



Government  
**CAMPUS**

# **Civil Service Apprenticeships Strategy 2022 to 2025**

Ensuring the Civil Service continues to deliver  
high-quality apprenticeships

April 2022



# Contents

<b>Foreword</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Purpose</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Sustainable skills and careers	4
2. High-quality and relevant apprenticeships	5
3. Working in partnership	5
<b>The strategy in more detail</b>	<b>6</b>
Sustainable skills and careers	6
High-quality and relevant apprenticeships	8
Working in partnership	10
<b>Monitoring and Measuring Success</b>	<b>11</b>

## Foreword



The Declaration on Government Reform set out our commitment to a skilled and capable Civil Service and high-quality and relevant workforce training. A revised apprenticeship strategy is central to our plans to “[raise the floor and the ceiling](#)” of knowledge, skills and networks in government: a vital element of our drive to level up. We need higher standards at the universal level, and more and deeper technical and specialist skills, for example in data analysis and digital technology. We also need to attract and retain people with the aptitude and appetite for learning and public service, from all backgrounds and across the United Kingdom.

We have recruited over 30,000 apprentices in the Civil Service since publishing the original Apprenticeship Strategy in 2017. The positive impact of their “learning while doing” is evident across the UK – from the national Covid response and bringing people in Afghanistan to safety, to improving digital public services. Our apprentices are improving lives and spending taxpayers’ money with care while developing skills they will need and use throughout their careers.

In 2021 we [outlined our progress](#) in incorporating apprenticeships into our strategic plans for Government Reform and upskilling while continuing to meet targets for more, and better quality, provision of apprenticeship programmes. Our 2022 to 2025 strategy builds on this work and sets our commitment to apprentices making up 5% of the UK Home Civil Service workforce.

We will recruit in a way that ensures quality, diversity and accessibility, and sets bold expectations of employers, managers, training providers and apprentices themselves, with exacting measurements of success. Our apprenticeships will be tailored to align with career pathways and provide relevant on-the-job opportunities. The updated strategy also focuses on supporting organisations to maximise the use of the apprenticeship levy, a critical lever for building capacity in digital and data capabilities.

We see the apprenticeship model as integral to training a cadre of new government administrators with the skills to perform anywhere in our complex system. The benefits of apprenticeships are great, for the Civil Service and the country, and this strategy will help us recruit and nurture the many talents waiting to be tapped around the UK.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather Wheeler'.

**Heather Wheeler MP**  
Parliamentary Secretary, Cabinet Office

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Chisholm'.

**Alex Chisholm**  
Civil Service Chief Operating Officer and  
Cabinet Office Permanent Secretary

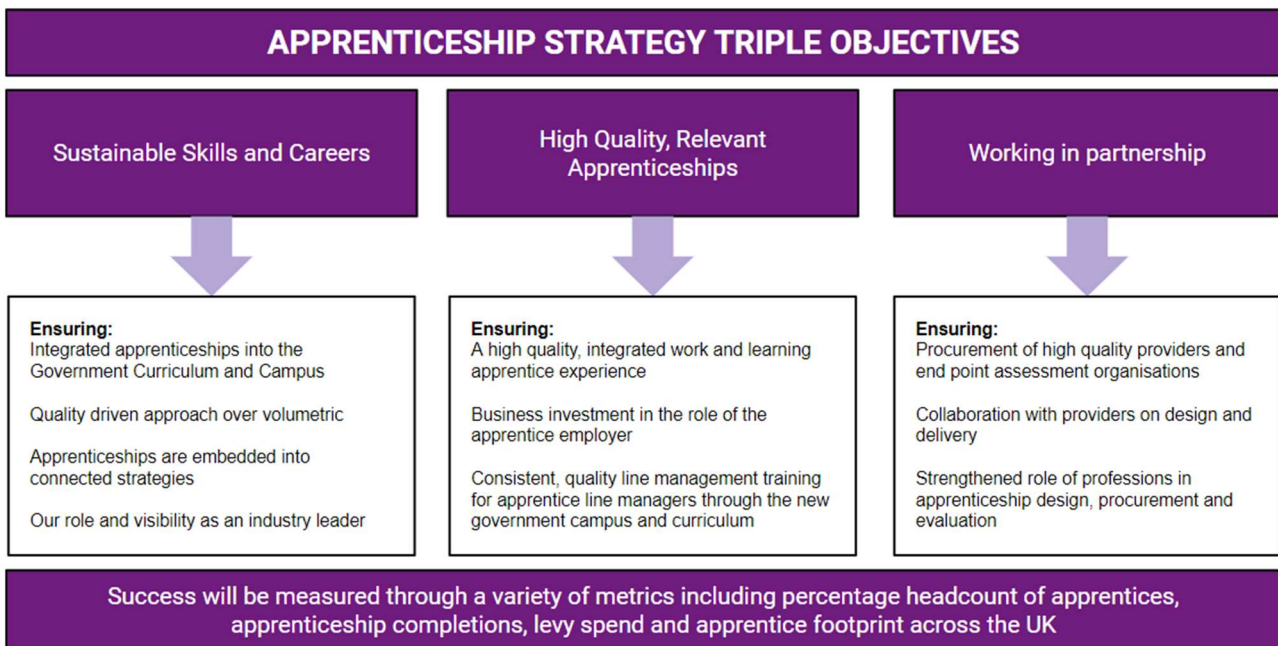
# Purpose

The 2022 to 2025 apprenticeship strategy maintains our focus on providing good quality entry and progression pathways in the Civil Service. The strategy will deliver our shared ambition:

High-quality apprenticeships embedded into our skills and capability strategies, providing entry and progression routes within a range of careers and designed to attract, develop and retain people from all backgrounds and locations.

In this new strategy, apprenticeships will be integrated into departmental skills and capability plans, ways of working and our people strategies. This includes supporting professions and departments to develop career pathways inclusive of apprenticeships – and will therefore ensure that standards are aligned to wider government reforms, among them our commitments in the Declaration on Government Reform.

The strategy applies to all apprentices within the UK Home Civil Service (including those employed by HM government departments in the Devolved Administrations) despite funding and framework differences. We continue to engage with the Devolved Administrations on our broader approach to apprenticeships and sharing best practices.



## 1. Sustainable skills and careers

Aligning apprenticeship programmes to wider government priorities, reform programmes and future capability needs will ensure their sustainability. Apprentices will be training across the five strands of the Government Curriculum, developing into civil servants with subject matter expertise and an understanding of the core skills required for working in public service. We will collaborate on innovative ways of delivering apprenticeships, earning our place as one of the industry's leading employers.

With the Civil Service moving more career opportunities into local hubs, apprenticeships will be fundamental to making this levelling-up policy a success – enabling us to tap into wider labour markets, such as school leavers and career changers. In support of this, we will further invest in our Schools, Higher Education and Further Education outreach initiatives.

A strong employee offer, selling the privilege of public service along with our unrivalled training offer and accessible career pathways, will help attract a broad range of people to work in the Civil Service.

## **2. High-quality and relevant apprenticeships**

A premium apprenticeship programme should be designed and delivered in line with a framework that aims to equip apprentices with the knowledge, skills and experiences to succeed long-term.

We will ensure that Civil Service apprenticeships offer an unparalleled experience that complements a stretching, relevant role, and will use apprentices' voices to influence our design and delivery. Knowing that apprentices feel engaged and fulfilled under strong and supportive leaders, we will provide consistent quality training for their line managers in the Government Campus curriculum.

To maximise the value of the scheme we will support apprentices to move on into mainstream Civil Service roles and integrate apprenticeships into our career progression frameworks – benefiting both the individual and the wider good.

## **3. Working in partnership**

Every apprenticeship is a relationship between an individual, an employer and a training provider. We will work closely with market leaders to make sure we forge the best possible partnerships between providers and the Civil Service professions. This will see us regularly evaluate providers to make sure we are improving the breadth, quality and relevance of our standards.

We will also review the curriculum and provision so that they remain relevant to trends in industry and Civil Service needs. This will ensure we are developing the skill sets that we know are required to deliver the high-quality services the public expect and deserve, now and in the future.

# The strategy in more detail

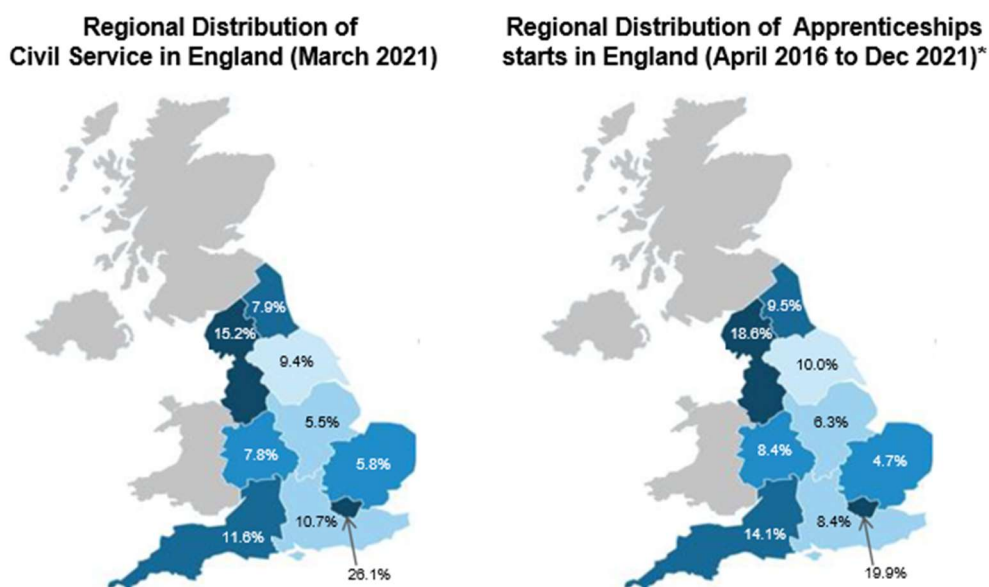
## Sustainable skills and careers

### Setting Standards for Attraction, Selection and Onboarding

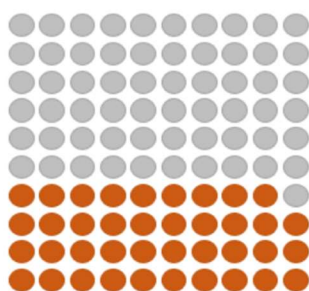
Apprenticeships established in HM government departments across all areas of the UK support our aim to become a more representative UK Civil Service.

#### Regional distribution

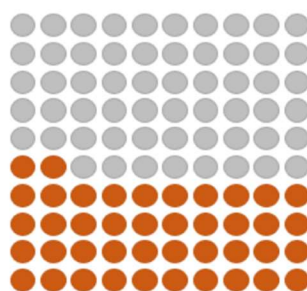
\*England only due to the scope of data reporting in the previous strategy



#### Social Mobility



39% the Social Mobility Commission benchmark for people from a working class background (May 2021)



42% of all Civil Service apprentices are from a working class background (Sept. 2021)

By 2025, the strong employee offer we have developed will be attracting talent from all backgrounds, ages and locations, enhancing and enriching the diversity of our staff and supporting our ambitions to level up. We will encourage short-term secondments between the Civil Service and other sectors, building new skills and a fresh perspective in our people; delivery resulting in more skilled, motivated and engaged colleagues.

## **Attraction and Onboarding**

We will continue to raise awareness of the Civil Service within our Places for Growth strategy and where apprentices are under-represented, including from low socio-economic groups – boosting outreach through better advertising and inclusive attraction. In promoting social mobility, as well as fairness and performance, this apprenticeship approach aligns with the wider Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.

Through our industry partners and networks, we will build close connections with schools and FE institutions (for example, by using ‘T Level’ work placements) to build a pipeline of candidates, targeting those with STEM strengths.

### **Samaira Uddin, Civil Service level 4 public relations and communications apprentice**



“The application process was different to other interviews – I had to design a PR campaign. It felt really good to be designing something and having ownership over it as part of the interview process. The variety of work has been good, as I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do and through this apprenticeship, I was matched to a role and the Civil Service department. So far I’ve found the Civil Service to be very supportive, with a good cohort of apprentices and an understanding team helping me settle into work life and my apprenticeship.”

## **Retention**

The role played by the employer is key to increasing the number of people who stay in the Civil Service beyond their apprenticeship. This means we need clearly defined, profession-led career pathways with support at all stages. Roles must be fulfilling, challenging and rewarding while meeting the needs of the apprenticeship standard. By improving their experiences and training provision we will encourage more apprentices to stay on and progress in the Civil Service.

## **Embedding apprenticeships in strategic workforce plans**

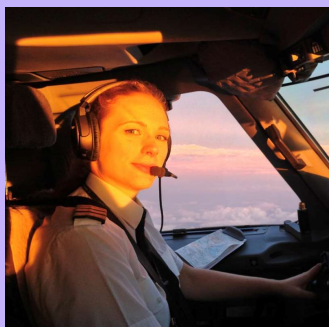
To truly embed apprenticeships within our career pathways means incorporating them in our talent, attraction and strategic workforce planning strategies at all levels – department, profession and Civil Service-wide. Using them as a means of training and skills development, and not solely as a recruitment tool, shifts the focus from one of quantity to quality and relevance – for example in STEM, project delivery, commercial, data and cyber – and will also maximise our levy contribution.

Career pathways from schools outreach and work placements to permanent job offers and long-term careers will be built using the framework below. This may include moves between



departments, professions and potentially even outside the Civil Service when appropriate, allowing individuals to build their skills and knowledge, and bring these back into the Civil Service.

### **Heather Hillier, Civil Service level 5 learning and development consultant**



“I have found my apprenticeship incredibly valuable in making the transition to my new career. My previous career was as an airline pilot. Having spent the past 20 years with an office in the skies, the overnight loss of my role as Captain when my airline went into administration in March 2020 led to my decision to change career. Moving into a new office environment and working style, I found the apprenticeship incredibly useful in embedding the language and tools of the business. Apprenticeships are an excellent way for career changers to gain qualifications and accreditations, building knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviours and experience to succeed in new roles. I have been able to apply my learning to projects, sharing knowledge and new ideas with my team and other areas of the business.”

## **High-quality and relevant apprenticeships**

### **Improving our role as apprentice employers**

We must take on more responsibility as the employer to improve the apprentice experience. Good job design will enhance the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are being developed through the apprenticeship. Over the last few years, we have learned how best to support apprentices and what a good apprenticeship experience looks like.



## Hannah Watson, People and Organisational Development Director, HMRC



“Following rapidly increasing volumes of apprenticeships and a raft of changes brought about by the pandemic, HMRC was seeing rising frustration on the part of apprentices and line managers alike. As apprentices increasingly began withdrawing from schemes, new entrants were paused while an independent consultant identified how to improve the offer for individuals and the department.

The recommended remedies included external audit benchmarking, to ensure that the quality of learning and related issues in support were rectified. While HMRC recognises there is still progress to be made, it is now seeing better learner outcomes through end-point assessment, and receiving substantially better feedback from learners and coaches alike.

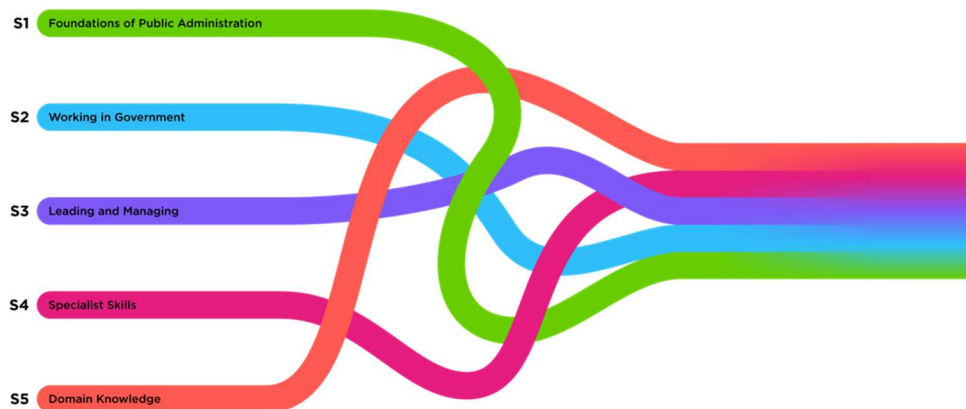
HMRC’s multi-year Learning Transformation Programme will form the basis for addressing some of its future questions around being a great place to work and the broader Civil Service apprenticeship strategy. It is clear that apprenticeships and similar accredited learning vehicles have a valuable role in addressing disparities, retaining employees in a challenging landscape, and addressing business capability needs.”

Our focus will be on:

- **Relevant standards** – Apprenticeship standards are being used appropriately and linked to professional standards. Standards will align to profession capability frameworks and we will introduce readiness assessments for standards.
- **Quality assurance of roles** – Engaging and stretching opportunities that are business relevant and aligned to their learning will not only further embed apprenticeships and their value within the organisation but will also yield more capable staff, higher completion rates and increase overall satisfaction and engagement.
- **Line managers** – Line managers playing a significant role in the apprenticeship experience, with the capacity and capability to support, manage and guide their apprentice(s). Our Strand 3 training will give access to structured, coherent and quality-assured management and leadership training. A greater understanding of the role of a line manager is required, along with their responsibility to safeguard the off-the-job training time entitlement.
- **Learning experiences aligned to roles** – We need to ensure job roles are designed to support learning application. Where line managers have a comprehensive understanding of the knowledge, skills and behaviours being taught, they can provide relevant opportunities to put them into practice.
- **Evaluation** – We will work with departments and professions to ensure effective evaluation and assurance measures are in place. Metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) across the end-to-end apprenticeship lifecycle will measure reliability and consistency, performance, training efficacy/ validity, apprentice satisfaction and return on investment (ROI).

# Working in partnership

## Creating business-relevant apprenticeships within the curriculum/ campus framework



During apprenticeships, individuals improve their appropriate specialist skills, domain knowledge and, where relevant, leadership in their chosen field. For the Civil Service that means an understanding of public administration and the workings of government, in line with the Campus framework. We will be working closely to improve our provision with policy and operational delivery professions, and with delivery partners. We will supplement this with additional training across Strands 1 and 2 to deliver rounded, highly-skilled civil servants.

### Steven Banks, Civil Service level 6 Digital and Technology Solutions, Ministry of Defence



“The chance to study to degree level during work time was a dream come true, and the skills I’ve picked up have helped build my confidence at work. I’ve enjoyed the whole experience – even the inevitable challenges that arise when learning something new. I chose a specialism that was relevant to my role, so I could apply the new skills to my job straight away, helping me work more efficiently. My favourite part has definitely been finding little gems of information that can be used in everyday life, not just at work.”

We will strengthen relationships between professions, commercial colleagues, apprenticeship learning providers and end-point assessment organisations to improve the quality and relevance of apprenticeship training and evaluation. A more tailored learning provision will better enable departments to support apprentices and provide them with an aligned job role and development.

By building flexibility into our apprenticeship procurement and provider contracts, we will diversify the available learning providers – leading to a more bespoke and relevant apprenticeship experience.

# Monitoring and Measuring Success

## MONITORING THE SUCCESS OF CIVIL SERVICE APPRENTICESHIPS

01	Apprenticeship Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>At least 5% of total Civil Service headcount should be apprentices on programme</li></ul>
02	Diversity and Inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The proportion of apprentices from lower socio-economic backgrounds should remain at or above the Social Mobility Commission benchmark.</li><li>This is 39% as of April 2022</li></ul>
03	Levelling Up & Regionalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The overall percentage of apprentices employed in each region should reflect the local Civil Service workforce size</li></ul>
04	Quality of Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>There should be a year on year increase in the proportion of apprentices completing their apprenticeship</li></ul>
05	Value for Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Civil Service will use at least 65% of its annual levy contribution in year one, further increasing each year, in order to achieve a return on investment</li></ul>



© Crown copyright 2022

Produced by Government Skills and Curriculum Unit

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned

