Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship
What you need to know

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ILM – your ultimate Management Apprenticeship partner

ILM is the UK's leading specialist provider of leadership and management apprenticeships – last year, we qualified over 14,000 management apprentices – seven times more than any other management body. Combined with our experience in the development of apprenticeship standards, this makes us the first choice for training providers and employers who are looking to engage with reformed apprenticeships. With our expert team of assessors, we are ideally placed to offer End-point assessment. No organisation is better qualified to provide you with the end-to-end services required to deliver worldclass apprenticeships in leadership and management.

New Management Apprenticeship Standards

Currently there are two types of apprenticeships in England – 'frameworks' and 'standards'. Framework apprenticeships are being phased out and replaced with employer-designed Apprenticeship Standards.

The Level 7 Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship (SLMDA) is one of these standards and has been designed by a group of employers, led by Serco and with the support of a number of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Standards and assessment plans

Employer groups are required to produce two key documents which must be approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships before an apprenticeship standard can go live: The Standard is typically a two-page document which outlines the occupation and the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for competence.

The Assessment Plan describes the features of the End-point assessment which apprentices must successfully complete in order to be awarded their apprenticeship certificate. The Standard and Assessment Plan for this apprenticeship can be downloaded from the ILM website.

The Level 7 Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship

Who is it for?

The Level 7 Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship (SLMDA) is suitable for those who are responsible for direction and vision in an organisation, driving the overall strategy. Usually, they are the role-model of an organisation, responsible for those in senior positions and significant organisational budgets.

Key responsibilities may include:

- Developing the organisation's strategic direction and vision
- Identifying long-term opportunities and risks and developing ethical, innovative and supportive cultures

Occupations may include:

- Director
- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Executive Officer
- Chief Information Officer
- Senior Military Officer

Key facts

Level
This is a Level 7 apprenticeship.

Duration
Typically this apprenticeship will take 2 – 2 ½ years minimum with a minimum of 20% off-the-job training. However, the duration also depends on the previous experience of the individual. At the end of the apprenticeship the apprentice will also gain a Master's degree from a recognised institution.

Entry requirements
The entry requirement for this apprenticeship will be decided by each employer, but may typically be A levels (or equivalent) or Level 3 qualifications and English, Maths and ICT at Level 2. Previous work experience such as previous management experience or other apprenticeships or qualifications may be also taken into account.

Maths and English
Apprentices will need to have achieved ESFA-approved Level 2 qualifications in English and Maths prior to taking their End-point assessment.

Review date
This standard should be reviewed within three years of its approval.

Delivery

There are three key stages to the delivery of the apprenticeship:
- On-programme
- Gateway
- End-point assessment

On-programme

This is the substantive part of the apprenticeship and includes both knowledge and skills assessment and on-programme behavioural assessment. Throughout this stage, the apprentice will develop the skills, knowledge and behaviours outlined in the Standard.

One of the key features of Management Apprenticeship standards is flexibility. Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have more choice in how they deliver the on-programme component of the degree apprenticeship. They can choose from a blend of delivery models, such as day release, distance learning and online, or through a more integrated approach created in collaboration with the employer.

Overall, the modules within the Management Master's Degree should comprise of 180 credits. On top of the modules, the on-programme component should also be complemented by a portfolio, demonstrating employer-defined knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs), as well as a work-based project, submitted towards the end of the programme. The existence of employer-defined knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) as part of the on-programme element is what distinguishes the Level 7 Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship from other Master's degrees.

The quality of the on-programme content is guaranteed by the quality assurance standards HEIs have, which are rigorously monitored by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

For more details about the structure of the on-programme stage, please read more here.

Fully funded

Apprenticeship funding – including levy funds – can be used to cover the costs of delivering mapped ILM Diplomas. Please note that qualification registration fees cannot be paid for out of levy funds or Government contributions.
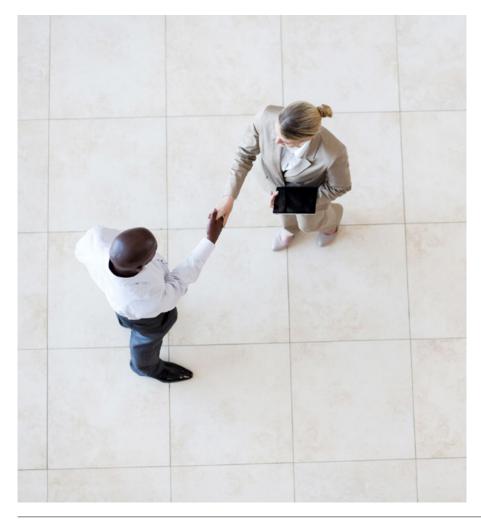
Gateway

The Gateway is an opportunity for the HEI and the employer to sit down and discuss the apprentice's performance. The employer needs to agree that the learner has successfully met the requirements of the standard.

To go through to the End-point assessment, the learner must have completed:

- A Masters level management degree
- ESFA-approved English and Mathematics qualifications at Level 2 or higher
- A work-based project: the employer and the learner need to agree on a subject which is achievable within the employer's business constraints, and which enables the application of the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) which need to be demonstrated.
- A portfolio: the learner should put together evidence demonstrating the relevant KSBs of the standard. The portfolio, which will be assessed by professional discussion, can include documentation such as: reports, minutes, emails, performance reviews, customer /stakeholder comments or any other materials which would fit the purpose. The learner should be able to demonstrate each individual KSB through at least one piece of evidence.

For more details and guidance on the Gateway requirements, please consult the SLMDA Assessment Plan.

End-point assessment

The timeline for completing the End-point assessment (EPA) is 8–12 weeks from the moment the apprentice meets the requirements of the Gateway.

The EPA for the Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship is made up of two distinct assessment components, which contribute equally (50%–50%) to the final EPA grade:

- Project showcase, based on work-based project, including report, presentation and a questioning session
- Professional discussion between the apprentice and their independent assessor, based on the portfolio review

The assessment methods will collectively assess the KSBs required of a Senior Leader, as set out in the Apprenticeship Standard (see following pages). Each of the methods will be graded with either fail, pass, merit or distinction using the assessment criteria.

The End-Point Assessor cannot be related in any way to the Provider or the employer, and should not have been directly involved in the delivery of the apprenticeship. The EPAO needs to be approved on the Register of End-Point Assessment Organisations to deliver the assessment for this particular standard.

For an in-depth understanding of the EPA model for SLMDA, please read here.

ILM is now an approved End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) for this standard. Successful completion of the Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship EPA through ILM also includes Professional Recognition Awards (PRAs) and co-branded digital credentials. You can find out more on our website.

Assessment

The following table, taken from the Assessment Plan, describes each of the assessment components in more detail. It also provides guidance on how grading will be applied to the assessment.

The marking criteria will take into consideration:

- Ways in which the apprentice has met the requirements of their job role
- How the apprentice has approached and completed the task(s)
- Who the apprentice has worked with, demonstrating personal and interpersonal qualities they have brought to all their work relationships
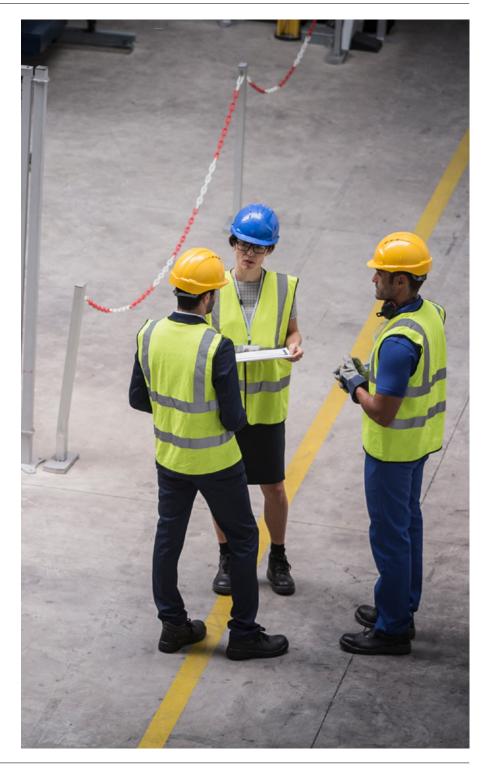
Assessment Method	Weighting
Project showcase, based on work-based project	50%
Professional Discussion, based on review of portfolio of evidence	50%

Funding

The Senior Leader Master's Degree Apprenticeship has been allocated a funding band maximum of £18,000 per apprentice. It can be either fully funded by the apprenticeship levy or 90% funded for non-levy paying employers.

For the latest information on apprenticeship funding, please visit our website www.i-l-m.com/assessment-and-resources/funding

Apprenticeship Standard

Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours to be assessed by each Assessment Method

Knowledge	What is required (through formal learning and applied according to business environment)	Assessment Method
Organisational Performance – delivering a long-term purpose		
Strategy	Knows how to shape organisational vision, culture and values.	Professional discussion
	Understands organisational structures; business modelling; diversity; global perspectives; governance and accountability; the external environment, social, technological and policy implications.	Professional discussion
	Understands new market strategies, changing customer demands and trend analysis.	Professional discussion
Innovation & Change	Understands innovation; the impact of disruptive technologies (mechanisms that challenge traditional business methods and practice); drivers of change and new ways of working across infrastructure, processes, people and culture and sustainability.	Professional discussion
	Knowledge of systems thinking, knowledge/data management, and programme management.	Project showcase
Enterprise & Risk	Knowledge of ethics and values based leadership; regulatory environments, legal, H&S and well-being and compliance requirements; corporate social responsibility; risk management, environmental impact and cyber security.	Professional discussion
	Understands competitive strategies and entrepreneurialism, approaches to effective decision making, and the use of big data and insight to implement and manage change. effective decision making, and the use of big data and insight to implement and manage change.	Project showcase
Finance	Understands financial strategies including scenarios, modelling and identifying trends, application of economic theory to decision-making, and how to evaluate financial and non-financial information.	Professional discussion
	Understands financial governance and legal requirements, and procurement strategies.	Professional discussion

Apprenticeship Standard

Knowledge	What is required (through formal learning and applied according to business environment)	Assessment Method
Interpersonal Excellence – leading people and developing collaborative relationships		
Leading & Developing People	Knowledge of organisational/team dynamics and how to build engagement and develop high performance, agile and collaborative cultures.	Professional discussion
	Understands approaches to strategic workforce planning including talent management, learning organisations, workforce design, succession planning, diversity and inclusion.	Professional discussion
Developing Collaborative Relationships	Understands large scale and inter-organisational influencing and negotiation strategies.	Project showcase
	Knowledge of the external political environment and use of diplomacy with diverse groups of internal and external stakeholders.	Professional discussion
	Understands working with board and company structures.	Professional discussion
	Knowledge of brand and reputation management.	Professional discussion

Apprenticeship Standard

Skills	What is required (developed through continuous professional development in the workplace)	Assessment Method
Organisational Performance – delivering a long-term purpose		
Strategy	Use of horizon scanning and conceptualisation to deliver high performance strategies focusing on growth/sustainable outcomes.	Professional discussion
	Sets a clear agenda and gains support from key stakeholders.	Project showcase
	Able to undertake research, and critically analyse and integrate complex information.	Project showcase
Innovation and Change	Initiates and leads change in the organisation, creates environment for innovation and creativity, establishing the value of ideas and change initiatives and drives continuous improvement.	Professional discussion
	Able to manage conflict. Manages partnerships, people and resources effectively, and measures outcomes.	Project showcase
	Acts where needed as a Sponsor, championing projects and transformation of services across organisational boundaries.	Project showcase
Enterprise and Risk	Able to challenge strategies and operations in terms of ethics, responsibility, sustainability, resource allocation and business continuity/risk management.	Professional discussion
	Application of principles relating to Corporate Social Responsibility, Governance, Regulatory compliance. Drives a culture of resilience and supports development of new enterprise and opportunities.	Professional discussion
Finance	Oversees financial strategies/management, results and setting organisational budgets, and challenges financial assumptions underpinning strategies.	Project showcase
	Is accountable for decisions based on relevant information eg Key Performance Indicators/ scorecard.	Professional discussion
	Uses financial data to allocate resources.	Professional discussion
	Oversees procurement, supply chain management and contracts.	Professional discussion

Apprenticeship Standard

Skills	What is required (developed through continuous professional development in the workplace)	Assessment Method
Interpersonal Excellence – leading people and developing collaborative relationships		
Engaging Employees	Uses personal presence and "storytelling" to articulate and translate vision into operational strategies, demonstrating clarity in thinking and using inspirational communication.	Professional discussion
	Creates an inclusive culture, encouraging diversity and difference.	Professional discussion
	Gives and receives feedback at all levels, building confidence and developing trust, and enables people to take risks.	Professional discussion
Leading and Developing People	Enables an open and high performance working, and sets goals and accountabilities for teams and individuals.	Project showcase
	Leads and influences people, building constructive working relationships across teams, using matrix management where required	Project showcase
	Ensures workforce skills are utilised, balancing people and technical skills and encouraging continual development.	Project showcase
Building Collaborative Relationships	Manages complex relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders.	Professional discussion
	Builds trust and rapport, with ability to positively challenge.	Professional discussion
	Leads beyond area of control/authority, and able to influence, negotiate and use advocacy skills to build reputation and effective collaborations.	Professional discussion

Apprenticeship Standard

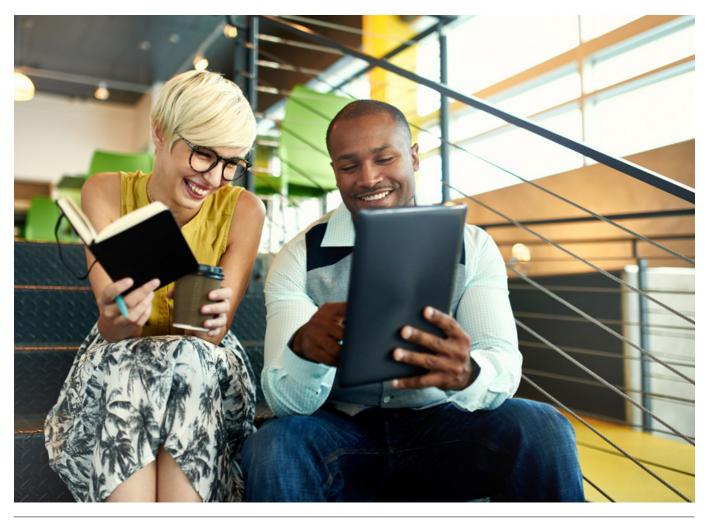| Behaviours	What is required (developed and exhibited in the workplace)	Assessment Method
Personal and interpersonal effectiveness		
Leads by Example	Has high levels of self-awareness, emotional and social intelligence, empathy and compassion, and able to identify mental well-being in others.	Professional discussion
	Works collaboratively enabling empowerment and delegation. Acts with humility and authenticity, is credible, confident and resilient.	Professional discussion
Judgement and Challenge	Takes personal accountability aligned to clear values. Instils confidence demonstrating honesty, integrity, openness, and trust.	Professional discussion
	Demonstrates flexibility and willingness to challenge when making decisions and solving problems.	Project showcase
Courage & Curiosity	Is confident and brave, willing to innovate, seeks new ideas and looks for contingencies.	Professional discussion
	Manages complexity and ambiguity, comfortable in uncertainty, pragmatic.	Project showcase
Valuing Difference	Engaging with all – is ethical and demonstrates inclusivity, recognising diversity, championing, enabling cultural inclusion.	Professional discussion
	Actively seeks to coach and mentor.	Professional discussion
Professional	Reflects on own performance, demonstrates professional standards in relation behaviour and ongoing development.	Professional discussion
	Advocates the use of good practice within and outside the organisation.	Project showcase

Find out more

Visit our dedicated apprenticeships pages www.i-l-m.com/apprentice

The gov.uk Apprenticeship pages include information on building an apprenticeship programme, standards, funding and more

Still confused?
Book a free one hour apprenticeship standards briefing with one of our expert team

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www.i-l-m.com/apprentice

About ILM
ILM is a City & Guilds Group business, bringing a wealth
of expertise in professional training, qualifications, learning
content, technology and assessment.

Together we set the standards for corporate learning,
on-the-job development, and skills recognition around
the world.

All ILM qualifications are awarded by The City and Guilds
of London Institute, which was founded in 1878 and is
incorporated by Royal Charter. The City & Guilds Group is
a charity. Any profits we make are reinvested to deliver our
shared purpose – to enable people and organisations to
develop their skills for personal and economic growth.