UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIP: APPLICANT TOOLKIT

HELLO FROM THE GA TEAM AT UOFG!

Together with our Employer Partners and apprentices, we are proud to deliver a fantastic, unique degree programme. Our Software Engineering Graduate Apprenticeship (GA) enables apprentices to start making a difference in their profession **and** work towards a high-quality degree – all while enjoying the UofG student experience!

To join our course and become an apprentice you need a job offer from one of our Partner Employers, and at least our minimum academic entry tariff. As this is a different process to traditional degree courses, we've developed this "toolkit" to guide you through the exciting journey ahead.

Thank you for your interest and we wish you every success!

Anna, Claire & Matt
Anna Doyle & Claire Johnston (Programme Managers)
Dr Matthew Barr (Programme Director)

E: compsci-ga-team@glasgow.ac.uk

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THE RIGHT CHOICE FOR YOU?

A Graduate Apprenticeship offers you the opportunity to start your career and degree simultaneously – it can be challenging, fast paced and fun! If you're unsure whether the UofG GA in Software Engineering is right for you, consider the following:

1. Do you want to pursue a career in software engineering?

The programme requires you to start your technology career right away. Specific roles vary but apprentices are always part of a team and given the opportunity to gain a breadth of experience while working with code in some form. Our Partner Employers are from a wide range of industries including broadcasting, financial services and renewable energy.

2. Do you want a BSc (Hons) in Software Engineering (Graduate Apprenticeship)?

Apprentices are on a **bespoke course** for years 1&2 which is taught by a dedicated lecture team so you will gain practical skills and understanding quickly, while covering the same number of credits as standard degree students. This focus means apprentices do not study outside subjects so do not have the flexibility to switch degree course, which you would have on a standard Scottish undergraduate degree programme. In years 3&4, apprentices access the same Honours course options as our standard route degree students and you can opt to specialise in areas like Data Science or Cyber Security.

3. Are you ready for professional employment?

Apprentices are valued team members from early in their course and their salary recognises their contribution. Our Partner Employers know you're learning and will provide you with support, but you will be expected to meet the same professional standards as other employees including timekeeping, self-motivation and seeking help when you need it.

4. Are you up for an on-campus student experience?

Our apprentices learn on campus. In the first 2 years this is in 8-week teaching blocks, alongside apprentices from other employers and in the final 2 years you'll join your peers from the standard degree route in Honours classes. Blocks of teaching reduces context switching between work and study, creates an immersive "student experience" and grows your professional network. GAs access the same student services as traditional degree students.

5. Do you meet our academic and funding eligibility requirement?

Our academic requirements are available **on our website.** Our course offers all first years two free, remote Summer Schools in Programming and Maths so you can upskill in these key areas of knowledge before commencing studies with us.

Applicants must ensure they are eligible for tuition fee funding from the Students Award Agency for Scotland before applying for the course. Funding criteria for GAs can be more inclusive than for traditional degrees so please check the **SAAS website** for more information.

6. Are you up for applying directly to employers?

Our employers have their own unique processes to select the right apprentices for their organisations. Applying directly to employers means you can apply to as many opportunities as you wish. All the roles will be competitive, and apprentices often find it takes several applications before they are successful.

From online applications to interviews and group assessments, our team can support you through this process. Where applicable, we encourage GA applicants to simultaneously pursue standard degree routes via UCAS.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Specific roles and salaries vary by employer, but our GAs all receive a living wage and work as part of a team to gain a breadth of experience and work with code in some form.

- The GA offers the same qualification and high-quality UofG degree as the traditional route, but not the same flexibility to switch degree course.

- GAs are students and employees and have the benefits – and responsibilities – of both.

- The UofG apprenticeship course uniquely offers 8-week teaching blocks on campus.

- Applications are made directly to companies, with support available from the GA Team in making applications and confirming your eligibility *(see next section).*
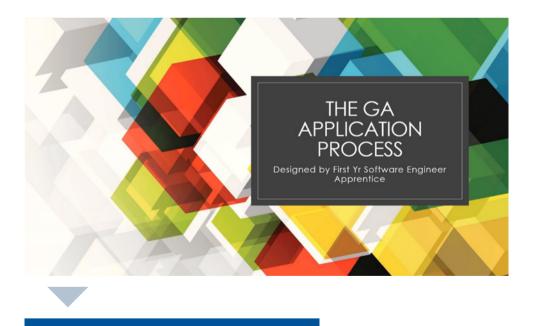
APPLICATION PROCESS & SUPPORT

Once you know the UofG Software Engineering GA Programme is right for you, please register your interest with the GA Team. This ensures you receive access to new opportunities with employers, support with your applications and invitations to events while applying.

register your interest ➔

The University typically partners with 10-15 Employers to deliver 30-40 places on the programme annually. In a typical year, employers recruit from November to July for the course commencing in October. Some employers ask apprentices to begin work before the course, while others expect work and study to commence at the same time.

The application process is different for each Partner Employer and this means the more roles you apply to the greater your breadth of application experience. This presentation was made by a Graduate Apprentice to provide a helpful overview of the process ahead:

THE GA
APPLICATION
PROCESS

Designed by First Yr Software Engineer
Apprentice

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SUPPORT FROM THE UOFG GA TEAM!

Once you've registered your interest in the programme, our friendly team can provide the following support:

1. CV Service:

Whether this is your first CV or it's been a while since you needed one, we can help you put together a strong CV to showcase your skills and experience to employers. As a starting point please check out the **UofG Careers Service webpages.**

2. Eligibility Check:

The team will offer advice on whether you can expect a conditional or an unconditional offer based on your qualifications. Help with **SAAS eligibility** is also available.

3. Live Vacancies:

You will be first to hear when new vacancies with Partner Employers go live! Most employers do also list their vacancies on **www.apprenticeships.scot**

4. Pre-Approved Status:

When your CV is ready and eligibility confirmed your application can become "pre-approved" meaning the team may ask to put forward your application directly to Partner Employers. This saves you time making multiple applications.

5. Event Invites:

Applicant information events are held throughout the year and provide an opportunity to visit the University and find out more about the programme from academic, apprentices and Employers.

COMMUNICATION WITH EMPLOYERS

When you are applying for a job, all communication you have with the Employer tells them more about you and can form part of their hiring decision so use opportunities to communicate with employers to showcase your abilities, potential and enthusiasm. Presenting yourself professionally in person, over email, online and by phone is important at all stages.

KEY POINTERS

- It must always be **you** (not a parent, teacher, course leader etc.) who communicates with Employers as this demonstrates maturity and gives employers the opportunity to get to know you better

- Remember to be **truthful** at all stages of your application as Employers check application details, including employment histories and grades. Errors are often accidental – previous problems have included unpaid work experience being listed as a job on an application form – so please double check all information.

- When emailing an employer make sure your email structure, content and tone is **professional** and keep the email as concise as possible. There's a good guide to how to write an email here:

How to write a professional email →

Sticking to these guidelines give the greatest chance of a swift response but you should always allow 48 working hours before following up an email. Please also remember to check your email regularly as employers will expect quick responses from candidates as this shows you are keenly interested in the opportunity.

- If you are speaking to an employer by **phone,** this will usually be at a pre-arranged time. Ensure you have a quiet space with reliable phone signal. It often helps to write any questions you wish to ask in advance and have a pen and paper handy to take notes.

- **Present yourself well!** For interviews it is normal to wear business attire but for more informal occasions and events smart casual clothing is often expected, especially in the tech sector. Think about your body language and what messages this may be conveying. It's normal to feel nervous, especially in interview situations and employers will be understanding. The more prepared you feel, the less nervous you are likely to be so researching the employer and running a few practice interview questions can help.

- Employers often run a background check on your **social media** accounts as part of their screening programme so ensure your social media content is professionally appropriate.

OUTCOMES AND NEXT STEPS

- If you are unsuccessful in an application, you can ask an employer for feedback to help with future applications

- If you are successful in an application, congratulations and check out the next section!

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- UofG offers a unique level of support to candidates applying for a GA.

- Employers expect professional and timely communication and presentation from candidates at all stages of the application process.

- Most candidates apply for several GA roles, often simultaneously. Be patient, persevere and believe in yourself – you can do it!

"The goal of a degree is to get a job at the end of the course, but with a Graduate Apprenticeship you get a job at the start"

CONNOR, FINAL YEAR GA

CONFIRMING YOUR GRADUATE APPRENTICESHIP

Congratulations! You have been offered a place on the Software Engineering Graduate Apprenticeship (GA) programme with one of our Partner Employers. What happens next?

Firstly, please get in touch with the GA Team at **compsci-ga-team@glasgow.ac.uk** to advise us once you have accepted an offer with one of our Employer Partners.

Contact UofG GA Team →

You will then begin two onboarding processes: one with the university to become a student and one with your employers to become an employee.

EMPLOYER ONBOARDING

Onboarding processes vary across our Partner Employers but here are some helpful pointers:

- All aspects of your employment agreement and working arrangements, including your start date, salary, working hours, leave policy, are discussed directly with your employer. The UofG is not involved in these discussions.

- Please note if you are awaiting exam outcomes your apprenticeship offer will be conditional on you achieving the UofG minimum grades or those stipulated by your prospective employer (if higher).

- Some of our employers require strict background check on all new employees. Please provide the full information requested promptly to ensure you can begin work on time.

- If you have any holidays planned which start after your employment date you should raise this with your employer. Please note we ask that Graduate Apprentices do not take leave (unless it is exceptional circumstances) during the university teaching blocks (Nov-Dec and Mar-Apr). Exact dates will be provided as part of your UofG onboarding.

- Please be aware as a Graduate Apprentice you are entitled to a salary on full pay in line with UK government salary policy on minimum wage.

UNIVERSITY ONBOARDING

Once your employer has confirmed to the university that you have accepted a place with them, you will be contacted by **Dr Matthew Barr,** Graduate Apprenticeship Programme Director, to welcome you onto the programme and explain the next steps for registering with the university and joining the Summer School.

Dr Matthew Barr
School of Computing Science

youtu.be/bPdOscMiiO4 →

YOUR UNIVERSITY REGISTRATION

- Your welcome email from Matt will include a link to register with the university on the Graduate Apprenticeship Programme.

- If you have already achieved your academic grades, once you have registered, you will receive an email from our Admissions Team with your Glasgow Unique ID (GUID) with details on how to login to MyCampus. It is very important you do this as soon as possible. You will also receive a letter outlining key dates, university services and clubs.

- If you are awaiting academic grades, the Admissions team will contact you once your exam results are confirmed.

- To prepare you can view information on the registration process on this university webpage

- If you have any concerns that you have not heard from our Admissions Team or have any questions regarding completing registration contact **compsci-ga-team@glasgow.ac.uk**

- Please remember, if you have applied for accommodation this cannot be confirmed until you have registered.

YOUR COURSE FUNDING VIA SAAS

The Graduate Apprenticeship Programme is fully funded by the Scottish Funding Council.

You need to apply to SAAS for this funding to be allocated to you. Your email welcome from Matt will provide a link to activate this and guidance notes.

Please note that it is very important you apply to SAAS for funding as soon as you are contacted by Matt as your funding needs to be applied to your university account for you to financially register.

SUMMER SCHOOL

The GA Team run Summer Schools in Programming and Mathematics consecutively in August and September.

The courses are online, fully flexible, self-paced, include drop-in support sessions, and are led by our Graduate Apprenticeship Lecturers.

The Summer Schools are open to all new Graduate Apprentices and we recommend you attend. If you do not have prior programming skills or do not have Higher Maths you will be required to attend the Summer School.

ACCOMMODATION

If you require accommodation contact the GA Team as soon as you start applying for roles at **compsci-ga-team@glasgow.ac.uk**

You cannot apply directly to Accommodation Services until you have accepted an offer from the university. Because GA applications tend to be later it is really important to tell the GA Team you are interested in accommodation and also contact us as soon as you have accepted a role with one of our Employer Partners so we can ask Accommodation Services to reserve a room for you.

You can find out more about Accommodation and how to confirm your application here:

Accommodation application ➜

OTHER PAPERWORK

Do be prepared for additional paperwork required by the programme funders once you have joined the GA. But don't worry the GA Team is on hand to walk you through all of this.

FAQs

FINANCIAL

How much will I get paid?
Salaries do vary from company to company but you can expect a full-time salary compliant (and often better than) government guidelines. Typically, the starting salary will be between £15-20K.

Does the amount I get paid change over the course of the degree?
As you progress through the four-year programme you can expect your salary to increase assuming you meet work and university targets.

What about tuition fees?
The programme is funded by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) and they cover your university fees. You need to apply to SAAS to get your funding in place and meet SAAS funding requirements. You can find out more here:

Funding for GAs →

What about student loans?
Because your university fees are covered by SFC and you are earning a full-time salary with your employer you are not expected to apply for a Student Loan or bursary.

ELIGIBILITY

I already have a degree. Can I still apply?
You can apply to be the Software Engineering GA even though you already have one degree. The stipulation is that the degree cannot be in software engineering or computing. These guidelines are subject to ongoing review so please check with SAAS to ensure your eligibility at the time of application.

Do you accept applications from college?
We do accept applications from college leavers who have achieved a B or above in the following HNC/HND (please note we do not differentiate our offer between HNC/D): Computing; Software Development; Computer Games Development. College applicants must also have Higher Maths (B or above) or have completed the Calculus Matrices for Computing module as part of their HNC/D.

ACADEMIC

Do you offer direct entry to second or third year?
Because the UofG Software Engineering GA is a bespoke programme designed specifically to support you in the workplace we do not offer direct to second or third year. We expect everyone to complete the four-year programme.

WORKPLACE

Who are your Employer Partners?
Our Employer Partner community is growing all the time. Some of our employers recruit every year and some recruit every other year. You can view our Partners **here.**

What about holidays?
As an employee you will be entitled to annual leave, and this will be outlined in your employment contract. The University requires annual leave is not taken during teaching time, except in exceptional circumstance which can be discussed with the Programme Director.

If you have holidays already booked before your place is confirmed, discuss these with your employer during onboarding.

Good luck with your applications! For further information please visit our website or contact our GA Team.

Visit website →	Contact GA Team →

Is this GA Right for You? →

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Confirming & Starting your Graduate Apprenticeship! →

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