies; handling sensitive information and keeping accurate records of policy history; and assisting their wider team by providing administrative support.

Policy roles are often based within organisations that interact with and strive to influence government policy, such as:

- local authorities
- national government
- public bodies
- statutory regulators
- private sector organisations
- non-profit, charity and voluntary organisations.

This qualification is suited to all the following types of employees:

- new starts
- existing employees
- career changers
- school leavers
- individual apprentices and cohorts
- full- and part-time employees.

Apprenticeship Standards

The Apprenticeship Standard specifies what is required of an apprentice. It has been developed by a group of employers and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) to ensure that apprenticeships are delivered and assessed consistently.

Policy Officer Apprenticeship Standard*

The Apprenticeship Standard specifies that apprentices need to achieve the following knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Knowledge

Including: the political environment; economic, social, technological, legal and environmental factors; programme and project management; consultation processes; policy delivery of a policy area relevant to their employment.

Skills

Including: the ability to gather evidence; carry out evidence-based problem-solving; carry out evaluation; communicating with influence; presentation skills; time management.

Behaviours

Including: continuous learning and agility; big-picture thinking; looking to the future; working collaboratively; resilience; self-awareness.

*The Standard is under revision. The new Standard is due to start teaching in summer 2022. The full Standard is available at www.instituteforapprenticeships.org – search for 'Policy Officer Apprenticeship'

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The course

Start date and duration

The apprentice can start in September or January. Other start dates are available throughout the year, subject to demand. The duration of this apprenticeship is twenty-four months including the EPA, but this is flexible.

Course content

On the Certificate of Higher Education in Policy Studies, apprentices immerse themselves in public policy strategy, design and delivery. They also discover how policy professionals can make a difference. The emphasis of the Certificate is to link the academic knowledge to work-based learning and employment.

We listen to you so that the course meets your needs, but typically the modules studied are:

- Readiness for Policy Officer Apprenticeship

- Who runs the UK? Power, Politics and Policy
- Applied Policy Analysis
- Implementing Policy
- Making and Communicating Policy
- Project Management for Policy Officers
- Critical Thinking for Policy Analysis
- Applied Research Methods for Evidence-based Policy.

Learning delivery

The University of Kent has designed this apprenticeship for delivery throughout England. The programme is delivered primarily using our web-based online learning environment, Moodle. This offers an integrated suite of interactive teaching and learning tools and provides apprentices with a flexible distance-learning experience led by academics.

There are two elements to the distance learning.

- 1 Guided independent online learning, where the apprentice is working on their own at a time and location to suit workplace priorities. It includes videoed talks, links to related reading, activities with feedback provided and discussion forums. The course content can be easily accessed on a range of devices, with no need for specialist software, giving apprentices a high level of flexibility about when and where their learning takes place.
- 2 Interactive online learning in a virtual classroom where the apprentice receives teaching support in real time. We hold real-time live webinars online, providing convenient contact with the lecturers for apprentices in locations across England, while maintaining a first-class education experience. The lecturer holds a weekly consultation hour, which is optional, at which apprentices can ask questions.

“I have identified several areas for self-development, particularly in my time-management and presentation skills. I have already learned new techniques for improving these skills.”

Harry Howell

L4 Policy Officer Apprentice, Ofcom



The apprenticeship can be delivered entirely online or as a combination of online learning with in-person face-to-face teaching at three, day-long intensive sessions. We usually hold these on a Saturday so that apprentices can travel at off-peak times. We offer these Saturday intensive sessions in central London and at various locations in England, subject to demand. Dates are announced well in advance.

Apprentices are also supported by a University of Kent Apprenticeship Adviser who meets every 6-12 weeks with the apprentice and their line manager to ensure that they are supported to successfully complete the apprenticeship.

A supervisor in the workplace provides on-the-job training and support for the apprentice.

Assessment

Apprentices need to develop confidence and competence in all aspects of the Standard. This is achieved through ongoing assessment and quarterly cycles of review to prepare the apprentice for successful completion. Progress is assessed by a variety of methods including presentations and written assignments. Apprentices also maintain a portfolio (a record of activity) to showcase their exemplary practice in achieving the knowledge, skills and behaviours of the Standard.

Gateway

Once students have completed the Certificate of Higher Education and their on-the-job learning and training, a meeting is held between the apprentice, their Apprenticeship Adviser and the employer to confirm that the apprentice is ready to proceed to the end-point assessment (EPA).

End-point assessment

The end-point assessment requires the apprentice to demonstrate that they have achieved the Standard. An end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) that is both approved by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and a nationally regulated awarding organisation delivers the EPA qualification service. Throughout the apprenticeship we liaise between you and the EPAO, and communicate the requirements of the EPA from the start to both apprentices and managers.

Qualification

On successful completion the apprentice will be awarded both a Certificate of Higher Education in Policy Studies and an Apprenticeship. Apprentices are eligible to receive their certificate at a Congregations ceremony held in Rochester Cathedral.

Progression

There will be the possibility to progress to Level 6 and beyond once these Apprenticeship Standards are available.

“The course has provided Katia with the confidence and skills to undertake research and step up in advising both Officers and Members. She is now the go-to person on executive decision making.”

Kayode Adewumi
Line Manager, Hammersmith and Fulham Council

About apprenticeships

Apprenticeships combine paid work and study towards a recognised qualification. An apprenticeship allows individuals to have a real job, and to earn while they learn and train. Government reforms now ensure apprenticeships are a viable alternative to studying full-time at university, leaving students debt-free.

Apprenticeship Levy

All employers in England with a pay bill of over £3m are required to pay an Apprenticeship Levy of 0.5% of their total pay bill. The levy can be used to pay for training related to approved apprenticeship standards. As a higher education institution, we are uniquely placed to support employers to maximise the opportunities of the levy.

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Off-the-job training

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding rules require that apprentices must have at least 20% of their paid hours as off-the-job learning. The reason for this is to ensure that a quality programme is delivered. This benefits not only the apprentice but also you, as you have a skilled, well-rounded employee by the end of the apprenticeship.

What counts as off-the-job training?

Off-the-job training is learning that leads towards the achievement of an apprenticeship and is undertaken outside of the apprentice's normal working duties. Off-the-job learning on this programme includes:

- guided independent learning online
- live real-time webinars
- face-to-face day-long intensive sessions (optional and subject to government guidance on Covid-19)
- support with learning
- optional enrichment activities.

APTEM

APTEM is the web-based system for apprentices to record their learning against the Standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours. It is a complete learner tracker system, accessible by employers and

apprentices. It is used throughout the apprenticeship, from on-boarding, initial skills assessments, and workplace reviews, right through to preparation for the EPA. It is easy for apprentices to keep their records up to date. APTEM allows employers, apprentices and University of Kent staff to see quickly how apprentices are progressing and identify any issues.

Cost

Apprentices receive a salary, have an employment contract, spend a minimum of 20% of their work time on off-the-job learning and pay no tuition fees.

This qualification is eligible for levy funding in England, meaning the full cost can be met by an employer's levy fund.

Approved apprenticeships are placed into funding bands, which inform the maximum that can be taken out of your levy pot for any specific apprenticeship. If there is not enough in your levy pot to cover all the apprenticeship training you would like to undertake as an employer, the government will fund 90% of any additional training, with employers funding the remaining 10%, subject to the maximum cap.

The Level 4 Policy Officer Apprenticeship funding band is £6,000** to pay for the training of each apprentice, including the EPA. This does not include the cost of travel to the day-long intensives.

The University works with levy and non-levy employers to provide apprenticeships. For further information and a quote, please contact us.

Entry requirements

Apprentices must be employed. Supported by the University of Kent, each employer decides on their entry requirements and selection process for the programme.

Since this apprenticeship exists to both diversify the workforce and up-skill aspiring policy professionals, a broad range of entry routes can be considered. As a guide, the minimum prior qualifications needed to successfully complete the programme are five GCSEs (including English and mathematics) at Grade C/4 or above, or an equivalent qualification.

All apprentices must have the right to work in the UK.

WHAT KENT OFFERS YOUR APPRENTICE

Our academic team

Our staff have a huge breadth of policy expertise. Across our social sciences departments we have recently carried out policy work with: the Ministry of Justice; the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS); the Women and Equalities Select Committee; the Government Equalities Office (GEO); the advisory board of the Shared Parental Leave Review; Public Health England (PHE); NICE; the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC); the Department for Education (DfE); the Care Quality Commission (CQC); the Health and Social Care Committee; the Drugs, Alcohol and Justice Cross-Parliamentary Group; and the Scottish Affairs Committee.

As a well-resourced university we have a large staffing pool to draw on to support delivery, enabling us to scale up or down depending on cohort sizes.

Networking and community

Valuable learning often takes place informally, through conversations, social interactions and projects – a community of practice. Apprentices are part of a wider cohort, with opportunities for interaction with their peers, creating communities of practice throughout the apprenticeship journey. Apprentices come from a wide variety of working backgrounds and can form valuable new contacts.

We encourage all our apprentices to support each other, share perspectives and learn from the contributions of others. Our online learning environment has social learning functionality, such as forums, video upload and sharing.

Inclusive culture

We champion diversity and this apprenticeship will help you build a diverse workforce. It can be delivered nationally across England, which supports 'levelling up'. We support apprentices who may find it harder to adjust to the workplace or complete their apprenticeship. Our inclusive culture and community of practice helps apprentices to feel connected.

This apprenticeship promotes social mobility by creating visible opportunities for career progression. Working with you, we can help you to develop your apprenticeship recruitment processes, for example by more inclusive entry requirements.

Kent Inclusive Practices are powerful practices embedded across the University to make the delivery of our teaching more inclusive. They anticipate the needs of our learners, reducing the need for retrospective adjustments, and benefit all students, not just those with disabilities. For example, we ensure that our digital content can be used by the widest audience, by, for instance, captioning videos, promoting assistive technologies and providing learning materials in advance.

Additional benefits

As students registered with the University, your employees benefit from a higher education experience. The following University services are particularly relevant to apprentices:

- **Student Learning Advisory Service** – a dedicated team of learning advisers
- **Student Support and Wellbeing** – free confidential counselling; dedicated mental health, specific learning difficulty, autism and disability support
- **Library and IT Services** – access to the resources apprentices need for their studies online, wherever they are. They have access to a huge range of high-quality digital resources, such as e-books, e-journals, databases, newspapers and multimedia
- **Careers and Employability Service** – events and one-to-one advice.

Contact us

To talk to us about any aspect of our apprenticeships, just get in touch with our team: apprenticeships@kent.ac.uk 01634 888459 or 888467 www.kent.ac.uk/apprenticeships

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/ WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

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