



Government
Commercial
Function

THE GOVERNMENT COMMERCIAL FUNCTION BRIDGE PROGRAMME

Strengthening the commercial capability
of commercial leads working towards
accreditation



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Foreword from



Gareth Rhys Williams

Government Chief Commercial Officer



Commercial staff play a crucial role in delivering the priorities of the government. Across central government, around £50 billion is spent each year buying goods and services, with the demand for public services growing more complex in needs and scale year by year. New service models

are driven by changes in technology, lessons learnt, and rising public expectations. These often require commercial input and collaboration between multiple public organisations. When commercial staff with the right skills are involved at the right time in the right way, they can make a massive difference to the quality of the services and projects delivered by government.

Weaknesses in commercial practice have resulted in critical reports by the National Audit Office and Public Accounts Committee, as well as negative media headlines. There has never been a greater need for highly skilled and effective commercial staff who are able to plan, develop and manage high quality contracting arrangements in a complex environment, under the weight of public scrutiny, whilst providing the best value for money for taxpayers.

This means developing a world class commercial function. That is why strengthening commercial capability is one of the top three management priorities for the Civil Service, and why we established the Government Commercial Organisation (GCO).

We want all staff in the GCO to be able to deliver their best, and have therefore made a commitment to your ongoing learning and development.

Foreword from



Gareth Rhys Williams

Government Chief Commercial Officer

That means if you are not yet fully accredited, or wish to prepare for accreditation at a more senior specialist level, we want to do all we can to help you. The multifaceted, world class Bridge Programme: strengthening the commercial capability of commercial leads working towards accreditation has been designed with current and emerging commercial and leadership challenges as its key drivers.

The programme enables you to identify and explore your personal role in shaping the future of commercial in government and wider government bodies (WGB), strengthen your commercial capability and drive culture change within the commercial profession.

But it's about more than accreditation. Learning and development is a continuous, career-long commitment. It enables you to keep up with advances in your profession and continue to improve, actively contributing to our goal of having a world-class government commercial function that continues to consistently deliver high quality public services and projects.



The GCF Bridge Programme

Strengthening the commercial capability of commercial leads working towards accreditation

The Bridge Programme has been developed using accumulated data from the assessment and development centre (ADC), and expert advice from both internal and external sources.

The programme has been designed to build and enhance commercial capability within government and wider government bodies (WGBs) and had input from senior commercial specialists, subject matter experts (SMEs) and professionals from the commercial profession.

The Bridge Programme:

- has been co-created and endorsed by commercial leaders, SMEs and ADC assessors
- is aligned to the ADC and the GCF People Standards for the Profession and goes beyond this
- provides flexible opportunities to meet your individual learning needs

- adopts and promotes the 70/20/10 approach, where 70% is learning on the job, 20% is learning through peers and 10% is formal learning

The Bridge Programme focuses on the areas of 'leadership skills and capability' and 'business acumen and commercial judgement', which current ADC data indicates are the key areas for professional development for commercial leads who are working towards ADC GCO accreditation.

The 7 month Bridge Programme consists of 7 interactive webinars, that you will complete with your cohort, and an 8 week period of self-directed learning. Experienced commercial SMEs will facilitate the immersive webinars, with input and insight from professional coaches. There will be a mix of activity, exploration and practical learning, as well as a chance to receive feedback, and time for individual reflection.

The programme has been designed to meet specific learning preferences and there are times where you will be challenged and potentially feel out of your comfort zone – this is an important part of your professional development.

While The Bridge Programme is aligned to the ADC it is intended to go beyond this and support your development as a senior commercial leader.

The Bridge Programme aims to support you to:

- hone commercial acumen
- instill a culture of excellent commercial leadership and behaviours in teams and working environments
- communicate with impact and confidence
- manage complexity while making the appropriate decisions
- build resilience and learn how to maintain it under pressure
- enhance and maintain commercial networks
- reflect on own strengths and development areas
- create an iterative personal development plan that demonstrates growth
- evaluate the strengths and development areas of self and others
- use information to provide constructive feedback and coach others
- create, practice, and evaluate appropriate influencing strategies
- lead and influence better commercial decision-making

To get the best experience from this programme, we will ask you to complete various pre-webinar activities.

■ Action learning groups (ALGs)

As well as working together in your cohort, you will also be put into smaller groups to form action learning groups. Your self managed action learning group (ALG) will meet and work together during the 8 week period of self-directed learning. Your ALG will provide you with a supportive network to further deepen your understanding of the topic areas you have been introduced to during your Bridge Programme development journey. The Commercial L&D team will provide guidance on how to successfully run and set up your ALG.

To access the programme you must:

- have attained a B at the GCO ADC
- be working at the level of the programme either substantively or on temporary promotion (TP)
- have your line manager's support

■ The Bridge Programme overview

Pre-webinar activity	Webinar title	Time commitment for pre-webinar activity	Time commitment for webinar
Pre-webinar 1: watch 4 introductory videos and review your ADC report	Webinar 1: Programme Essentials	3 hours	5 hours
Pre-webinar 2: spotlight on Political Insight Podcast on the GCC, watch a video, complete a self-assessment exercise in your online journal	Webinar 2: Commercial Leadership	1 ½ hours	5 hours
Pre-webinar 3: no activity	Webinar 3: Building Relationships for Commercial Delivery	N/A	5 hours
Pre-webinar 4: no activity	Webinar 4: Using Strategic Analysis Tools to Create Robust or Innovative Solutions	N/A	5 hours
Pre-webinar 5: review your stakeholder map and watch a video on assertiveness	Webinar 5: Being Assertive in the Face of Challenge	30 minutes	5 hours
Pre-webinar 6: watch videos on supplier engagement and financial literacy	Webinar 6: Utilising Influencing Skills during Negotiation	30 minutes	5 hours



8 weeks of self-directed learning - action learning groups



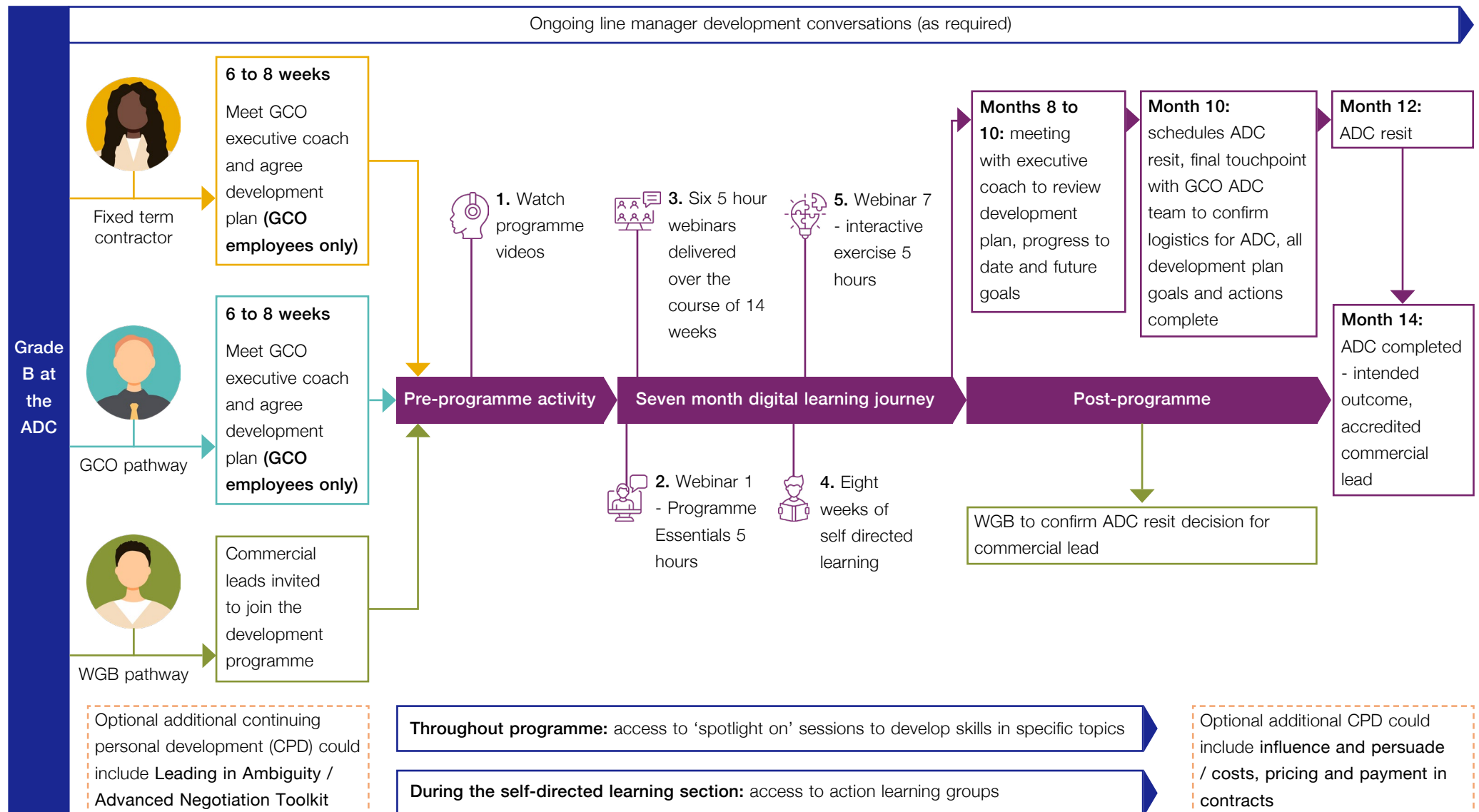


Pre-webinar activity	Webinar title	Time commitment for pre-webinar activity	Time commitment for webinar
Pre-webinar 7: watch videos on recalling stories and exit and transition	Webinar 7: Practical Application, Reflection and Action Planning	30 minutes	5 hours



Development journey for a GCO, FTC and WGB commercial lead working towards accreditation

This is an example development journey for a GCO / FTC / WGB commercial lead who achieved a B at the ADC, and shows the potential opportunities to support them as they work towards accreditation within 2 years.



Reasonable adjustments

We want everyone to feel supported during their learning journey, so we will ask you to make known to us any reasonable adjustments that would support and enhance your learning experience. The team is experienced in supporting candidates requiring reasonable adjustments and any information that is shared is treated as confidential.

Please record any reasonable adjustments you may require to complete the programme, on your Government Commercial College (GCC) profile. Recording your reasonable adjustment requirements on your **GCC profile** will enable the Commercial Learning and Development team to action your needs as soon as possible.



Additional learning tools and development opportunities

There are a wide range of activities outside of the programme to support your learning and development, these are open to you once your attendance on The Bridge Programme is confirmed.

■ Spotlight on...sessions

The spotlight on...sessions are an integral and important element of the commercial learning and development offer. They provide an opportunity to cover, in greater depth, areas of learning introduced over the course of the programme and encourage you to assimilate your knowledge and experiences. The sessions are delivered as either webinars or podcasts, which have been created using the expertise of highly experienced SMEs, crown representatives and ADC moderators.

Political insight

Political insight involves considering the motives, objectives and positions of key stakeholders in order to equip you with the tools to better understand 'the agenda behind the agenda'. Political insight allows you to anticipate likely

lines of argument, work with conflicting interests and present technical issues to stakeholders that helps to align discussions with desired long-term outcomes.

Another aspect to political insight is having an awareness about your and your team's strengths and preferred engagement styles and how these may impact on perceptions and judgements, especially in pressured environments and situations.

Building effective supplier relationships

Working in partnership with suppliers can be an exciting and mutually beneficial experience, it can also bring difficult challenges and unwelcome surprises. The aim of this session is to explore different styles and approaches for working with suppliers and how to, appropriately, apply these.

Diversity and inclusion

This spotlight on session explores behaviours and tools that will enable GCF colleagues to create and sustain a diverse and inclusive working environment. The interactive masterclass is aimed at all GCF commercial and non-commercial staff.

Networking

The session is presented by a commercial subject matter expert and explores how you can make the most of your networking opportunities.

ADC

The session is presented by moderators from the ADC team and has been designed to provide you with a broader understanding of how the GCO ADC has been designed and how the ADC functions.

■ Government Commercial College (GCC)

The [Government Commercial College](#) is a web based platform that enables learners to view and manage all aspects of their commercial learning.

It will deliver significant improvements to the learner's experience in terms of the way learning is scheduled and tracked.

■ Knowledge Hub

This is the principal networking online platform, hosted on the [Knowledge Hub](#). Within the GCF network you will be able to share news, views and requests for information, find networking opportunities, search for colleagues and events and use the best practice zone. Please make your profile as complete as possible.














■ Further queries

If you have any further queries about The Bridge Programme, please contact the GCO L&D Team via our email address.



commercial-development@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Useful contacts

-  ADC team: gcfdevelopmentcentre@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  Commercial L&D team: commercial-development@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  GCO talent team: commercialtalent@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  GCF partnerships team: gcfengagement@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  Bookings team: gcfprog-bookings@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  Government Commercial College email: govcomcollege@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
-  Government Commercial College website: www.govcommercialcollege.co.uk
-  GCO Knowledge Hub group: <https://khub.net/group/government-commercial-organisation>
-  Development programme Knowledge Hub group: <https://www.khub.net/web/gco-development-offer>
-  Civil Service Learning: <https://identity.learn.civilservice.gov.uk>
-  Government Campus prospectus online: <https://prospectus.governmentcampus.co.uk/>
-  GCF LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/government-commercial-function
-  GCF X (formerly known as Twitter): [@GCF_Comms](https://twitter.com/GCF_Comms)