

# INSIGHT

Inspiring success, developing potential

**WORKING WITH  
HITACHI RAIL**

**SELF-CARE**

How it makes  
you feel

**LEVY  
SPEND**

**SAFEGUARDING**

Government strengthens  
Domestic Abuse Law

**NEW AEB  
DIPLOMAS**



# APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMMES

## England - Apprenticeship Standards

Apprenticeship	Level	Duration*	End Point Assessment Service**
<b>Business &amp; Management</b>			
Business Administrator	3	14 months	Yes
Team Leader/Supervisor	3	14 months	Yes
Operations/Departmental Manager	5	18 months	Yes
<b>Childcare &amp; Teaching</b>			
Early Years Practitioner	2	14 months	
Early Years Educator	3	15 months	
Early Years Lead Practitioner	5	24 months	
Children, Young People & Families Residential Practitioner	4	18 months	
Children, Young People & Families Residential Manager	5	20 months	
Children, Young People & Families Manager within the Community	5	20 months	
Teaching Assistant	3	14 months	
<b>Adult Care</b>			
Adult Care Worker	2	15 months	Yes
Lead Adult Care Worker	3	15 months	Yes
Lead Practitioner in Adult Care	4	18 months	Yes
Leader in Adult Care	5	18 months	Yes

## Scotland - Modern Apprenticeships

Course Title	SCQF Level	AV Duration*
Diploma for IT & Telecommunications	6 & 8	12 months
Digital Applications	6	12 months
Digital Marketing	6	12 months
Business & Administration	5 & 6	6-9 months
Management	7 & 9 & 11	12 months
Children & Young People (CYP)	7 & 9	12 months
Customer Service SCQF	5 & 6	6-9 months

\*The length of the apprenticeship will vary dependant on the individual. Durations are agreed at the start of the course and monitored throughout for their appropriateness. \*\*End point assessment is a mandatory element of all apprenticeship standards. GP Strategies Assessment Services is a registered end point assessment provider.

## Welcome to the latest edition of Insight Magazine

Latest news, views and updates from GP Strategies Apprenticeships

**As part of our post-Covid strategy development, we are pleased to be back seeing our learners, employers, and other stakeholders face-to-face.**

GP Strategies have always put face-to-face interactions at the heart of our delivery, and we are now confidently and safely able to do so. Whilst we will retain established high-quality virtual elements across all our programmes, we believe our apprentices and learners are best supported in a hybrid model, and it is great being back out there doing what we do best!

Face-to-face engagement is also extremely important for

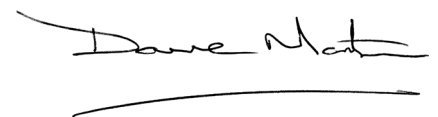
us, in order to understand and be responsive to the skills needs of employers in our local communities. We put the voice of local employers at the heart of our regional skills strategies and will continue to do so. As our Apprenticeship offer develops and matures, we are seeing learners progress and reach their full potential in their chosen career. This is possible through our clearly defined Apprenticeship pathways from Level 2 to Level 5 in Early Years, Adult Care and Business.

As part of a complementary offer, we are pleased to have now added two standalone Level 3 Diploma qualifications in Early Years

and Adult Care, funded via the Adult Education Budget. This updated offer, allows us to further support these two key sectors as they struggle with the challenges of post-Covid recovery.

You can read more about these courses on page 4.

As always, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any comments or questions.



**David Martin**  
Vice President

## CONTENTS

Apprenticeship programmes.....	2
Welcome.....	3
NEW AEB Level 3 Diplomas.....	4-5
Apprenticeship Focus - Employer News Off-the-job & Levy funds .....	6-7
Apprenticeship Focus - Employer News Working with Hitachi Rail .....	8-9
Levelling Up Adult Care and Early Years.....	10-11
Self-Care .....	12
Taking about Mental health.....	13

Safeguarding Domestic Abuse Law.....	14-15
Equality & diversity British Values & Pride .....	16-17
Achievements .....	18
A Spotlight on... Rebecca Martin.....	19
Testimonials.....	20
GPSAS .....	21
Scotland Focus Employability .....	23
Contacts .....	24

## GET IN TOUCH

If you have any feedback, questions or news that you would like to share with us, we would love to hear from you!

**Contact Marketing - [Imcdonald@gpstrategies.com](mailto:Imcdonald@gpstrategies.com)**





# AEB FUNDED COURSES - LEVEL 3 DIPLOMA

*Helping you improve the skills of your workforce and meet future skills needs*

We have three **NEW** Level 3 Diploma courses in Adult Care, Early Years Workforce (Early Years Educator) and Residential Childcare that are eligible for government funding through the Adult Education Budget (AEB)



## Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care

This qualification develops the knowledge and skills needed when working in a senior role with adults in adult care environments. It covers a wide range of areas including supporting individuals with their physical and emotional care, daily living needs and care procedures. It develops the knowledge and skills required for working in a senior role with adults in adult care environments.

## Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare

The Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare is specifically designed for learners wanting to work in residential care with children in a care role. Settings include residential care homes, residential special schools, therapeutic communities, secure children's homes, shared care and short break settings. Learners will develop the knowledge skills necessary to promote a caring, healthy, stimulating, safe, secure environment for children and young people in their care.

## Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce (Early Years Educator)\*

The Level 3 Diploma for the Early Years Workforce (Early Years Educator) prepares learners to become Early Years Educators, enabling them to work with children from birth to 5 years and gain knowledge of children aged 5 to 7 years.

*\*To count in EYFS staff: child ratios at level 3, staff holding an Early Years Educator qualification must also have achieved a suitable level 2 qualification in English and maths as defined by DfE. This includes; Functional Skills at Level 2, GCSE grade A\* - C (grade 4-9)*

## Need some more information?

Call or email our team for more information:

0330 1000 610 | [aeb@gpstrategies.com](mailto:aeb@gpstrategies.com)

[www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk/adult-education-budget/](http://www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk/adult-education-budget/)



# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Functional Skills, also known as Skills for Life include Maths and English at Level 1 and Level 2. Functional Skills qualifications are key to building foundations for individuals to progress into their specialist skillsets. These skills are also crucial for all individuals, both for confidence and career progression, and supports their everyday work. Holding these skills at level 2, equivalent to GCSE grade 4-9 (or A\*-C), is a completion requirement of apprenticeships at level 3 and above.

## Functional Skills

- Level 1 Functional Skills English
- Level 1 Functional Skills Maths
- Level 2 Functional Skills English
- Level 2 Functional Skills Maths

## Funding

These courses are fully funded (no cost) via the Adult Education Budget as part of the Government's National Skills Fund Free Level 3 qualifications opportunity (subject to meeting eligibility criteria).

## Eligibility Criteria

To access this course via the Adult Education Budget you must;

- Be aged 19 or above on 31st August within the academic year
- Live in England
- Have lived within the EU for a minimum of 3 years
- Not have already completed the qualification
- Not be on any other funded training (e.g. apprenticeship)
- Reside in an area where AEB funding support is available – we will help you ascertain this by

And either,

- be unemployed OR
- earn under the national living wage (i.e. earn less than £18,525 annual gross salary) OR
- earn above the national living wage, but do not already hold a full Level 3\* or equivalent qualification or higher



# APPRENTICESHIP FOCUS - EMPLOYER NEWS



## The 'Off the Job' training policy is changing!

From 01 August 2022, the 20% off-the-job requirement for all new apprentices is changing and will be capped at 30 hours per week. The 20% off-the-job requirement will be capped at 30 hours per week, over the planned duration of the apprenticeship practical period. When taking into account annual leave, this is approximately 5.5hrs per week for any full time employee, irrespective of the hours worked by the apprentice.

This means that full-time apprentices who work more than 30 hours per week, will no longer be bound to a disproportionately large number of off-the-job training hours, just because their working hours are longer than other apprentices. For example, an apprentice working 40 hours per week, will be required to engage in the same number of off-the-job hours as an apprentice working 30 hours a week.

See example calculation below:

Employee working 30 hours per week, on a 14 month apprenticeship:	$(61 \text{ weeks} - 6.6 \text{ weeks A/L entitlement}) \times 30 = 1632 \text{ hours} \times 20\% = 327 \text{ hours}$ <b>Total Off-the-job hours = 5.5 hours per week</b>
Employee working 40 hours per week, on a 14 month apprenticeship:	$(61 \text{ weeks} - 6.6 \text{ weeks A/L entitlement}) \times 30 \text{ (CAPPED)} = 1632 \text{ hours} \times 20\% = 327 \text{ hours}$ <b>Total Off-the-job hours = 5.5 hours per week</b>

A benefit of this is that Apprentices will be able to contribute more time to On-the-job activities at a time when many businesses are still struggling to recover from the impact of the pandemic

**NOTE:** This policy change only applies to new starts from 1 August 2022.



## There is still time to unlock your Levy!

### **£3.3 billion of apprenticeship levy funds have been returned to the treasury since 2019.**

In a time of economic uncertainty, there has never been a better time to ensure you are fully unlocking the potential of your apprenticeship levy.

Whether you are new to utilising your levy or are an employer yet to get the most from it and you are not sure how to utilise your funds effectively, we can help. GP Strategies offers an end to end levy management service for everything you need to effectively manage your apprenticeship levy.

We want to ensure apprentices have the opportunities they need to get on in work and to support levy employers to make use of their levy and small employers to access it. Taking simple action to transfer unspent levy helps increase opportunities and impact and also delivers social value.

#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

▷ The apprenticeship levy can be used to recruit new talent into your business, which can be fully supported by our Free Recruitment service.

The levy can be used to upskill existing employees of any age from 16 years and upwards, improving productivity and retention amongst other things.

- ▷ Much of any commercial or internal training offer you currently access can be mapped into funded Apprenticeship standards.
- ▷ Apprenticeships can integrate well into your overall Learning and Development strategy, and do not have to sit outside of that.
- ▷ Apprenticeships utilise 1-2-1 technical coaching alongside masterclass sessions, to fully embed workplace application, equipping your staff with more effective and sustainable skills that give long-term business impact and cost savings.
- ▷ Up to 25% of any unused levy expenditure can be re-invested into the local community or your supply chains via the transfer of apprenticeship levy funds each year. Helping other businesses, to pay for their apprenticeship training and assessment, and helping you meet the goals of your Social Corporate Responsibility strategy.
- ▷ We will support you and your Learning and Development teams to provide a full end-to-end levy management service. Inclusive of marketing, recruitment and monitoring support.

If you are a levy paying employer and need advice and support, please contact our specialist team on 0330 1000 610.

\*an apprenticeship levy payer is an organisation with a payroll of over £3 million per year.

## Working with Hitachi Rail

**HITACHI**  
Inspire the Next

### Manager Series Success



#### What is the Manager Series?

The **New** Manager Series was launched in December 2020 with a vision of giving new and aspiring managers within Hitachi Rail the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills around coaching, managing and leading.

It is a bespoke programme, tailored to meet the needs of Hitachi Rail employees and the overall organisation and recognises the changing ways of working, post pandemic.

There are multiple elements that come together to create this fantastic offer. It includes the nationally

recognised **Institute of Leadership and Management accredited Level 3 Diploma, 1-2-1 Leadership Assessment and Coaching sessions, tailored Masterclasses and an online, multi award winning Coaching qualification.**

The Programme has gone from strength to strength with over 90 participants over 5 cohorts, the last having commenced in February this year. The motivation and enthusiasm of the participants is clear to see and has resulted in a highly successful and sought-after opportunity.



In cohort 1 we have **Claire Fox, Ben Earl, John McConville** and **Jonathan Riley**. They were the first to commence this programme and have had exceptional feedback from their Skills Coach who has praised them for excellent quality and depth of work provided.



“ I was really nervous before starting the Manager Series but after getting started, I found the whole Series really enjoyable. The learning, support and interacting with other people from the business has inspired me and helped me gain a huge amount of confidence. It's a fantastic Series and I've learnt and applied so much of it to my day to day working life. The opportunity to complete the Manager Series may have never come around again so I'm so pleased I made the decision to go for it. Is it a lot of work? Yes - but definitely worth it”

Our first achiever completed in February this year from cohort 2, 4 months ahead of his planned end date! **Congratulations to Andrew Vickers for the hard work and dedication to complete the programme ahead of schedule.**

Also completing ahead of target from cohort 2 is Lance Omsky. **Once again, a big congratulations to Lance for this achievement!**

“ I have found the programme to be really informative and it has bolstered my confidence in all areas of management. The Manager Series has been enjoyable and the support from the Hitachi Rail L&D team, tutors, Star Manager and GP Strategies has been exceptional. I am using the knowledge daily to create efficiencies and progress my team. I've received positive comments from my team and line manager for processes I've implemented as a result of this training. I would recommend any manager or aspiring manager to request a nomination for this qualification from their line manager today!”



## Levelling Up - Early Years

Did you know that there is an Apprenticeship pathway in Early Years up to and including Level 5, that can support Early Years Workers into Team Leader and Management positions.



Apprenticeships that Early Years Workers can undertake after their Level 2 programme.

Who is it for?	Examples of Leadership skills that are developed in this Apprenticeship
<b>Early Years Educator Level 3</b>	
Individuals who are frontline practitioners who play a key role in ensuring that young children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. Early Years Educators may be working on their own or supervising others to deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) requirements set by Government for the learning, development and care of children from birth to 5 years old.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work effectively with colleagues and other professionals and support the learning and development of others through mentoring and sharing of professional expertise and experience.</li> <li>• Carry out risk assessment and risk management in line with policies and procedures.</li> <li>• Work co-operatively with colleagues and other professionals to meet the needs of babies and children and enable them to progress.</li> </ul>
<b>Early Years Lead Practitioner Level 5</b>	
Individuals that are likely to still be practitioners themselves, working directly with children, but also skilfully leading day to day practice at an operational level. As active practitioners they are effective role models of play based learning, supporting others to develop their own practice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in and lead daily routines and practice</li> <li>• Take the lead and provide support in disseminating best practice in the use of observation, assessments and planning</li> <li>• Demonstrate leaderful practice through the effective deployment of resources and practitioners</li> <li>• To be accountable for day to day practice, longer term planning, management and training within the specific aspect or environment for which they are responsible.</li> <li>• To lead and manage across the area, aspect or environment for which they are responsible for.</li> <li>• Provide constructive feedback on points of practice on an informal day to day basis and contribute to formal performance management as necessary.</li> </ul>



## Levelling Up - Adult Care

Did you know that there is a full Apprenticeship pathway in Adult Care up to and including Level 5, that can support Adult Care Workers into Team Leader, Management and Leadership positions.



Apprenticeships that Adult Care Workers can undertake after their Level 2 programme.

Who is it for?	Examples of Leadership skills that are developed in this Apprenticeship
<b>Lead Adult Care Worker Level 3</b>	
Individuals who are the frontline practitioner staff who help adults with care and support needs. In addition, Lead Adult Care Workers have responsibility for providing supervision, frontline leadership, guidance and direction for others, or working autonomously, exercising judgement and accountability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead and support colleagues to understand how to establish informed consent when providing care and support</li> <li>• Guide, mentor and contribute to the development of colleagues</li> <li>• Demonstrate and promote excellent communication skills</li> <li>• Lead and support others to keep information safe</li> <li>• Lead, support and mentor others to promote E, D and I, wellbeing and support safeguarding</li> <li>• Demonstrate good team/partnership working skills</li> <li>• Contribute to recruitment and induction processes</li> </ul>
<b>Lead Practitioner in Adult Care Level 4</b>	
Individuals that are likely to still be practitioners themselves, whilst managing teams of frontline carers to look after vulnerable adults with care needs. A Lead Practitioner has a greater depth of knowledge and expertise of particular conditions being experienced by the user of services. The individual will be a coach and mentor to others and will have a role in assessing performance and quality of care delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership and mentoring to others</li> <li>• Evaluation of own leadership, mentoring and supervision skills</li> <li>• Development of effective teams</li> <li>• Lead recruitment and selection processes</li> <li>• Contribute to the induction process of individuals within their role</li> <li>• Lead and support others in professional development through personal development plans, supervision, reflective practice, research, evidence based practice and access to learning and development opportunities</li> </ul>
<b>Leader in Adult Care Level 5</b>	
Individuals who Lead the care service and manage teams of carers to look after adults with care needs. Leaders will guide and inspire teams to make positive differences to someone's life. Leaders may be responsible for business development, financial control, organisational resilience and continuity as well as for managing risk and leading on organisational change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and apply systems and processes that monitor and sustain quality of the service, including assessments, care plans and service delivery</li> <li>• Lead and support others</li> <li>• Manage all resources in delivering complex care and support</li> <li>• Develop and lead implementation of organisational practices</li> <li>• Implement systems to train and support work colleagues in Safeguarding</li> <li>• Lead the implementation of policies, procedures and practices to manage H&amp;S</li> <li>• Lead a team</li> </ul>



# SELF-CARE

***We all experience times where we need to take a step back and focus on ourselves***

**We can sometimes be too busy to even think of ourselves, but it is so important to make self-care a part of our everyday routine and turn it into a priority.**

Self-care has become incredibly important as people realise the need to take care of themselves and put themselves first. This has made people talk about it and increased the interest of others to take control of their health and wellness by prioritising themselves.

## **What does Self Care really mean?**

In its simplest form, self-care is just the little things we do to look after our own mental health. It's about trying to listen to how we are feeling and understanding what we need, even if it's difficult, so we can care for ourselves.

Perhaps the single most common reason people give for not participating in self-care is due to a lack of time. While many of us have a lot going on, it's imperative that we take time out every day for ourselves, even if minimally.

Remember that self-care is all about you. What works for one person may not work for another, but that's the beauty of a self-care routine.

## **Why is Self-Care important?**

Self-care means taking care of yourself so that you can be healthy, you can be well, you can do your job, you can help and care for others, and you can do all the things you need to and want to accomplish in a day.

Ideally, we all engage in regular self-care in which we do the things that make us feel taken care of mentally, physically, and emotionally. But this doesn't always happen, and we may need to stop and take the time to remind ourselves we are important, too.

*The important thing with self-care is not what it looks like, but what it does for you and how it makes you feel. When it comes to **self-care** it's not one thing, it's your thing.*





# Keep talking about Mental Health



Mental health remains a key aspect in the recovery of the nation post-Covid, and other ongoing factors. Our mental health is key to this recovery, and for GP strategies Training we want you to know that you are not alone – 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem this year.

While many of us feel more able to talk about our mental health and wellbeing, we are yet to see a big enough shift in the narrative around mental illness, particularly for some of the most stigmatised conditions and symptoms. Your attitude to mental health could change someone's life.

GP Strategies are here to support you if there's anything you wish to discuss. Please contact our safeguarding support line on 0330 0183 531 or email [safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com](mailto:safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com). You can also find more information, resources on our website.

## KEY CONTACTS

### **Mind Infoline**

T: 0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm - Mon-Fri)

Providing confidential mental health information services

### **Samaritans**

T: 116 123 – providing confidential, non-judgemental emotional support

### **Mental Health Foundation**

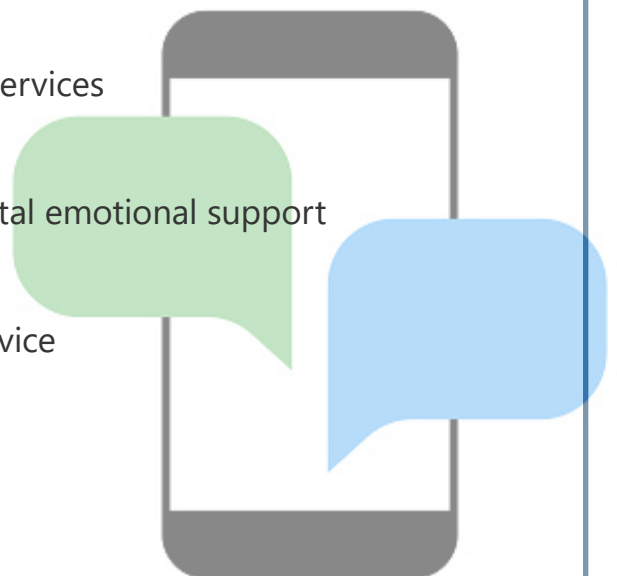
[www.mentalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk) - free guidance and advice

### **Carers Direct**

T: 0203 904 4520

### **Carers Trust**

<https://carers.org/help-and-info/carers-services-near-you>





## Government strengthens Domestic Abuse Law

### The Domestic Violence Act 2021

---

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional or other abuse

Under the Act, local authorities must give housing priority to victims who have lost their home due to fleeing domestic abuse.

The Act also places a duty on local authorities to help domestic abuse victims receive therapy, advocacy, and counselling in secure accommodation.

**Does your partner, ex-partner or someone you live with:**

- cut you off from family and friends and intentionally isolate you?
- bully, threaten, or control you?
- take control of your finances?
- monitor or limit your use of technology?
- physically and/or sexually abuse you?

**Domestic abuse is not always physical violence.**

It can also include:

- coercive control and ‘gaslighting’
- economic abuse
- online abuse
- threats and intimidation
- emotional abuse
- sexual abuse

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides local authorities with greater powers and responsibilities regarding protecting victims of domestic abuse.

For the first time children who hear, see, or experience the impact of domestic abuse are recognised as victims, which will assist local authorities in targeting support for young people, especially in the area of mental health.

## What should a person do to report domestic abuse to themselves or others?

Most police stations have Domestic Violence Units or Community Safety Units with specially trained officers to deal with domestic violence and abuse.

You can call 999 in an emergency or 101 in a non-emergency or you can attend a police station in person to report an incident. Find your nearest police station on the UK Police Service Portal. You should tell the police what's happened and let them know if you are worried about your or another person's safety.



## What should an employer do if they think a member of staff is facing domestic abuse (from other staff) outside of work?

We recommend employers have a clear policy in place on supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse, but also an effective framework of support. Most importantly though, employees need to be made aware of the policy and how to access support if they need it.

Supportive and empathetic employees and co-workers can assist an affected colleague in gaining confidence to seek support. Make it clear that abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the perpetrator and misconduct inside and outside of work is viewed seriously - and can lead to disciplinary action.

Some actions an employer can take are:

- using existing staff networks to provide a safe space for workers and to promote awareness across the organisation
- introducing confidential reporting channels
- agreeing a code word or hand signal to alert others of domestic abuse and or immediate risk
- use of special leave arrangements to support the wellbeing of individuals, including for instance in attending appointments

## Help and Support

Freephone 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline:  
0808 2000 247

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

<https://www.victimsupport.org.uk/>

Don't forget if you need a Safe space these details may help you. Safe Spaces are also available in Boots, Morrisons, Superdrug and Well pharmacies, TSB banks and independent pharmacies across the UK. Once you are inside, specialist domestic abuse support information will be available for you to access. Many Safe Spaces are also prepared to respond to the 'Ask for ANI' codeword, to provide victims with a discreet way to access help to call the police on 999 or specialist support services - **find your nearest Safe Space.**

You can find further information on the Gov Website:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-abuse-how-to-get-help#recognise-domestic-abuse>

If you have any safeguarding concerns please visit our [website](#), email [safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com](mailto:safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com) or call our safeguarding support line on 0330 0183 531 - available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



# EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

## FUNDAMENTAL BRITISH VALUES

**Fundamental British values are what make the United Kingdom great - accepting everyone, regardless of belief and culture.**

Here at GP Strategies we passionately believe in those values, and whatever your culture, workplace, belief, or gender we will work and support you on your learning journey, as an employer and student, promoting Fundamental British Values on your journey.

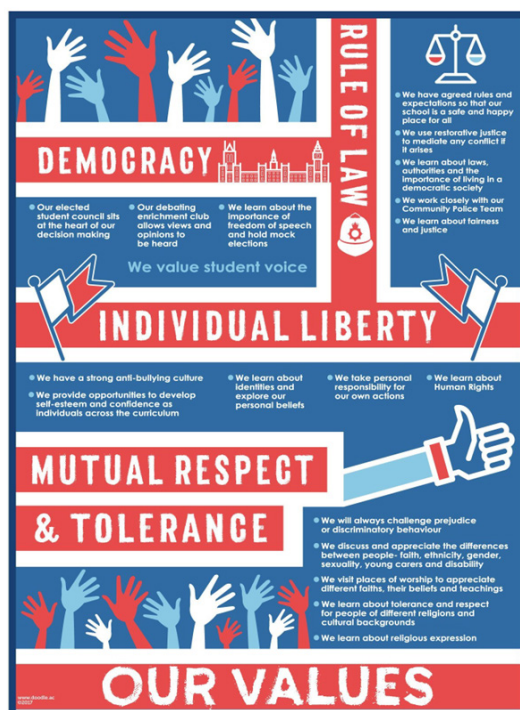
In 2014, the UK Government created fundamental values that it proclaimed were the unifying values that were fundamental to British society and cohesion.

The values were designed to balance freedom of thought, expression, and choice in a liberal society with the need to maintain a safe and secure society.

The fundamental British values are:

- **Democracy**
- **Rule of law**
- **Individual liberty**
- **Mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths**

## WHAT THEY MEAN?



**Democracy:** A culture built upon freedom and equality, where everyone is aware of their rights and responsibilities

**The rule of law:** The need for rules to make a happy, safe and secure environment to live and work

**Individual liberty:** Protection of your rights and the rights of others around you

**Mutual respect & tolerance of different faiths and beliefs:** Understanding that we all don't share the same beliefs and values. Respecting those values, ideas, and beliefs of others whilst not imposing our own onto them.

## HOW DO WE DEMONSTRATE BRITISH VALUES TODAY?

I have shown respect for people who have different faiths and beliefs and for those that have none  
I have demonstrated an understanding of what is right and wrong  
I have formed and shaped my opinion and I have listened to other people do the same  
I have had my say and taken part

## PRIDE MONTH



Pride Month was observed in many parts of the world in June - a month dedicated to celebrating LGBTQ+ communities all around the world and this year Pride had a very special celebration as it was 50 years old.

Pride is celebrated in June to commemorate the month the **Stonewall riots** took place. The **Stonewall riots** were important protests that took place in 1969 in the US, that changed gay rights for a lot of people in America and around the world.

For us, Pride month was an opportunity to show that we are all in this together. We continue to work towards creating a culture where everyone feels comfortable being who they truly are and Pride month provides us with the chance to put our words into action by showing allyship with our LGBTQ+ colleagues. We held our first of two Pride-focused webinars discussing how to be a good LGBTQ+ ally as colleagues, friends and as leaders within the business.

GP Strategies is made up of diverse voices and experiences. To meet our diverse workforce's needs, and ensure that diversity is integrated into all aspects of our work, GP Strategies has an 'IDEA Council' to lead and guide us on all policies and practices related to inclusion, diversity, equity and accountability.

### How well do you know Pride?

Everyone has their personal story and reason for using a pride flag. For some it gives a feeling of belonging, for others, it might be a way of coming out, and for others, it is a way to show their support for the LGBTQ+ community.



*It all started in 1977...* by Gilbert Baker, an artist, activist, and openly gay military veteran. Tasked by Harvey Milk, a historic figure in the fight for LGBTQ rights, to create a flag for the queer community, Baker created a rainbow flag with eight different colours. Inspired by the classic song "Over the Rainbow" from the 1939 film *The Wizard of Oz*, Baker created a rainbow flag to represent the LGBTQ community. Each colour in the flag also had a specific meaning.

Over the last few years, the Pride flag has been updated and changed to include and represent more communities. One of these updated versions is the Progress Pride flag.

# South West team get involved in local fundraising event

## Tonnes of Tins

We love to get involved in raising money for charity and our staff in the Southwest participated in Pirate FM's 'Tonnes of Tins' Appeal to support local food banks who are in need of donations, especially ahead of the long summer holiday. Well done to everyone involved!



## Raising money for Ukraine

Earlier in the year, everyone across the business got involved in raising some vital funds for Ukraine. In a time of extreme suffering, Ukraine needed as much help as possible and we wanted to do whatever we could.

We held a 'dress down' Friday for a donation of £1 and held a raffle with prizes kindly being donated by staff.

We raised an amazing total of **£581.14**. Well done to everyone who took part and the members of staff who worked so hard in organising the fundraising and helped to make a difference to the people of Ukraine.



# A spotlight on ...

Rebecca Martin

Strategic Business  
Development Director



**Each issue we would like to put the spotlight on one of our employees for you to find out a little bit more about them and what they love about Apprenticeships.**

Rebecca has been with the company for 15 years and spent the last 5 years in the role of Strategic Business Development Director, working closely with employers (mainly larger employers paying the Apprenticeship Levy) to embed their apprenticeship strategy across their organisation.

## **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

Supporting employers (new and existing) to set up and launch new Apprenticeship programmes across their organisation. Helping employers to seamlessly embed Apprenticeships into their overall Learning and Development strategy. And of course celebrating the success of Apprentices who undertake the programmes I have helped to implement, seeing them go on to achieve their standard and progress onto other things.

## **How do you maintain work-life balance?**

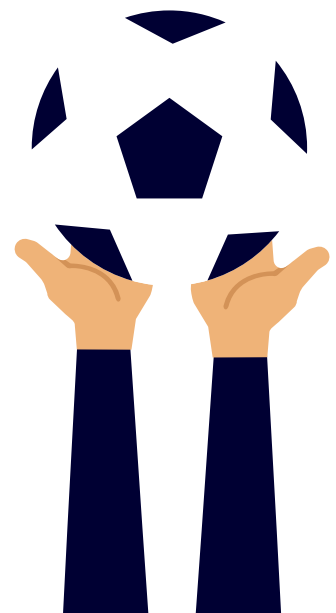
Having a 21 month old daughter keeps me both grounded and, on my toes, and probably dictates my need for a good work-life balance. I keep it simple, work hard and stay focussed in working hours, and switch off from work when the day is done. Quality family time is precious to me and is well earned after a hard days work.

## **Something your colleagues don't know about you?**

I am a massive football fan and support Tottenham Hotspur FC. I have supported them as long as I can remember and try and watch all their games on the TV, and also get to a few games in person when I can.

## **Best thing about Apprenticeships?**

They are widely accessible and since becoming Apprenticeship Standards are extremely fit for purpose. The career pathways now mapped out in Apprenticeship Standards for many sectors can take an individual neatly from Level 2 right up to Level 7. The development and progression opportunities for individuals are huge!



# Here are just a few of the messages we have received from our learners and employers

"Just want to say thank you for being an amazing skills coach, for helping, believing, and supporting me through my qualification"

I work in a setting with over 100 children and a large staff team. We have so many staff members who are unqualified and wanting to study a Childcare qualification. Thanks to GP Strategies we now have 8 members of staff working towards their qualification.

"A huge thank you to my Skills Coach for the support she has given me in helping me achieve my Level 3 Health and Social Care. I truly believe I wouldn't have passed if it wasn't for her."

My Skills Coach went the extra mile and above and beyond to help me. She encouraged, motivated and inspired me as a learner to reach my apprenticeship goals and to achieve a Distinction in my Level 3 Business Administration qualification.

"It's been wonderful working with my Skills Coach, Linda, while studying for my Level 4 Project Management qualification. Linda was extremely encouraging, supportive, inspiring and motivating."

We've worked with GP Strategies for many years. Our assessor plans her assessments not only around meeting the needs of the children but most of all around the needs of my staff and with the difficulties of staff shortages, having an assessor that meets all these needs is just unbelievable.

# We are now an Ofqual recognised awarding organisation



We have been recognised for EPA in the following standards:

Team Leader Supervisor

Business Administrator

Operations or Departmental Manager

Associate Project Manager

We also offer EPA for the suite of Adult Care Standards for Level 2 to Level 5

## TOP TIPS

### How to prepare for EPA

**Tip 1:** Use mock assessments available from the EPAO to assist in preparing for EPA

**Tip 2:** Sit all mock assessments/tests under test conditions and times as per the assessment

**Tip 3:** Use the assessment plan to prepare what will be covered and how you will respond to questions

**Tip 4:** If your EPA is being carried out remotely, practice accessing the video call so you feel more confident on the day

**Tip 5:** Your independent assessor is not going to try and catch you out. See them as a "Professional Friend"

We work closely with apprentices to ensure they are prepared and ready for their EPA. Recently the team have worked extra hours to do this, especially as some apprentices work shifts. Receiving feedback like this makes it so worthwhile and it's why we do what we do:

*"Wanted to say a big thank you for the help and support you give us as a team and more importantly the learners. A learner told us that the support she received was fantastic. With the communication, simplifying and explaining the process, making the learner feel at ease and the emotional support you gave before and after. I know this is normal practice when you are working with our learners and you always go above and beyond"*



If you are looking for a new direction and want to start a career in **Business and Digital Skills** then our **NEW Stage 3 & Stage 4 Employability programme** could be just what you need

Our Employability programmes are available for all ages, to either kick start a career or update skills to get back into the world of work.



The programme which is engaging and interactive teaches key skills and explores topical issues such as Wellbeing and Social Media, all of which are valuable in the Business and Digital sector or any other chosen career. Individuals will also gain valuable tips and advice on creating an impressive and a stand out CV and how to prepare for that all important interview.

As well as gaining valuable key skills and work experience, which will look great on a CV, these skills could be an opportunity to enter onto one of our **Modern Apprenticeship programmes**.

Build confidence

Learn new skills

Get work ready



**For more information about our Employability Programmes, contact:**

Beverley McLaughlin | 01162 184731

NOLBEmployability@gpstrategies.com | gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk/scotland

## Working with DILIGENTA

Last year we were delighted to start working with Diligenta, who were taking the first steps into using the Apprenticeship programme as a way to attract new young talent to the business.

A lot of work went into the pilot programme to combine their internal training and support mechanism with the Apprenticeship so that they were equipped to mentor and assist a younger pool of staff.

The candidates have been fully supported throughout, having a wellbeing mentor within the workplace who worked alongside the Assessor to ensure the candidates had a great experience transitioning into the world of work.

This programme has been so successful, and they are so pleased with the candidates progress they are now extending this to their Stirling office and are recruiting two new cohorts this year.

We are delighted with the success of the pilot and looking forward to continuing our partnership with them and to start the apprenticeship journey with the new candidates.

**Karen Baird**  
Regional Service Director

One of the apprentices at Diligenta shared an insight into their Apprentice journey.



**Martin Hamilton** | Age: 18

**Job Role:** Customer Services Representative

**Apprenticeship Programme:** Customer Services

### Why did you choose to do an apprenticeship?

I chose to do an apprenticeship to further my career goals and to gain a qualification whilst working. I believe this will help me to progress into other roles in the future.

### Why did you want to work in the sector/role you're working in?

I wanted to go into this role to further my experience within the customer services industry and also the financial industry. I would like to progress into further roles with the experience and training I have gained, over time.

### How would you like to progress in your career?

There are many positions to progress in to within Diligenta and other organisations. Within Diligenta there are team coach, team leader and operations manager roles and I'd like to progress into one of these or potentially look at risk management at some point.

“I would like to do more training as I believe you can never get enough experience, particularly if you want to progress in your career.”

**Martin Hamilton**





# USEFUL CONTACTS

## **GP Strategies**

T: 0330 0183 531 (this number is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year)  
E: [safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com](mailto:safeguardingreporting@gpstrategies.com)

## **ChildLine**

T: 0800 1111 (freephone) - the ChildLine number won't show up on your phonebill if you call from a landline or from most mobile networks

## **Action on Elder Abuse**

T: 0808 808 8141

## **Financial: Action Fraud**

T: 0300 123 2040

## **Mind Infoline**

T: 0300 123 3393 (9am-6pm Mon-Fri) – for confidential mental health information services

## **Samaritans**

T: 116 123 – providing confidential, non-judgemental emotional support

## **Mental Health Foundation**

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)  
Offers a range of free guidance and advice

## **Carers Direct**

T: 0203 904 4520

## **Carers Trust**

[www.carers.org/help-and-info/carer-services-near-you](http://www.carers.org/help-and-info/carer-services-near-you)

**England** | [www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk](http://www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk)  
0330 1000 610 | [apprenticeshipsuk@gpstrategies.com](mailto:apprenticeshipsuk@gpstrategies.com)

**Scotland** | [www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk/scotland](http://www.gpstl-apprenticeships.co.uk/scotland)  
01786 478478 | [modernapprenticeships@gpstrategies.com](mailto:modernapprenticeships@gpstrategies.com)

Follow us at  
GP Strategies Apprenticeships



Whilst every effort is made to make sure the content of this publication was correct at the time of publication, the editor nor publisher cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies herein contained. All third-party copyright is acknowledged.

© 2022 GP Strategies Training Limited. All rights reserved.

GP Strategies and GP Strategies with logo design are registered trademarks of GP Strategies Corporation.