

Edinburgh Napier  
UNIVERSITY



## Graduate Level Apprenticeships (GLA)

Information for Employers



## Background

The skills gap in the ever evolving IT, Digital and Cyber Security 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 from Skills Development Scotland (SDS) to develop and deliver two new work based Graduate Level Apprenticeship (GLA) courses. GLAs provide a development pathway for individuals to attain the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required by Scottish Industries.

Napier University are providing a total of 30 places the following courses:

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

## What are Graduate Level Apprenticeships?

Built on the success of existing Foundation and Modern Apprenticeships, GLAs are a work based learning alternative, providing individuals the opportunity to be in paid employment whilst gaining University level qualifications. They have been created in partnership with industry, allowing GLAs to combine academic knowledge with skills development based on industry needs.

Graduate Level Apprenticeships have no upper age limit for entry, and are open to either new recruits or existing employees looking to develop or change their career.

## Benefits to Employers

- Bridge the technology skills gap in business critical areas such as Software Development, IT Project Management, Cyber Security and Business Intelligence
- Fully funded by Skills Development Scotland – pay nothing other than a GLA's salary for the duration of the course
- Enables large businesses to reinvest their contribution to the Apprenticeship Levy
- Work based assessment means learning will directly contribute to the success of businesses
- Open to existing employees – develop staff without affecting cost or headcount
- Retain top talent by supporting and investing in their career development
- No upper age limit and flexible entry criteria, enabling a more diversified workforce – GLAs have proved particularly popular with women looking to get into IT
- Suitable for either large businesses or SMEs

## How Will GLAs be Delivered?

Commencing in September 2017, Graduate Level Apprentices will undertake 2 modules per trimester over a 12 month period, with the course taking 4 years to complete overall. They will predominantly learn and be assessed in the workplace, with a requirement to spend 1 day a week in classroom sessions at our School of Computing in Edinburgh alongside other GLAs. Latterly they will spend 1 day per month in class as they enter years 3 and 4.

## Why Napier?

The University currently runs the largest placement programme in Scotland, and have done so successfully for over 25 years. We also already run a hugely successful Cyber Security apprenticeship degree in England, where our apprentices enjoy the balance of work and study. They have shown demonstrable talent and motivation.

Edinburgh Napier is an ambitious, innovative and inclusive University, where working in consultation with business and industry is our speciality. We provide 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.

We will ensure that GLAs are shaped around your business needs, and our dedicated Employer Liaison & Recruitment Manager is available to fully assist in marketing, recruitment, onboarding and ongoing support.

## Courses Offered

### BSc (Hons) Software Development

The Software Development 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 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

If you would like further information or to register your interest in taking on a Graduate Level Apprentice, please contact:

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## FAQs

### Overview

#### What GLA courses are available?

The University is running 2 courses within the School of Computing:

- **IT Software Development at SCQF level 10 (honours degree level)**
- **IT Management for Business at SCQF level 10 (honours degree level)**

#### How many GLAs does Napier have available?

Opportunities are available for 15 Apprentices on each course.

#### What qualification will a GLA gain from these courses?

The qualification a Graduate Level Apprentice receives at the end is the same as they would get after a conventional learning programme with the University. When a GLA completes either available programme they will receive a BSc degree from the University, as well as a Graduate Level Apprenticeship award.

#### How long does it take to complete a GLA?

A GLA at BSc Honours level will take 4 years to complete when entering from 1<sup>st</sup> year level

#### What is the split between work and University?

Graduate Level Apprentices are first and foremost YOUR employee. We anticipate that in the first 2 years apprentices will spend 4 days a week in work and 1 day a week in University, with day release reduced to 1 day per month in their final years.

However the exact split between work and learning will be agreed based on what works for you e.g. of online or block release learning works better for you, this is negotiable.

This integration of work and learning means that the work employees carry out in your employment counts towards their qualification.

#### Do I have influence over the course material?

Yes – This applies to both what they do in University and what they do in work. We shape this programme around the needs of your business.

#### Do I have influence over the work based learning?

Yes – the GLA is your employee and as such the work they do is based around the needs of your business, provided it is relevant to the degree.

#### Do I need to hire new people?

No – GLAs can either be hired externally or be an existing employee within your business that you feel would benefit from upskilling.

#### When will my successfully recruited GLAs start employment?

We are looking for them to start their learning in September 2017, although there are flexible entry and exit points, so this can be negotiated. It is possible for the GLA to start work with you earlier or join for an induction, with the time they begin the University programme remaining the same. The purpose of GLAs is to fit the needs of your business, so we will endeavour to work start dates around your timeline.

### What salary should a GLA be paid?

A GLA is ultimately your employee, and it is up to you to determine an appropriate base salary. Skills Development Scotland encourage all employers to pay a Living Wage from year 1, which equates to £13,000-£14,000 per annum pro-rata, provided they spend 80% of time in employment. It is expected that you review salary on an annual basis and when GLAs become qualified they should be paid equivalent to the entry level salary for a BSc Graduate through a more traditional programme.

GLAs should also have full access to facilities and benefits.

### What University resources are available to GLAs?

The following educational resources are highlighted as part of the Edinburgh Napier University commitment to GLAs:

- All modules will have teaching material available on Moodle, compliant with the university's minimum frameworks to include all coursework, teaching slides, lab and tutorial sheets.
- Access to the 500-seat 24/7 Jack Kilby Computer Centre at Merchiston Campus
- 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
- Access to additional online learning resources including bespoke MOOCs developed to support skills development, also available 24/7. These resources, developed by staff in the School of Computing have over 1m users worldwide.

### What support will the University provide to the business?

Edinburgh Napier University is well renowned for providing work based learning, and currently has the largest placement programme in Scotland. Both of our programmes are supported by an experienced and committed Programme Leader, and we have a dedicated Employer Liaison Manager to ensure you are fully supported throughout.

We will also provide you with the following:

- Each line manager and/or company mentor will be invited to attend a workshop on work-based learning and regular networking events to meet the other companies involved.
- Progress reports will be made available to each line manager following regular Examination Boards.
- Attendance and engagement will be monitored to ensure employer expectations of attendance and study time are met.

### How are GLAs developed during their employment?

GLAs are developed through ongoing consultation with employers, universities, professional bodies and qualifications authorities in the form of Technical Expert Groups (TEGs). The TEGs act as an advisory group on behalf of the sector and are based on the premise that industry provides the expertise to identify the skills and knowledge they need for a competent graduate workforce. The academic representatives develop the programme, quality standards and alignment to professional accreditation required for delivery of the award.

### Do GLAs have the same job title/role in my business throughout the programme?

This can be discussed and based on the needs of your business, although in later years some time allocated to project work where GLAs can demonstrate output against learning outcomes would be beneficial. Progression through the course should also reflect progression within your business, so it is expected that their role increases in complexity with time, particularly in years 3 and 4.

### Eligibility

#### Is there an upper age limit on who can apply for a GLA?

No - to apply to become a GLA the employee/applicant must be a minimum of 16 years of age, but there is no maximum age limit.

#### If someone has an existing qualification in the same subject as a GLA they apply for, are they still eligible for funding?

Yes, if the Graduate Level Apprenticeship is a higher level of qualification than the one the individual already holds in the same area. For example, someone who holds an HND in Software Development or Modern Apprenticeship can apply to a BSc programme.

#### If someone has an existing qualification at the same level in a different subject, are they still eligible for funding?

Yes. If, for example, someone has already completed an honours degree in Chemistry but they want get a job in Software Development they can still apply for either course available.

#### Do employees need to be resident and working in Scotland?

Yes. The employee must be resident in Scotland at the start of the Graduate Level Apprenticeship. In addition to this, your working premises must also be located in Scotland. When applying to become a Graduate Level Apprentice the individual will be required to satisfy the employer that they have the right to live and work in Scotland.

#### Can I access GLAs if my business is registered or has its headquarters out with Scotland?

Yes - as long as the employees you want to put on a GLA course are living and working in Scotland.

#### Are there any restrictions on GLAs travelling to locations outside of Scotland for work?

No – if it is beneficial or part of their role within your organisation, then GLAs can travel to other locations without restriction, including internationally. The University will need to be notified in advance if this affects their classroom attendance, but we can be flexible around this.

#### Can a small or medium sized business take on a GLA?

There is no restriction on the size of organisation that can employ a GLA. However, a smaller organisation would need to be able to provide their Apprentice with the following:

- Employee's wage
- Time required away from work for learning
- Mentoring support
- Benefits package (pension and other normal benefits open to other staff)
- A consistent work load that would allow progression and breadth of opportunity and assessment of day to day practice

### Can I recruit a GLA who requires Visa sponsorship?

No – all GLA applicants must have full UK work eligibility and be a permanent resident in Scotland

## Entry Requirements

### What qualifications are required to apply for a GLA?

Napier University will assess applicants not just on formal qualifications but also existing experience, particularly with current employees within your organisation, and personality/aptitude. We offer flexibility to non-traditional entrants and will work with you to assess the criteria. There will be more emphasis on formal qualifications for school leavers.

### If I already have a Foundation or Modern Apprentice in the same subject area, can I progress them to a GLA?

Yes – although it is up both you and the University to ensure that the apprentice joins the programme at the right level, recognising any prior learning that may have taken place.

### Can a current BSc/MSc graduate in a different subject area apply for a GLA?

Yes – if they have graduated in a different subject area they can apply. This is something to consider with current employees who may want to apply.

### What if the applicant from within my business does not meet academic entry requirements?

If an applicant does not have academic qualifications then we can together assess whether the individual would be able to develop the skills and behaviours required to complete a degree programme. For example, we will recognise prior learning, skills and knowledge gained in the workplace.

## Funding

### How are Graduate Level Apprentices funded?

For GLAs starting before the end of September 2017, their learning costs will be fully funded by Skills Development Scotland for the duration of the course.

### Does an employer receive any payment from SDS for taking on a GLA apprentice?

SDS will pay the full fees of those apprentices starting in 2017 but employers will not receive any direct payments for taking on a graduate level apprentice.

### How will the Apprenticeship Levy impact GLAs?

Following on from the recent consultation on the apprenticeship levy, Scottish Government has reaffirmed its commitment to the expansion of work-based learning opportunities through Foundation, Modern and Graduate Level Apprenticeships.

Scottish Ministers are committed to increasing the number of Modern Apprentices, including Graduate Level Apprentices to 30,000 by 2020, and have expressed their strong support for the expansion of Foundation Apprenticeships, as an important part of its Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) youth employment strategy.

### Is the GLA entitled to SAAS funding?

No – as they are your full time employee they will not be entitled to SAAS funding.

## Recruitment

### How do I recruit a GLA?

1. After consultation with The University on each programme in detail, you contact us to confirm which course you are interested in and how many places you intend to take. Our Employer Liaison Manager will keep you updated on availability throughout the consultation process
2. Discuss entry requirements, timescales for recruitment, course content and assessment methods
3. Create a job description including entry requirements and a closing date
4. Advertise the role – we will also advertise through our own channels and you can also advertise on the apprenticeship.scot website
5. Liaise with us throughout the recruitment process, with support provided at interview stages
6. Accepted GLAs will likely attend a summer boot camp, provided by the University, where they can all meet and get an induction to Napier. The duration of this and compulsory attendance is yet to be determined, and we are currently considering how this will work for employees already in your business

### What support will the University provide during recruitment?

The University will be as involved as you want them to be during recruitment. Some organisations want to manage the whole process themselves and others prefer a much more hands on level of support. We are highly experienced in assisting with recruitment in many different methods, and will shape this around how you would like to progress.

It is important however that applicants meet the entry requirements of both the University and the employer.

An example of a more hands on approach from the University would be:

1. The university manages all external applications and assesses them based on entry requirements to the course. We will liaise with you on the entry criteria for non-traditional applicants.
2. We shortlist these applicants and, depending on volume, hold an assessment centre to establish aptitude and personality fit. We recognise that personality fit is vital to your organisation, so this stage could involve both university and employer if preferred.
3. Establish a final shortlist for you to interview

This is an example method of a more hands on approach from Napier, and we will shape the recruitment process around your needs.

### What is expected of GLA employers?

Typically, the following would be expected:

- To meet with us to agree the structure of the GLA programme. This will include assessment methods, time spent at university, and projects that will need to be supported in the workplace.
- Attending regular meetings with the University and the GLA apprentice. These can be done quarterly, but we can do more regular meetings and meet on an ad-hoc basis on request

- Mentoring the GLA apprentice and involvement in training and assessment elements as agreed with the University.

Your role will depend on the individual partnership with the university and/or college.

### What happens if the apprentice is unable to meet the academic demands of the course?

If the Apprentice's academic work is not meeting the required standard, they will be offered resits as per University policy. If the Apprentice is not successful in resits but has successfully completed other elements of the course, they will be awarded a certificate or diploma at the last level they achieved.

### What happens if an apprentices' employment is terminated before they complete their GLA?

If you can no longer keep the individual in employment, the GLA apprentice will have the option to continue their apprenticeship with another employer, where available, or to join a related course with the University.

### What happens when we are out of the traditional University timetable?

The GLA is your employee and bound to the terms of your contract, and as such is not bound by traditional University timetables. They will still work full time with you even when not attending academic study, although work based learning will still apply.

### Can GLAs be accredited by professional bodies?

Yes - 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.

### My business deals with sensitive information, can we implement a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) similar to regular employees?

Edinburgh Napier University is highly experienced in delivering work based learning, and have experience of adhering to NDAs. We currently have agreements elsewhere on other work based learning programmes not to circulate the work beyond assessor and external examiner (if necessary).

### Can GLAs gain advance entry to year 2 or 3 for the 2017 intake?

No - This criteria will apply, for example, to someone who already as an HNC/HND or Level 8 Technology Apprenticeship qualification. GLAs are designed so that any previous learning is not repeated, and with the programme at pilot stage only year 1 (Level 7) is being designed at this stage.

A GLA who is eligible for advance entry into year 2 or 3 will need to wait until this course material has been designed.

An HND or Level 8 qualified apprentice with a non-directly related degree is eligible for entry into year 1 for either 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.

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