

Edinburgh Napier
UNIVERSITY



Graduate Level Apprenticeships (GLA)

Information for Apprentices



Background

The skills gap in the ever evolving IT and Digital industries in Scotland is widening. Currently 72% of employers in Scotland have reported a lack of technical, practical or job specific skills in applicants.

To help bridge this gap Edinburgh Napier University's School of Computing has received funding of over £1M from Skills Development Scotland to develop and deliver two new work based Graduate Level Apprenticeship (GLA) courses as a way for individuals to develop the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required by Scottish Industries:

- **BSc (Hons) Software Development**
- **BSc (Hons) IT Management for Business**

Building on the success of existing Foundation and Modern Apprenticeship programmes, these GLAs will give you the opportunity to be in paid employment whilst completing your Honours degree. Since they have been developed with employers, they ensure that you gain the necessary knowledge and skills required for your chosen area of work.

The Software Development and IT Management for Business GLAs are set to commence in summer 2017, where Apprentices will undertake two modules per trimester which will be completed on block release, giving you the added benefit of both classroom and work based learning. The work you do for your employer counts towards your qualification, and you also spend time during your work week with a university or college.

Why GLAs

Graduate Level Apprenticeships work as a pioneering alternative to more traditional graduate schemes. They are open to either new recruits, such as high calibre school leavers, or people currently employed within a company who are looking to develop or change their career. There is no maximum age limit on who can become a GLA and entry & exit points are flexible.

Benefits to apprentices include:

- A Graduate Level Apprenticeship helps you build the skills and knowledge that Scottish industries need
- Your learning is funded so there is no need to pay for the GLA course
- You're an employee, so you'll be paid a salary and benefits package by your employer
- You'll achieve an internationally recognised BSc (Hons) degree
- The time taken to achieve a BSc through a GLA is 4 years, the same as through a more traditional University degree
- You will spend most of your time in work, learning vital industry skills that are directly relevant to the job and industry you are working in
- Instead of thinking about how things might happen in the real world, you'll be putting your learning into practice right away. You'll solve problems on real projects
- GLAs are designed by industry and for industry – so you can be confident that what you learn is relevant, and right for the role you're in
- BSc Graduates through a GLA programme will have a much higher level of business knowledge and practical experience in comparison to traditional graduates
- You will be mentored and supported by both your employer and the University

Why Napier

Edinburgh Napier is an ambitious, innovative and inclusive University, where all of our courses are designed in consultation with business and industry to give students the academic and practical skills to succeed. As of 2016, 95.1% of our students are in work or further study within six months of graduating thanks to our industry-focused courses, excellent facilities and student support. In comparison to other Universities in Scotland, our courses are much more industry led, giving students and apprentices the practical skills and experience to be successful after graduating.

Each student will have access to the 500-seat 24/7 Jack Kilby Computer Centre at Merchiston Campus and be well-supported by a committed and experienced programme team. In addition:

- Each programme has a Programme Leader to liaise with the workplace manager/ mentor
- Each student will be assigned a Personal Development Tutor who can advise on all aspects of study and will visit the apprentice 3 times a year
- Our Academic Advisor will be available for advice on study skills including time management and preparing for assessments
- Our Wellbeing Team can support students with disabilities and health-related concerns

Courses Offered

BSc (Hons) Software Development

The Software Development degree GLA is designed to produce graduates with:

- Competence in custom software development processes, including the knowledge, skills, and professional competences necessary to begin practice as a software engineer in a business environment.
- Ability to confidently work as an individual and as part of a team to develop and deliver quality software deliverables.
- Skills to design appropriate solutions in a range of application contexts/domains using software development approaches that deliver business value.
- Skills to build and test software solutions for a range of application contexts/comains.
- Ability to reconcile conflicting project objectives, finding acceptable compromises recognising the limitations of capability, capacity, cost and time.
- Understanding of current theories, models, and techniques that provide a basis for problem identification and analysis, software design, development, implementation, verification, and documentation and how to apply these.
- Understanding of the importance of applying negotiation, effective work habits, leadership, and good communication with stakeholders in a typical software development business environment.
- The ability to learn new models, techniques, and technologies as they emerge and appreciate the necessity of such continuing professional development.
- Skills, knowledge and understanding of the need to embed cyber security resilience requirements throughout the software development life cycle.

BSc (Hons) IT Management for Business

The learning outcomes for this course are designed to support four key content areas:

1. Technology	25-35%
2. Business	20-25%
3. Personal and Interpersonal Skills	20-25%
4. Project Management	20-25%

The ITMB degree GLA is designed to produce graduates with:

- A broad background of business operations, procedures and culture applicable to a career in IT in a business environment
- Sufficient technical knowledge to play a key role in an IT related environment
- Personal and interpersonal skills enabling them to work closely and communicate with employees in non-IT related areas of an organisation
- A set of problem-solving and modelling skills appropriate to IT related business operations
- Sufficient management and business knowledge to play a management role in an IT project with project delivery experience in a business oriented environment

Next Steps

Following a successful launch event during Apprenticeship week in early March, employer interest in pioneering the GLA programme is very high, particularly with the incentive of the programme being fully funded for the summer 2017 intake.

The University is currently in the process of meeting prospective employers with whom to partner. If you are interested in applying or have any questions regarding GLAs at this time please contact Scott Killen, Employer Liaison & Recruitment Manager - s.killen@napier.ac.uk

FAQs

Qualifications Offered

What qualification can I gain?

The qualifications on the 2 courses offered by Edinburgh Napier University are BSc (Hons), the same as you would receive after a conventional programme. For example, if you complete a Graduate Level Apprenticeship in IT Software Development at SCQF level 10, you will receive a BSc (Honours) degree from the University, as well as a Graduate Level Apprenticeship award.

Would I be an employee or a student?

You would be first and foremost an employee, spending around 80% of your time with your employer. You would spend the rest of your time with a university or college, and would be enrolled in your university/college, having access to the same facilities and benefits as other students.

The integration of work and learning allows the work you carry out in employment to count towards your qualification, meaning that attendance at University can be flexible based on your employer's requirements. We also offer remote learning facilities.

Do I need to apply for a new job?

No – if your current employer has the capability to put you through the course then you can speak with them and discuss the recruitment with us.

How long will it take me to complete a BSc GLA?

A GLA at BSc (Hons) level will take 4 years to complete when entering from 1st year level.

When would I start my course?

The GLA courses will commence in September 2017. If your current employer is putting you through the GLA, you will likely remain in your current role and transition over to the programme once the course commences

Eligibility

Are there age restrictions on who can apply to become a GLA?

To apply to become a GLA you must be a minimum of 16 years of age. Certain employers may require a minimum age of 18 due to health and safety considerations. There is no maximum age set on who can become a Graduate Level Apprentice.

Can I become a Graduate Level Apprentice if I am already in employment?

Yes, GLAs are an open for existing employees. Ask your employer about options for beginning a Graduate Level Apprenticeship and the University would be happy to speak with both you and your employer to discuss the details.

If I have an existing qualification in the same subject, am I still eligible for funding?

Yes, if the Graduate Level Apprenticeship is a higher level of qualification than the one you already hold in the same area.

If I have an existing qualification at the same or higher level in a different subject, am I still eligible for funding?

Yes. If, for example, you have already completed a degree in Business but you want get a job in Software Development you can still apply for a Graduate Level Apprenticeship.

If your qualification is within a different area in IT, you can start either of our courses from the beginning, provided there is no repeat learning. We can establish this prior to you applying for the course.

Do I have to be resident and working in Scotland to apply for a GLA?

Yes. You must be resident in Scotland before you start your Graduate Level Apprenticeship. In addition to this, your employment working premises must also be located in Scotland. When applying to become a Graduate Level Apprentice you will be required to satisfy an employer that you have the right to live and work in Scotland.

Does my employer need to be a large business to take on a GLA?

No – there is no restriction on the size of organisation that can employ a GLA, as long as they can provide you with mentoring support, progression and time required away from work for learning.

Entry requirements

What qualifications do I need to apply for a GLA?

What you need will depend on the GLA course you are applying for, and the university or college that is delivering it. However, any previous industry experience you might have will be taken into consideration alongside any formal qualifications you hold. For example, universities can offer flexibility to people who have already completed other work based learning qualifications e.g. a Modern Apprenticeship and want progress to a GLA in the same subject area.

If you are applying for a GLA straight from school, qualifications are equivalent to what is required on a similar course through a conventional University degree.

What if I don't have the qualifications required for a GLA I'm interested in?

If you don't have the required academic qualifications, we will assess with your employer whether you would be able to develop the skills and behaviours required to complete the GLA degree programme.

For example, if the entry requirements of a particular GLA required four Scottish Highers (or equivalent) at ABBC or equivalent (BBBB), you would be assessed on an individual basis, allowing your previous experience and learning to be considered in the recruitment process.

Can I do part of a GLA? I'd like advanced entry, or to leave at a lower level.

GLAs have flexible entry and exit points, although advance entry into 2nd or 3rd year for example is unlikely for the 2017 intake, as the course material has not yet been designed.

Funding

Do I have to pay for the Graduate Level Apprenticeship?

No, your learning is funded so there is no cost to you. As you are an employee, you will also receive a wage from your employer. Any additional costs in relation to books, materials and travel should be discussed with your employer.

Is there other funding available to me while I am doing a GLA?

As a GLA apprentice is a paid employee you would not be entitled to any SAAS funding.

What happens if I am unable to meet the academic demands of the course?

If your academic work is not meeting the required standard, you will be offered resits as per our policy. If you are not successful in resits, you will be offered an award at the last achievement level (i.e. an Ordinary Degree, Diploma of Higher Education, or Certificate of Higher Education).

What happens if my employer terminates my employment before I complete my GLA?

If your employer can no longer keep you in employment, you will have the option to continue your apprenticeship with another employer, where available, or to join a related course with the university in order to continue your learning.

Can I go from a Foundation or Modern Apprenticeship to a Graduate Level Apprenticeship?

Yes. If you have completed a Foundation Apprenticeship or Modern Apprenticeship in the same subject, you will be able to apply to become a Graduate Level Apprenticeship studying the same subject area, providing there are vacancies.

The Graduate Level Apprenticeship is designed so that previous learning will not be repeated. We will discuss your prior learning with your employer and Skills Development Scotland to ensure you're eligible to apply for the course.

Are GLAs accredited by professional bodies?

In most cases, the GLA courses have been mapped to professional body standards so apprentices will be able to apply for membership to any professional body relevant to their industry at the conclusion of their programme.

Comparison: GLAs vs Other Apprenticeships

How do Graduate Level Apprenticeships differ from a Technical or Professional Apprenticeship?

Technical and professional apprenticeships have different key characteristics to Graduate level Apprenticeships. Whilst both technical and professional apprenticeships are broadly aligned to the same SCQF levels (8 and 10) there are features of each that provide notable differentiation.

A comparison table has been provided overleaf.

Feature	Technical/Professional Apprenticeship	Graduate Level Apprenticeship
Size	Variable size	Standard size at each level (240 credits and 480 credits)
Permeability	Variability of type of qualification with an end only exit point	Flexible entry and exit points
Qualification Type	Degree level qualification	Internationally recognised BSc Honours Degree
Transferability	Recognised within the Scottish system and across the UK	Recognised internationally and within the Scottish system
Role Type	Designed for Managerial/Supervisory role	Designed for entry level roles and progression to degree
Accessibility	Not accessible to school leavers	Accessible to anyone, including school leavers, with no upper age limit
Standard	NOS or Professional Standard	Defined Frameworks leading to standards & professional qualifications

How are GLAs different from Degree Apprenticeships?

Degree Apprenticeships	Graduate Level Apprenticeships
More bespoke as degrees are tailored to the outcomes defined by a job role within a particular company, making them very specific	Broader coverage to meet a wide variety of employer needs, allowing for more flexibility. They are also transferable in the same way as conventional BSc Honours degrees
Learning costs are part funded by the UK government via the digital voucher scheme with an employer contribution	Learning costs are fully funded by SDS for the duration of the course, provided the GLA starts employment by the end of September 2017
Any organization or collaboration that can award a degree can register to deliver the degree apprenticeship	Exclusive to Scottish Universities
Based on English qualification levels	Based on the Scottish Certificate and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) which articulates to other frameworks including the European Qualification Framework (EQF)

Further Information

The GLA programme is at its early stages, and as such there may be some questions you have that are not answered in the FAQ. This document will be updated on an ongoing basis, but if there is anything specific you want to ask, please don't hesitate to contact our Employer Liaison Manager using the details below:

Scott Killen

0131 455 2312

s.killen@napier.ac.uk