

Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA) for Schools 2018/2019

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is the programme for?

The Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA) for Schools is aimed at both new and existing school business managers and directors and those in similar business management or support roles (e.g. Finance Manager, Finance Director, Office Manager, Senior Administrator, Business Support Officer, Bursar, HR Manager, etc.) employed in schools and academies.

The CMDA for Schools offers school-based staff in management and leadership positions the opportunity to gain formal recognition of their skills at degree level.

What are the benefits to my school?

Research has shown that apprentices increase innovation and drive quality. The CMDA for Schools will help learners to develop job-specific skills that will benefit the school. Employment leading to higher level qualifications attract and retain high-calibre individuals with the potential to progress.

What topics will I study?

The programme includes modules on:

- The School environment and business management
- Project management in schools
- School finance & legal requirements
- Human resource management in schools
- Operations management in schools
- Continuous Professional Development
- School business leadership
- Managing school improvement
- School business initiatives
- Leading school efficiencies
- Effective learning in schools
- School performance data
- Transforming schools
- Change management in schools

(NB: this is not an exhaustive list)

The programme will develop and examine the knowledge, skills and behaviours of activities associated with the role of school business professionals and in addition to the above modules, the learner will complete a work-based project which addresses genuine challenges within your school.

When will the programme start?

The first intake will be a pilot group starting at the end of November 2018. Following this, we expect to have new programmes (with regional centres) starting twice a year from Spring 2019. Please refer to the CMDA for Schools web page for latest options: www.serco-ese.com/serco-education

What's the cost?

The fee for the three year CMDA for Schools is £27,000. The training costs are covered as part of the Government Levy, provided your school/academy are contributing to the apprenticeship levy. Your school/employer should have a digital apprentice account or be able to provide us with the contact details for the parent organisation holding the account; this may be the local authority or academy trust for example.

As long as your school/ organisation have sufficient funds in their digital apprenticeship account (DAS) then there is no additional cost for the programme delivery.

If you are a non-levy paying school then you will be invoiced for £2,700, which is 10% of the total cost of the programme (please contact us for further details of this option).

Should you be eligible to fast-track through part of the programme (through the Accreditation of Prior Learning, or APL process) the fee will be reduced accordingly.

How do I pay?

Providing you are from a levy-paying school, then, as a general guide, 80% of the apprenticeship cost is split into monthly payments to the provider, with the remaining 20% payable on completion. (This is a simplified example of the payment process). Serco Education will start to claim monthly payments from your levy fund soon after you start the programme.

How will the Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship for Schools benefit me?

Successful apprentices will achieve:

- An Honours Degree in School Business Management (awarded by the [University of Gloucestershire](http://www.glos.ac.uk))
- On-the-job experience
- A professional pathway for future development
- Level 2 in maths and English (if you do not already have these qualifications)
- Helps you gain specialist expertise in areas including finance, procurement, HR, leading school effectiveness and school performance data.

What is the content of the programme?

There are 18 modules to complete in total. A brief summary of the five first-year modules is indicated below:

Level 4 (Year 1): The school environment and business management, Project management in schools, Introduction to school finance and legalities, Human resource management in schools, Introduction to risk management in schools (5 modules in total).

a. The School Environment and Business Management

This module delves into the role of the SBM in the school setting and considers some of the current

policies linked to school business management. This is an opportunity to analyse trends and factors that impact a school and consider the key challenges of the future.

b. Project Management in Schools

This module aims to equip learners with the knowledge and skills required to be able to lead and develop projects. It will consider all aspects of project management and support the learner as they begin their work-based project.

c. Introduction to School Finances and Legal Requirements

This module considers the systems and processes in place within a school to ensure financial probity. It will help learners understand how to set and manage a school budget and how to ensure value for money.

d. Human Resource Management in Schools

This module offers the knowledge and skills required to manage human resources within a school and ensure regulatory and legal compliance.

e. Introduction to Risk Management in Schools

This module provides an opportunity for the learner to look at risk within a school environment and how to mitigate these risks. It will consider the school's Health & Safety policy, fire safety and contingency planning.

Level 5 (Year 2): Operations management in schools, Professional development, School business leadership, Managing school improvement, Marketing in schools, School organisational behaviour in practice, School business initiatives, Leading school efficiencies (8 modules in total)

Level 6 (Year 3): Effective learning in schools, School performance data, Transforming schools, Continuous professional development, Strategic financial management in schools, Change management in schools (6 modules)

Note: exact content and unit titles still tbc, but are expected to be as indicated above (Sept. 2018)

How long will it take to complete the programme?

The CMDA for Schools is a three-year programme although you may be able to fast track through some modules if you have prior knowledge and/or experience. Once you have successfully completed the degree and a portfolio of evidence you will need to complete a one-day assessment centre (**end-point assessment** or EPA) with an external assessor. This end-point assessment (EPA) should take place within 8-12 weeks of the successful completion of your apprenticeship studies.

I already have a Level 4 Diploma in SBM (CSBM), does this allow me to fast track through the programme?

We are waiting for confirmation from the University of Gloucestershire but we anticipate that the answer is 'yes'. If you already have a Level 4 Diploma in SBM (CSBM) you will not need to complete year 1 of the CMDA for Schools but can go straight into year 2. You will be given three extra months during the programme to enable you to evidence the CMDA skills that are required for your portfolio of evidence that you would have completed in year 1.

I already have a Level 4 Diploma in SBM (CSBM) and a Level 5 Diploma in SBM (DSBM), does this allow me to fast track through the programme?

We are waiting for confirmation from the University of Gloucestershire but we anticipate that the answer is yes, if you have already successfully completed both the Level 4 and 5 Diplomas then you will be able to 'top these up' by completing a one year programme at Level 6. We will add four extra months to the programme to enable you to evidence the CMDA skills that are required for your portfolio of evidence that you would have completed in years 1 & 2. This will be a challenging apprenticeship due to the short amount of time but is entirely achievable.

I have a Level 5 Diploma in SBM (DSBM) but I don't have a Level 4 Diploma in SBM, will I have to complete year 1 and 3 of the programme?

As the CMDA for Schools is an apprenticeship, there is an expectation that a learner will be challenged to extend their knowledge and skills. This means that we are unable to fast track an applicant with just the Level 5 Diploma in School Business Management.

NB: note currently fast-tracking into the CMDA for Schools through meeting eligible APL criteria for Level 4 / Level 5 school business manager (SBM) qualifications only applies to SBM programmes which started before 2018.

Can I use other qualifications at Level 4 and Level 5 to fast track through the CMDA for Schools?

This will depend on the how closely the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of each unit/module of your qualification map to the CMDA for schools modules. In order to fast track through a module (through APL process) you must be able to evidence that you have met all of the assessment criteria linked to that module. Please contact us for further information about your qualifications.

I have a Level 6 Diploma in SBM (ADSBM) can I 'convert' this to the BA School Business Management?

Under ESFA rules you are not eligible to join an apprenticeship if you have similar qualifications at the same level so unfortunately you are not able to convert your ADSBM to a BA School Business Management. Keep an eye on our website for the Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship (SLMDA) which we are planning to deliver in Autumn 2019 as you will be eligible to apply to study for a Master's degree if you have the ADSBM.

Can I study the Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship for Schools if I already have a degree?

Yes, as long as it is in a different discipline (i.e. not business).

What are the entry requirements?

You will be required to demonstrate that you are working at a minimum of Level 2 (same level as GCSE Grade A* - C) in English and maths through the completion of a web-based initial functional skills assessment. If you do not have these qualifications, we can help you gain the Level 2 requirements during your studies. If you already have Level 2 in maths and English qualifications we will need to see your original certificates (you will still need to take the short diagnostic assessment).

The apprenticeship is suitable for school business managers and directors and those in similar business and support roles in schools or academies who are responsible for people, projects, operations and/or services to deliver long term organisational success.

You should also be a member of your SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and have been a school business manager, or similar role in a school, for at least three years. See programme T&Cs for full eligibility details.

It is essential that all applicants have the support of their line manager as the apprenticeship will involve attendance at one-/two-day workshops at the beginning of each module (or set of modules); approx. 18 days over the full three years (Year 1 workshops are typically one-day, Year 2 and 3 are typically two-day sessions). We will require a statement from your line manager supporting the application (see separate Line Manager Guidance and the Personal Statement & Line Manager Support documents). Applications will not be accepted without the line manager's full support.

What is the application process?

There is a two-part application process:

- Online application form
- Personal Statement & Line Manager Support (within 5 days of submitting your application)

In addition to the online application form we require a personal statement (submitted within 5 working days of receipt of the application form) that recognises the commitment required along with a statement from the line manager confirming support. Applicants may then be invited to participate in a phone interview.

A formal offer of an apprenticeship will be sent to successful applicants approximately 5 to 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 the programme at a later date.

Successful applicants will also need to complete an **Apprenticeship Agreement** and an **ILR document**, as well as an **Individual Learner Plan (ILP)** plus other documentation, and confirm your employer's funding/payment details.

How will I be assessed?

You will be required to complete a formal assignment(s) at the end of each module to enable you to complete the degree. You will also be required to develop a **portfolio of evidence** as part of the apprenticeship. There is a final end-point assessment which will be conducted by an external assessor once you have completed all elements of the CMDA for Schools. This will take place within 8 – 12 weeks from the successful completion of your studies.

Can I apply to study the CMDA for Schools if I work outside England?

Levy funding is only available to apprentices who live or work in England. If you are based outside of England but interested in studying for the apprenticeship please contact us for more details.

What qualification will I achieve?

Upon completing the apprenticeship you will gain a BA (Hons) in School Business Management. If you have been in a management role for three years or longer you will also be eligible to gain Chartered Manager Status. If you have not been in a management role for three years you will be eligible for Chartered Manager Status as soon as you have completed three years as a manager.

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. We require a personal statement that recognises the commitment required along with a statement from the line manager confirming support. Please visit our website to start the application process: www.serco-ese.com/serco-education/programmes/schools-cmda

What if I leave my employer after I have started the apprenticeship?

Your apprenticeship will be terminated if you leave your current employer before completion unless you move to another employer who is willing to let you continue your studies with us. If you are made redundant then you will be given 12 weeks to find employment in order to continue your studies. If you haven't got a level 2 in Maths and/or English then as long as you have started your studies for these qualifications with Serco, you are able to continue until you complete them.

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

You may be able to defer (or suspend) your studies for up to a year, depending upon circumstances.

What if I become pregnant once I have started the programme?

You will be able to defer from the programme for up to a year.

How will the training be delivered?

Predominantly online and in the workplace, but with a face-to-face workshop (one- or two-day sessions) at the start of each module (or set of modules). A facilitator and coach will help guide your learning.

You will receive visits from your coach at your workplace each term or a touch point phone call. Your coach will support you in developing the portfolio of evidence and offer pastoral support as required. In addition, you will have an annual review with your coach and employer at the end of each year of your CMDA for Schools studies.

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 module you study will have a start and end date and you may have one or two milestones during the modules, 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; overnight accommodation may be required for any two-day workshops, depending on your location. Your reviews/assessments with your coach will be at your place of work.

Do I have to attend every training event and coach meeting?

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

What is the time commitment needed from participants?

It is difficult to estimate the time commitment for each apprentice as study habits differ considerably. We anticipate that a minimum of 7 hours a week, on average, will be required in addition to the workshops and meetings with your coach. The amount of time required will vary depending upon your stage of learning. Apprentices will probably spend more than 6 - 8 hours a week completing the formal assignment tasks attached to each module but may spend less than this when reading through materials or undertaking research.

Apprentices and their line manager will need to attend a quarterly meeting with the apprentice's coach and an end of year review. Throughout the programme, apprentices will keep a portfolio of evidence which will be supported by 360 degree feedback. As an apprentice your employer must agree to let you spend 20% of your time studying for the CMDA for Schools; you will be required to maintain a log of your off-the-job training hours.

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. The programme will contain 20% off-the-job training including shadowing, reading, attending workshops, completing a project and preparing your portfolio of evidence etc. You should be given time off work to attend workshops and review meetings. 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.

All apprenticeship funding is managed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), the Government agency accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults. As an apprenticeship training provider our activities have to adhere to ESFA guidance and requirements.

Note: the term 'schools' used in this document applies to both maintained and independent schools as well as academies, multi academy trusts, etc

Further information:

www.serco-ese.com/serco-education

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