

JBM Guidance for Graduate Apprenticeships in Scotland

Introduction

This document provides guidance for education institutions/providers which are developing programmes as part of their graduate apprenticeship and seeking the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM) accreditation.

The Graduate Apprenticeship (GA) is a work-based degree, designed to provide the underpinning knowledge (K) for an undergraduate degree which meets Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 10 requirements. The degree structure will meet the requirements set out Skills Development Scotland's (SDS) "[Graduate Apprenticeships Framework document for Civil Engineering at SCQF level 10](#)" and the content must map to the JBM and the Engineering Council (EngC) degree guidelines.

As a Higher Education Institution (HEI) offering places in conjunction with SDS, you must work in parallel with your apprentices and their employers to ensure that by the end of their academic programme of study the apprentice has; met the requirements as set out by SDS in the Graduate Apprenticeship Framework, met or exceeded the academic requirements as specified by the University offering the accredited degree and is able to demonstrate the Key Skills attributes required by JBM members for accreditation at IEng level.

The ethos of the GA programme is to utilise the working environment as a place of learning. As such, all GA programmes must contain a proportion of Work Based Learning (WBL) in order to demonstrate the integration of knowledge within contextualised learning opportunities. WBL activities may be developed and assessed by the University or by the employer working in close collaboration with the University. As the degree awarding body, it is the responsibility of the University to ensure that all WBL learning activities are undertaken at the required SCQF level and are assessed in accordance with appropriate Quality Assurance processes. It is also the University's responsibility to monitor the overall progress of the student to ensure that the programme delivers the required subjects at the required level over its duration – be this through content delivered at the University or in the WBL context.

This requires you to monitor the apprentices' practical experience to ensure that they are competent in the knowledge, understanding and skills outcomes sought by employers as defined in the framework. This is the key difference between an apprenticeship degree and a traditional part-time degree.

The following are the most common questions Universities are asking the JBM about an apprenticeship degree.

1. We run accredited bachelor degree programmes, can I advise employers that this existing degree is also accredited for the purposes of registering apprenticeship students?

No, an individual Higher Education Institution (HEI) needs to seek a separate accreditation for the GA programme through submission of a GA documentation pack, demonstrating that you have reviewed the programme content and its delivery against the apprenticeship standard and also to ensure that it delivers in full alignment with the SDS's "[Graduate Apprenticeships Framework document for Civil Engineering at SCQF level 10](#)". JBM needs to see evidence of close academic/industry liaison for the successful delivery and that you have done this to allow them to approve changes you make to your programme as a result.

Providers should also refer to the [QAA characteristics statement](#), and the Engineering Council sets the overall requirements for the Accreditation of Higher Education Programmes (AHEP) in engineering, in line with the UK Standard for Professional Engineering Competence (UK-SPEC).

2. We wish to develop an apprenticeship degree, where do I start?

You start with the SDS's "*Graduate Apprenticeships Framework document for Civil Engineering at SCQF level 10*" which stipulates the requirements of the programme and details the industry skills, knowledge and competence which the Apprentice must consistently achieve. Further guidance on the principles of Graduate Apprenticeships may be derived by viewing the framework document in conjunction with the Apprenticeship Standard for a [Civil Engineer degree](#) which states the knowledge (K), skills (S) and behaviours (B), that an equivalent Apprenticeship offered in England should meet. In all cases, priority should be given to the guidance specific to Scotland.

The Framework confirms the qualification(s) that the successful apprentice will achieve on completion of their apprenticeship. This Framework, when viewed in conjunction with this guidance specifies that on completion, the Graduate Apprentice will be awarded an SCQF Level 10 bachelor degree accredited by the JBM.

2.1 Graduate Apprenticeship programmes MUST ensure that:-

- a) In line with SDS stipulations – whilst there are a range of different delivery mechanisms for the Graduate Apprenticeship the integration of knowledge within contextualised learning opportunities must be the overriding factor i.e. the programme MUST contain a proportion of WBL
- b) All learning activities are undertaken through close collaboration between the University and employers in order to ensure relevancy and validity
- c) The University is responsible for ensuring that all Work Based Learning and assessment is undertaken in line with the associated SCQF level of study
- d) The development, delivery and assessment of WBL is undertaken by a suitably competent person – in the case of WBL undertaken by the University this may be a suitably qualified academic, in the case of WBL led by the employer this would have to be someone who holds an appropriate level of professional recognition i.e. recognised as a Supervising Civil Engineer, Delegated Engineer or Mentor with associated IEng or CEng accreditation
- e) Any WBL and/or associated assessment undertaken by the employer is validated by the University in line with its approved Quality Assurance processes. It is the Universities' responsibility to ensure that the nature of the WBL, its assessment and any mark awarded is fit for purpose and can be justified relative to SCQF level of study

3. What does the JBM mean by WBL?

Following the recommendation of the JBM Sub-committee (JBMSC), it was agreed to use the definition of WBL set out in the JBM's [Glossary of Further Learning Terms](#): 'a structured way of using learning acquired through work experience'.

4. Is WBL a requirement for a Graduate Apprentice degree?

Yes – a Graduate Apprenticeship is an accredited work-based learning programme that lead to a professionally recognised degree qualifications for which Apprentices MUST be employed. If WBL is awarded academic credit, it must be assessed and delivered at the required level by an appropriately qualified and recognised party.

In line with the requirements set out in the [JBM Guidelines for Developing Degree Programmes](#) subject areas covered must comprise of the 3 Core Subjects contained within List A (Structures, Materials, Geotechnics) and a minimum of two Core Subjects chosen from List B. All subject areas may be assessed by either the University or by an individual holding an appropriate level of professional recognition/ accreditation.

Students may use in-house training courses, for example in surveying, to complete the practical element of a surveying module with the underpinning theory and assessment of related coursework being delivered/validated by the University.

5. Does the title of the degree programme need to be different from our existing degree titles, we will be using our existing part-time degree programme to provide the underpinning knowledge for the degree?

In line with guidance given by SDS, and in order to reflect the additional value associated with the degree, the award of title should include the term Graduate Apprenticeship e.g.:

BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering (Graduate Apprenticeship)

BEng (Hons) in Civil Engineering (Graduate Apprenticeship)

6. Local employers are asking us to offer a Graduate Apprenticeship pathway for both IEng and CEng (partial) students, does it have to be one or the other or can it be both?

The primary focus of the Civil Engineering GA is on developing the knowledge, understanding and skills outcomes sought by employers. This GA framework can provide a route to Chartered Engineer status and is intended to fulfil the requirements to achieve Incorporated Engineer (IEng) status. It is therefore intended to provide full accreditation of IEng status and where appropriate partial accreditation of Chartered Engineer (CEng) status. The framework is not prescriptive about the awards to be made available by learning providers, however these should be national qualifications at SCQF level 10 with 480 credits.

NB the framework should only be delivered by providers capable of bestowing the correct awards at the appropriate SCQF level (or working in a partnership to be able to do so). To ensure recognition by the following professional bodies all HE qualifications should be accredited by the Joint Board of Moderators (JBM):

- Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE);
- Institution of Structural Engineers (IStructE);
- Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation (CIHT);
- Institute of Highways Engineers (IHE);
- The Permanent Way Institution (PWI).

7. Does the Graduate Apprenticeship programme need to be a structured learning experience?

Yes, the whole Graduate Apprenticeship is a structured learning programme – containing the degree with a negotiated technical and professional WBL programme. The WBL content is assessed and audited by the provider (in conjunction with the apprentice and the employer) through a minimum of 3 scheduled visits per academic trimester. As a good practice, it is suggested to have a structured framework with around 3 visits to workplace per academic year. The purpose of these visits is to meet with the Graduate Apprentice and their mentor in their place of work and to monitor/asses that the WBL being undertaken is in line with discussions held between the 3 parties. This is to ensure progress is being made and a development plan is set for the period prior to the next scheduled visit.

These visits will also be used to reflect on learning at the university and in the workplace as well as any other relevant Initial Professional Development, e.g. attendance at professional body meeting, webinars, training courses, reading journals etc.

8. Does the University need to monitor the gathering of apprentices' evidence to demonstrate that it meets the standard required for professional accreditation?

The level of monitoring will depend on the method of delivery and the arrangements adopted for the development and assessment of WBL i.e. if it is undertaken by the University or by an appropriately qualified person within the organisation. In all cases, monitoring should be undertaken by the University to ensure that all work associated with the degree is undertaken in line with its Quality Assurance processes and as per the requirements of the SDS Framework guidelines.

The University is responsible for the monitoring of the students' academic progress and should ensure that the required subject areas (as specified by the JBM Core Subject Lists A and B) are delivered at the required level over the programme's duration.

Successful completion of an accredited GA programme will result in the award of the degree title. It is not a requirement that the Apprentice apply for accreditation following graduation, however, it is good practice to ensure that the apprentices gathering of evidence for their portfolio runs concurrently with the degree programme and the gathering of evidence is supported by their

employer. If the Apprentice is not afforded the opportunity to gather evidence in support of application for IEng registration, this should be discussed with their employer.

9. Does the University need to provide training for those designated industrial mentors from those organisations their apprentices will work for? Is this something the professional bodies can help with?

Learning providers (universities) should liaise with existing employer training and development and quality assurance systems to minimise any double assessment. They will need to ensure that mentors are recognised as such or have been trained appropriately - the professional bodies may be able to help with this.

10. Is an End Point Assessment (EPA) required as part of the Graduate Apprenticeship process in Scotland?

No – Graduate Apprenticeships are delivered by Universities and are subject to the same Quality Assurance mechanisms as conventional Full-Time degree programmes. In Scotland a different QA scheme is applied and therefore an EPA is not required. Successful attainment of the 480 credits required will result in the completion of the programme and award of the degree.

11. Can I use the [Risk Based Approach](#) (RBA) to make an application for approval of our apprenticeship degree, is there any extra information I will need to provide?

You may use the RBA to make your submission **if you are** already offering JBM accredited degree programmes. If you are, you will need to include the following information.

The HEI must submit a report to the JBM (jbm@ice.org.uk) containing the following information for each programme under review:

- A rationale for the new programme which includes:
 - Mapping to [AHEP Learning outcomes](#) and JBM mapping to core subject matrix and threads.
 - Projected recruitment statistics.
 - Internal validation report.
 - Details of changes to related accredited programmes since the last JBM visit
- Programme specifications providing details of the structure of the programme.
- Commonality with other accredited programmes.
- Resource implications (including staffing and equipment).

Extra information for all Graduate Apprenticeship Degree submissions:

- A statement confirming which framework the award provides the underpinning knowledge, skills and behaviours for.
- A mapping table to demonstrate how SDS GA frameworks' learning and skills outcomes requirement are met in the GA programme.
- The academic and industrial support provided to apprentices.
- Proposals for monitoring apprentices' academic and industrial competence as well as development needs, such as arrangements for on-going progress monitoring and reviews.
- In the case of academic credit given for WBL, state the number of credits and how the WBL is to be assessed.
- Any contractual agreement exists between employer and the SDS (funder) and with the HEI for delivering GA programme.
- The tri-partite commitment statement between the apprentice, the employer and the HEI.
- Active engagement with the relevant professional institution(s) to support employers and prepare the apprentices for successful timely completion of the GA.
- Completed Graduate Apprenticeship checklist

If you **do not** run JBM accredited degree programmes then you will need to complete the full [JBM accreditation submission report](#), as soon as your programme has been internally validated. Please contact the JBM secretariat as soon as the programme has been validated to allow them to arrange a pre-accreditation visit.

12. We have our accreditation visit in the next few months, what evidence will the JBM expect to see that relates to our apprenticeship programme?

- 1) The academic degree must meet the requirements set out in the [Guidelines for Developing Degree programmes](#) and has been mapped to [AHEP learning outcomes](#). This mapping must be evidenced in student work.
- 2) Where WBL is developed and assessed by the employer, clear evidence must be shown that activities map to the related SCQF level associated with study and that the employer is appropriately qualified to deliver and assess such content
- 3) Written agreement between University, employer and Apprentice develop prior to the commencement of WBL which clearly lays out the roles and responsibilities of each party
- 4) Evidence of Employer input to the development and ongoing delivery of the Graduate Apprenticeship programme at a strategic level. This may be demonstrated via the establishment and input of an Industry Advisory Panel
- 5) Evidence of close collaboration between the HEI and the employer(s) during the delivery and assessment of WBL components
- 6) Evidence will be required that the HEI has comprehensive quality assurance processes and procedures in relation to all WBL elements undertaken with an employer.
- 7) The apprenticeship course handbook should outline the full process i.e. the need to gain appropriate experience in addition to their academic studies
- 8) Minutes of Student Staff committee meetings or any other such activities that relate to apprenticeship students and their experience of the programme.

13. What types of questions could a JBM visiting team ask us?

- 1) What is the ethos of your apprenticeship degree, what is different from the other degrees you offer and your engagement with industry?
- 2) What is the mode of delivery and if there are likely to be any issues faced by apprenticeship students when compared with other students?
- 3) Is there any linkage between the University and company support/mentoring of the apprenticeship? As part of the accreditation process, the JBM will seek evidence that strong and visible links are in place between provider and employers, and that employers contribute to delivering GA framework learning & skills outcome, holding regular review meetings, supporting apprentice etc.
- 4) The JBM actively expects providers (universities) to consider apprenticeship related matters within an established Industry Advisory Board (IAB) or in a standalone IAB equivalent for the GA programme.
- 5) On an accreditation visit, the JBM must meet apprenticeship students, some of their employers and mentors
- 6) How are you going to monitor/manage the WBL element of the course?
- 7) Have there been any students admitted to later years of the programme to ensure that the accreditation intake period aligns with the graduating cohort?

14. Can the GA programme be entirely delivered and assessed through WBL by the employer with the University providing validation?

No – in order to ensure that the required subject areas are covered, and a sufficient understanding of underlying theory associated with study at a degree level is attained, a proportion of the program must be delivered by the University.

Whilst the use of the workplace as a learning environment is to be encouraged, it is unlikely that any one employer will be able to offer the opportunity to cover the entirety of the programme at the required level of study in the workplace. The GA programme should look to use the strength of the respective learning environments to ensure that the apprentice is provided with a comprehensive programme which includes academic study as well as its practical application for the purpose of learning.

In practical terms, this will mean a blend of classroom-based learning offered in combination with WBL. This may be achieved through day release/block release offered in combination with WBL activities if the University can show clear evidence that the required subjects have been covered and to the required academic level. For example, subjects which are predominantly theory based (e.g. Mathematics) may be exclusively taught in the classroom whilst more practical subjects (such as Surveying) may be taught through a combination of classroom and WBL activities. The

University should work with employers and Apprentices on an individual basis to identify opportunities for learning to be undertaken in the workplace and work to ensure this is supported through classroom-based learning. WBL may also be included in the form of a dedicated module(s) within the programme structure where it can be utilised to evidence the achievement of Programme Learning Outcomes as stipulated by the JBM.

