



# SUPPORTING YOUR APPRENTICES TO SUCCESS





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## Partnering with QA Apprenticeships

QA is the UK's #1 provider of tech and digital apprenticeships and funded workplace learning programmes. We empower organisations and individuals to develop the tech capabilities needed for success.

We're committed to powering potential. Working in partnership with your organisation on a bespoke basis, we help employees develop new skills to boost their careers and propel your business forward.

Our programmes are defined by digital thinking, operational excellence, sustainability and our passion for great customer engagement.

We want to guarantee you and your apprentices a rewarding experience. That's why we work to continually improve our world-class delivery and value-add service for the rapidly evolving digital world.



## About this guide

Managing an apprentice ('learner') or a group of learners might be a new experience for you. QA's apprenticeships are innovative, fast-paced and exciting and we're here to help you navigate the journey ahead.

Based on feedback and frequently asked questions from people in your position, we've put together this quick guide to introduce the responsibilities for line managing an apprentice.

Your role is crucial to supporting your apprentice's success – QA will be with you every step of the way to help you get the best outcomes for your learner and your wider organisation.

**We can't wait to work with you!**



# QA apprenticeship programmes

QA offers a range of apprenticeship programmes for new hires and existing employees looking to upskill or reskill to meet new business challenges.

For more details on each of our programmes click on the hyperlinks within the programme tables below or visit [QA.com](https://qa.com).

## ENGLAND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

### LEVEL 3

Azure Cloud Support Specialist Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Cloud Network Specialist Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)
Multi-Channel Marketer Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Junior Developer Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)
Microsoft Data Essentials Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	AWS Cloud Support Specialist Level 3 Apprenticeship Programme (England)

### LEVEL 4

Software Engineer Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Business Analyst Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Data Analyst Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Digital Product Manager Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)
Cyber Security Engineer Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Cyber Risk Analyst Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	DevOps Engineer Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	
Network Engineer Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)	Cyber Defender & Responder Level 4 Apprenticeship Programme (England)		

## ENGLAND DEGREE AND HIGHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

### LEVEL 4/5/6 (DEGREE)

BSc (Hons) Digital and Technology Solutions Degree Apprenticeship	BA (Hons) Digital Marketing Degree Apprenticeship
	BSc (Hons) Cyber Security Technical Professional Degree Apprenticeship
	BSc (Hons) Project Management Degree Apprenticeship

### LEVEL 7 (MASTERS)

MSc Digital and Technology Specialist Degree Apprenticeship	Artificial Intelligence Data Specialist Higher Apprenticeship
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## SCOTLAND APPRENTICESHIPS

### LEVEL SCQF6

Digital Marketing SCQF6 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	IT Support Specialist SCQF6 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)
Network Analyst SCQF6 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	Digital Applications Support SCQF6 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)
Business Administration SCQF6 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	

### LEVEL SCQF8

IT Support Professional SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	Project Management SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)
Software Developer SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	Cyber Security SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)
Data Analyst SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)	Network Engineer SCQF8 Apprenticeship Programme (Scotland)

## FURTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

During the apprenticeship programme and beyond, learners on QA's L3 and L4 programmes, Scottish L6 & 8 programmes, and select Degree and Higher Apprenticeship programmes can benefit from skills development material on our online platform **Cloud Academy**.



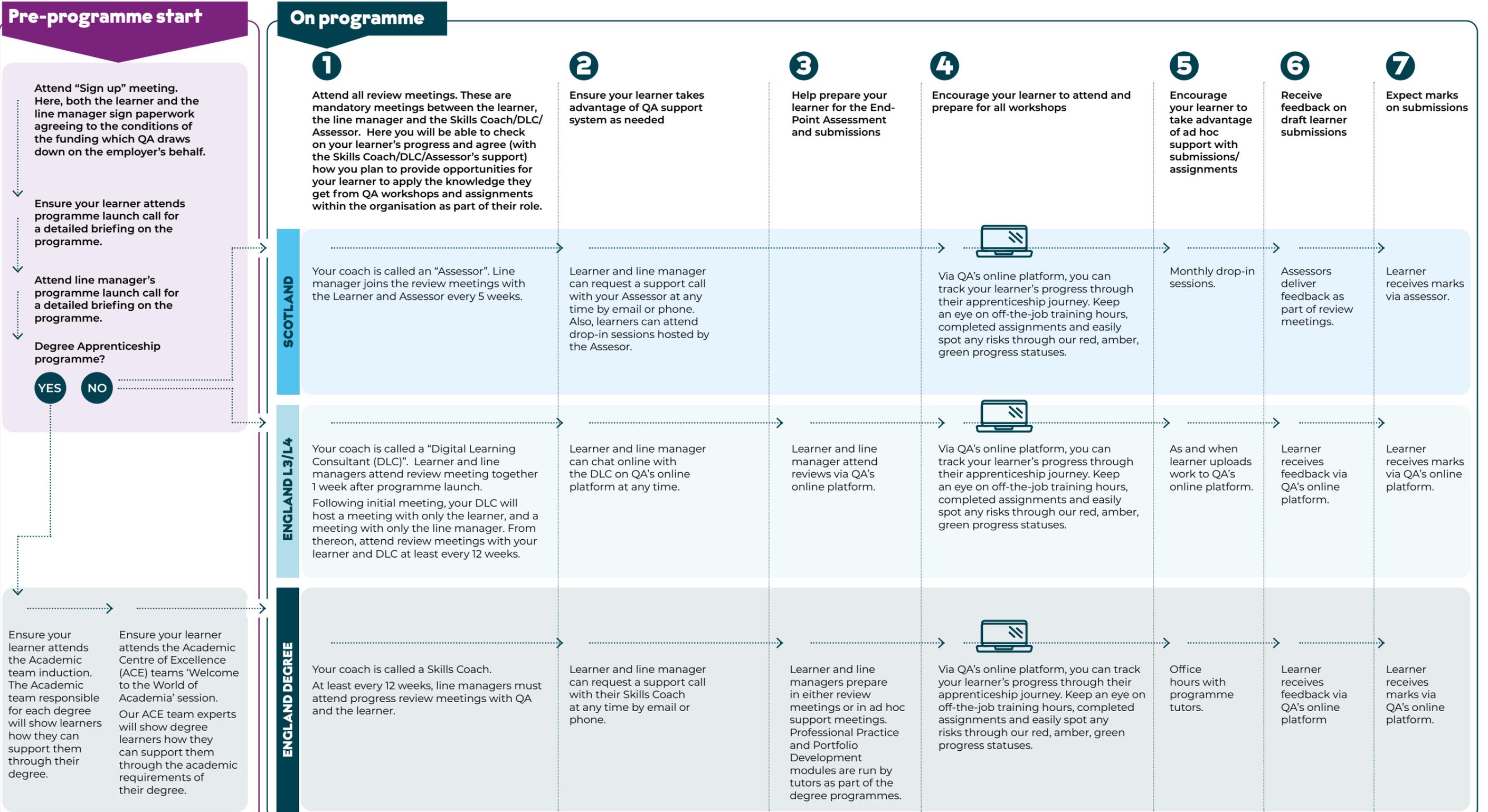
The Cloud Academy training library provides access to over 10,000 hours of technical learning to master AWS, Azure, Google Cloud, DevOps, Programming, Security, and much more. Alternatively, you can build training that mirrors your production environment by cloning and customising our learning paths and creating and uploading your own bespoke content.



# Line manager checklist

As a line manager of an apprentice, you're a crucial part of your learner's success on programme. QA provides the knowledge and you provide the opportunities for your apprentice to apply their knowledge within the organisation. This will give them the skills and opportunities to demonstrate the behaviours they will need to evidence at the end of their apprenticeship in their End-Point Assessment.

We will guide you through this process but here is a summary of what will happen (and how you can support) both before the programme starts and during the programme. Follow the checklist to see where you can drive strong outcomes for learners on Scotland, England L3/L4 and Degree Apprenticeship programmes.





## FAQs

### Q. What is EPA?

A: End-Point Assessment (EPA) tests the knowledge, skills and behaviours that an apprentice has gained during their apprenticeship programme. Requirements for the EPA are unique to the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) standards per programme and are designed to demonstrate the competence of an apprentice in their role.

This may entail submitting a portfolio, a project, an employer reference and participating in an online interview.

### Q. Will my apprentice need to complete an EPA?

A: Learners on our England Level 3 and 4 programmes and Degree and Higher Apprenticeships will be required to complete an End-Point Assessment at the end of their apprenticeship programme in order to achieve their qualification.

Learners on our Scotland Level 6 and 8 programmes do not complete an End-Point Assessment.

### Q. How long does the EPA take?

A: Depending on programme anytime between 12 – 16 weeks.

### Q. What will my learner's project look like for the EPA?

A: It's crucial that the project is individualised to the learner and their workplace, so how your learner's project takes shape will depend on the programme and your learner's objectives and your team's challenges/goals. Your QA Digital Learning Consultant / Skills Coach is on-hand to support this process.

### Q. How will QA help my apprentice prepare for the EPA?

A: Each DLC/ Skills Coach will arrange a mock interview for their learner to practice before their actual EPA interview. This should be done as part of their final review.

During the actual interview, learners must ensure they bring a valid form of ID and they have their ULN (Unique learner number) to hand. The learner must also ensure they are in a secluded, quiet area/meeting room and ensure that no-one enters for the duration of the interview. Without these, the interview cannot take place and will need to be rescheduled, delaying the end point assessment.

### Q: When will my learner receive their final grade?

A: We work with leading End-Point Assessment Organisations (EPAO) to deliver the EPA.

EPAOs have different SLAs to return final grades:

- CMI – 15 working days + 3 working days for EPA team to process
- BCS – 5 working days + 3 working days for EPA team to process
- C&G – 20 working days + 3 working days for EPA team to process
- APM – 15 working days + 3 working days for EPA team to process

Please do not chase the EPA team for the final grade as the email will not be responded to. If your learner is chasing their final grade, you are responsible for managing their expectations and ensuring they are aware of the EPA team processing SLA.

### Q. Do I need to attend every review meeting?

A. Yes! The frequency of review meetings will vary by which apprenticeship your learner is doing, but will be at least every 12 weeks. You can discuss with your learner's Skills Coach/DLC/Assessor how much of the meeting you need to attend, but to start with you should always attend the full meeting.

The meeting will enable you to understand how your apprentice is progressing (and if they aren't, how you can help get them back on track). You'll also hear expert advice from the Skills Coach/DLC/Assessor to help you understand the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours that your learner needs to evidence in their End-Point Assessment.

Your knowledge and experience within your organisation will enable you to create or find relevant opportunities for your apprentice to apply learning/new skills in the workplace, so your attendance and support is crucial to your apprentice's development.

### Q. How do I contact QA?

A. You will have a dedicated QA representative and can access additional support via the centralised QA Apprenticeship Hub Team: [TheApprenticeshipHub@qa.com](mailto:TheApprenticeshipHub@qa.com). Additional support contacts are provided at the end of this guide.

### Q. Where can I find the programme overview?

A. These are all available on the [QA website](#).

### Q. Who will be my point of contact during the on-boarding process?

A. You will have a dedicated member of the QA Apprenticeship Team who you can contact throughout the onboarding process.



# FAQs (continued)

## Q. What if I am unavailable for the Enrolment?

A. It is a requirement that a line manager is available for enrolment. If you are unable to attend, you can request another member of staff attend on your behalf or request an alternative date. Before the end of the meeting, you will be required to sign and return the Apprenticeship Induction paperwork electronically.

## Q. What will my learner be required to complete / submit as part of their enrolment?

A. This process differs slightly between learners who are already in employment and those who are recruited by QA into the Apprenticeship.

- Learners already in employment will need to complete and return the online enrolment form. This will ask the learner for personal details such as; home address, prior attainment and an emergency contact.
- Learners recruited by QA will be asked additional questions as part of their recruitment process which will form part of their enrolment.
- All learners will need to provide a valid passport or birth certificate.
- All learners will need to provide their GCSE certificates or Scottish Highers and any relevant certificates for the Apprenticeship programme they are enrolling on.
- All learners and line managers will be required to take part in a discussion with a QA representative to discuss the outcome of the learner's Initial Assessment for the programme.

BKSB, an initial assessment of Maths and English competency, will need to be completed by all learners prior to the sign up.

## Q. What is BKSB?

A. QA uses BKSB to provide the vital baseline initial assessment for Maths and English, which is an ESFA mandatory requirement for every learner. This will determine whether the learner is working to the required level to come onto the programme. BKSB will also support learners to prepare for Functional Skills / Core / Meta Skills (whichever applicable to region and programme) in English and Maths.

## Q. When will my learner begin their training?

A. Your learner's programme starts with their programme launch where their first learning will take place. Learners will receive a copy of their training schedule following this.

## Q. What if my learner does not have evidence of proficiency in core Maths and English skills (e.g. GCSE/Nat 5)?

A. Functional Skills / Core / Meta Skills (whichever applicable to region and programme) are the essential skills needed for English and Maths and are seen as vital for life, learning and work. Level 2 Functional Skills are equivalent to GCSE Grade A\*-C.

Learners who have not already achieved English and Maths GCSE (A\*-C) / Nat5, equivalent qualifications or are unable to provide proof of these qualifications (or an approved alternative) will be required to take Level 2 Functional Skills / Core / Meta Skills (whichever applicable to region and programme).

# Top tips

## Top tips for supporting your apprentices

- Treat learners like any other team members – welcome, support, guide and listen
- Be aware of any additional support needs of learners and speak with the QA Team for guidance
- Familiarise yourself with the Apprenticeship programme journey using all resources and contacts provided
- Build a professional relationship with QA Assessor / Digital Learning Consultant/ Skills Coach by responding to communications
- Make the most of your time required for progress review meetings by asking questions or sharing feedback with your apprentice and their QA Assessor / Digital Learning Consultant/ Skills Coach
- Be aware of your learners' virtual workshop/ classroom dates
- Be supportive of your learner's off-the-job time to focus on their training
- With guidance from QA, help your apprentice build their apprenticeship portfolio by providing supplementary evidence of workplace learning such as professional recordings / witness testimonies



# Your QA support contacts

	SCOTLAND APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES	ENGLAND L3/L4 APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES	DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES
<b>GENERAL APPRENTICESHIP ENQUIRIES</b>	<p>The QA Apprenticeship Hub Team</p> <p>0345 074 7973</p> <p><a href="mailto:TheApprenticeshipHub@qa.com">TheApprenticeshipHub@qa.com</a></p>	<p>The QA Apprenticeship Hub Team</p> <p>0345 074 7973</p> <p><a href="mailto:TheApprenticeshipsHub@qa.com">TheApprenticeshipsHub@qa.com</a></p>	<p>The QA Degree Apprenticeship Hub Team</p> <p><a href="mailto:QAADegreeAdmin@qa.com">QAADegreeAdmin@qa.com</a></p>
<b>LEARNING ENQUIRIES</b>	<p>Assessor</p>	<p>Digital Learning Consultant</p> <p>Online chat (9-5:30 Mon-Fri)</p> <p><a href="mailto:DigitalApprenticeships@qa.com">DigitalApprenticeships@qa.com</a></p>	<p>Learning Consultant</p>



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