

Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA)

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the content of the degree?

The degree aims to develop management and leadership skills, knowledge, self-awareness and behaviours. These include strategic decision making, setting direction and achieving results, building and leading teams, clear communication, developing skills and motivating others, fostering inclusive and ethical cultures, leading change, project management, financial management, innovation, risk management, business intelligence & developing stakeholder relationships.

When will the degree start?

We expect to have new degree programmes starting each February, May and September. Our website will indicate which intake is currently open to applications.

What's the Cost?

The cost of the training is covered by the Apprenticeship Levy. However, this does not cover the cost of travel expenses or accommodation (if needed). Your business contract may be willing to cover these costs for you, please check with your line manager.

Who is the degree for?

The degree is targeted at managers and senior managers in the first instance but may be open to aspiring managers at a later date. Priority will be given to participants who have undertaken the LEAD and GROW programmes.

It is recommended for individuals who take responsibility for people, projects, operations and/or services to deliver long term organisational success, with the expectation that they will deliver impact, behave ethically and demonstrate their commitment to continual learning and development.

How will the CMDA benefit me?

You will gain:

- A high quality business management degree
- Level 5 Diploma in management and leadership
- Full chartered membership of the Chartered Management Institute (CMI)
- Support to put your learning into on the job experience
- Professional pathway for future development
- Structured and reflective approach to your personal and professional development as a manager
- Regular assessment of your progress, including 360° feedback

How long will it take to complete the degree?

The CMDA is a 3 year programme. However, participants with previous relevant qualifications and/or experience, **gained in the last 5 years**, can have this recognised, reducing the duration – subject to accepted recognition by the University.

Participants completing 2 or more years of the programme will gain an additional Level 5 Diploma in management and leadership accredited by the Chartered Management Institute (CMI).

What are Serco's Entry Requirements?

Most applicants will have A levels or equivalent or existing relevant Level 3 qualifications and English and Maths at Level 2 (GCSE/O Level). Applicants without A levels or other Level 3 qualifications but with a minimum of 3 years' experience in management may also apply. As this is a significant commitment, all applicants will be required to complete a personal statement. Applicants may be invited to interview.

English and maths will be required to be demonstrated at a minimum of Level 2 (the same level as GCSE grade A* - C) through the completion of a web-based initial assessment. Please note that in addition to completing the initial assessment (whatever the outcome) successful applicants to CMDA will need to provide evidence of prior attainment of Level 2 in maths and English (i.e. GCSE certificates). CMDA students who don't achieve Level 2 in the initial assessment and/or who do not have certificates showing prior attainment will need to complete Functional Skills training and tests in maths and English alongside their CMDA course.

It is essential that all applicants have the support of their line manager as the apprenticeship will involve attendance at workshops as well as potential shadowing, observations etc. In addition apprentices will be required to complete job-related assignments that may require them to have greater access to management activities. We will require a statement from a line manager supporting the application. Applications will not be accepted without the line manager's support.

What is the Entry Process?

Performance and development reviews provide an opportunity for individuals to discuss their development with their line manager. This is an opportune time to identify whether the CMDA will help support individuals to develop all aspects of management and leadership skills, knowledge, self-awareness and behaviours.

If CMDA is the agreed way forward then the next step is to complete an application form with details of current role as well as previous experience and qualifications. In addition we require a personal statement that recognises the commitment required along with a statement from the line manager confirming support. Applicants may then be invited to interview.

A formal offer of an apprenticeship will be sent to successful applicants at least 6 weeks prior to the apprenticeship commencing. Unsuccessful applicants and their line managers will be notified and offered guidance and support to enable them to join CMDA at a later date.

What is the Time Commitment needed from the participants?

Learning will be vocational with flexible delivery. There is no block release but apprentices will be required to attend a workshop at the beginning of each module – there are 18 modules, two per term. There may also be web conferences usually an hour in length, a maximum of two per module. In addition to this, apprentices and a nominated manager (usually their line manager) will attend a quarterly meeting with their facilitator and an end of year review.

Throughout the programme, apprentices will keep a portfolio of evidence which will be supported by 360 degree feedback. During the final year of their studies, apprentices will complete a work-based project which may require additional time to undertake surveys, liaise with colleagues, attend additional management meetings etc.

It is difficult to estimate the time commitment for each apprentice as study habits differ considerably. We anticipate that a minimum of 4 hours a week will be required, in addition to the workshops and meetings mentioned above, during year 1 and this could rise to 8 hours a week by year 3. The amount of time required will

vary depending upon your stage of learning. Apprentices will probably spend more than 4 hours a week completing the formal assignment attached to each module but may spend less than this when reading through materials or undertaking research.

What happens if I only want the Degree and not the apprenticeship?

The apprenticeship levy can only be used for recognised apprenticeships which include the CMDA. It is a requirement of this funding that applicants complete all aspects of the apprenticeship.

How will I be assessed?

The degree - all assignments will be completed and submitted electronically according to set deadlines for each module. They are submitted online as reports, assignments or as shorter assessment tasks for each module. You will receive guidance and support from your facilitators to help prepare you for the assessment process. If, for any reason, a participant does not achieve a pass for the first submission of an assignment, then they are able to resubmit a few weeks later.

Chartered Management status – your portfolio of evidence and work based project will be assessed by an external assessor.

CMDA – once you have successfully completed all assignments linked to the degree and submitted your portfolio of evidence and work based project, you will be invited to an end point assessment where you will give a presentation on your work based project and participate in a panel interview. Only upon successful completion of this end point assessment will you be awarded your degree and Chartered Manager status.

Do I have to be new to the role of a manager to become an apprentice?

No, the apprenticeship is open to existing employees of any age who are in a management role.

Is becoming an apprentice a backward step in my career path?

Not at all. This is a new opportunity for managers at all levels to gain a recognised business qualification along with on-the-job experience and a professional pathway for future development. The CMDA apprenticeship enables you to undertake recognised qualifications at no charge for the training and without taking a break from your career.

Can I study the CMDA if I already have a degree or higher qualification?

Yes, as long as it is in a different discipline (i.e. not a business degree). If you have gained a degree in the last 5 years, you may be eligible to have some of your prior learning recognised, thus shortening the length of your apprenticeship. For more details please contact cmda@serco.com.

Can I apply to study CMDA if I work outside England?

Levy funding is only available to apprentices who live or work in England (Scotland and Wales have separate apprenticeship schemes). If you are based outside of England but interested in studying for the degree element of the apprenticeship please contact us at cmda@serco.com for more details. Please note that this will be at your own or Serco's corporate expense.

What qualification will I achieve?

Upon completing the apprenticeship you will gain a degree in business management (BA (Hons)) and full chartered membership of the CMI. Apprentices who complete the full programme will also receive a Level 5 Diploma in management & leadership.

How do I apply?

You should first discuss with your line manager whether this apprenticeship is appropriate for you based on your role and its demands, the support they can provide and the amount of time you can dedicate to study. If you are willing to commit to up to 3 years of study and if CMDA is the agreed way forward then the next step is to complete an application form with details of current role as well as previous experience and qualifications. In addition we require a personal statement that recognises the commitment required along with a statement from the line manager confirming support. Applicants may then be invited to interview. Please go to our website: www.leadershiplearningcentre.com to apply.

What if I leave Serco after I have started the CMDA?

Your apprenticeship will be terminated if you leave Serco before completion.

What if I have to suspend studying due to ill-health or other circumstances beyond my control?

You may be able to take a Leave of Absence of up to a year from the CMDA programme depending upon circumstances.

What if I become pregnant once I have started CMDA?

You will be able to take a Leave of Absence of up to a year from the CMDA programme.

How will the training be delivered?

Predominantly on-line and in the workplace, but with a face-to-face workshop at the start of each module (there are 17 modules in total and a work-based project). A facilitator and coach will help guide your learning.

Please note that, whilst your learning will be guided, with support from your facilitators (at the workshops and online) and your coach, you will be expected to work through the learning materials via our learning platform. Each block of modules which you study will have a start and end date and you may have one or two milestones during the module, but aside from these it will be up to you to determine the pace at which you study and the amount of additional reading you do. This may be a different style of learning to your previous experience and it relies on your own motivation to succeed.

Where will the training be delivered?

The location of workshops will be based on the location of the majority of participants in your learning group so some travel may be involved. Your reviews/assessments will be at your place of work,

Do I have to attend every training event and assessment?

Yes, 100% attendance is mandatory. It is your responsibility to make arrangements to ensure you have a 100% attendance record.

Will I be given time off work in order to study?

You will need to discuss this with your line manager before applying to join the apprenticeship to ensure that you are both content and timings are workable. You will be given time off work to attend workshops and quarterly and annual reviews as well as the end point assessment in year 3. You will also need time to undertake your work based project and to prepare your learning portfolio. You may be able to negotiate additional study time and we encourage line managers to consider this.

What if I work part-time?

You are still eligible to join the programme, however, if you work fewer than 30 hours then the length of time in which you study will be extended pro rata to reflect your normal working hours.

What is the structure of the programme?

