

# UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK GRADUATE SCHEME PLACEMENT GUIDE

This document is designed to provide an overview of the University of Warwick Graduate Scheme. It includes an outline of the scheme, information for the Graduate Management Trainees, Placement Managers, Mentors and Scheme Manager.

## Introduction to the University of Warwick Graduate Scheme

A University of Warwick Graduate Scheme was proposed after the cessation of the Ambitious Future Graduate Scheme which Warwick was previously been a part of. It is recognised that the graduate scheme is a key talent pipeline for University of Warwick. The scheme has been designed to take the elements which worked well from Ambitious Futures whilst also considering University of Warwick's specific workforce development needs. We are delighted to welcome our second cohort on the University of Warwick Graduate Scheme, commencing October 2024.

### Scheme Aim

The scheme aims to align with the University's long-term people and talent strategy, which is to attract graduate-level talent with the ability to develop in the following areas:

- Agile focus – able to seamlessly work in different areas of the University, understanding local priorities and the link with overarching strategic aims.
- External focus – developing an ability to work with internal and external stakeholders, using the skills learnt within the University setting to support external partners.
- Emergent leadership ability – confidently collaborate across functions and grades.

Graduates enter the scheme at grade 5, with a view that by the end of the two-year scheme, will be operating at considerable strength in their grade 5 roles, with potential to successfully attain a Grade 6 role within their fourth year.

## Graduate Scheme Programme

Our two-year programme is designed to give the Graduate Management Trainees everything they need to start their leadership career. They will complete three, eight-month placements: two internal placements along with one placement with an external small company or charity within our local community. Each placement will involve a project to enable them to put their new project management qualification into practice.

The placements are structured to give them exposure to a range of different areas of the University and enable Warwick to have additional project support where needed, ensuring the Graduate Management Trainees have the skills necessary to potentially undertake a grade 6 role at the end of the scheme. Typically, they will be involved in activities such as:

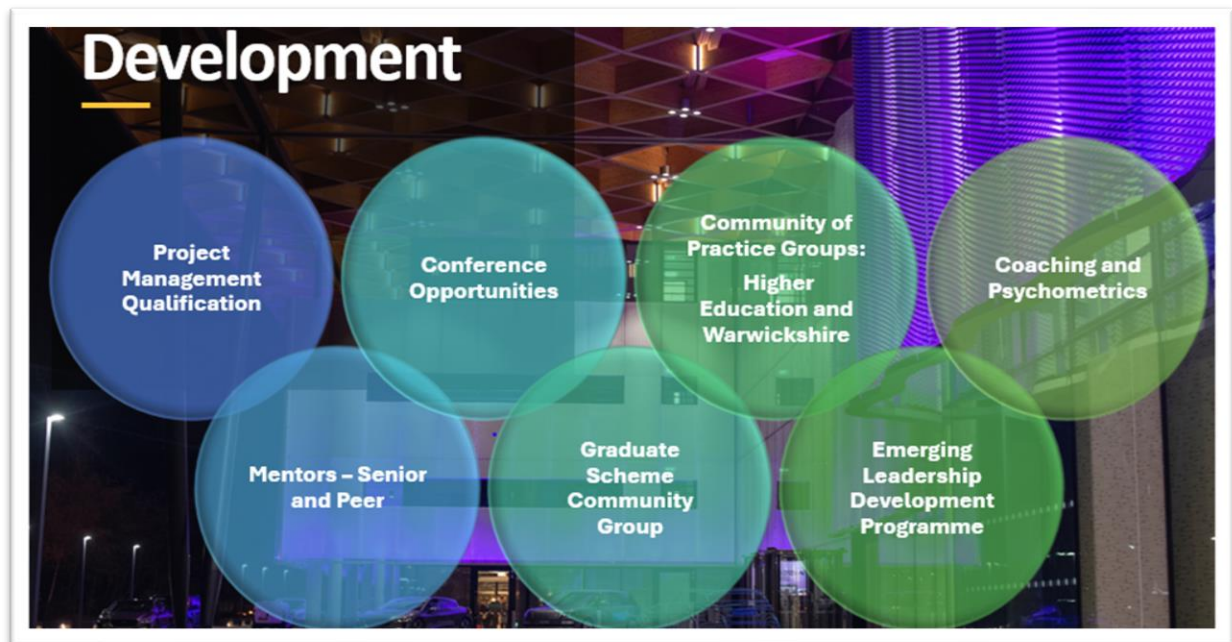
- Immersing themselves in key departments to understand the role they play within the University, learning how they operate and using this knowledge to deliver new initiatives.
- Learning how to solve problems, conducting root cause analysis, working with senior leaders to plan solutions as well as project manage their implementation.
- Working alongside existing experts to deliver operational excellence.

The four key elements are outlined below:

- To provide Graduate Management Trainees with a good overview of the scheme, its purpose, benefits, structure and organisation
- To establish the new cohort as a cohesive and supportive network
- To instil a sense of enthusiasm and excitement for the scheme, and the profession
- To provide new Graduate Management Trainees with an introduction to the nature of Higher Education, governance and funding.

## Development Programme

The programme has the following elements to ensure there is development of knowledge and skills in a supported environment, enabling each Graduate Management Trainee to have some consistency as well as utilising coaching to enable each person to have a personalised experience.



### Project Management Qualification

The Graduate Management Trainees will be undertaking a project management qualification. This will be funded via the apprenticeship levy and 20% of their working week needs to be dedicated to this, in the form of workshops, reflective practice, assignments and practical application. This is mandatory as it is a core part of their development programme.

This qualification will commence in December 2024 to enable the first few months to be focussed on their induction and settling into Warwick. The programme will cover key project management areas. It is essential that the Graduate Management Trainee has exposure to project management whilst undertaking their placement so they can evidence the required learning.

### Group Coaching and Community Sessions

The Graduate Management Trainees will take part in group coaching and community sessions to help consolidate their learning and to develop self-reflective practice. The coaching sessions enable the trainees to share and discuss current issues in a confidential and supportive environment. They will also be part of a HEI Community of Practice with a number of Graduate Management Trainees from other Universities.

## Support

There are a number of different roles designed to support the Graduate Management Trainees.

### **Sponsor - Rachel Sandby-Thomas, delegated to Anna Chapman, Organisation Development Manager**

The Sponsor has overall strategic responsibility for the Programme within their institution. Specific responsibilities include:

- championing the programme within the institution
- raising awareness of the programme
- ensuring resources are made available to fund the programme

### **Programme Lead (PL) - Claire Nicholls**

The Programme Lead has overall responsibility for managing the programme and success of the scheme, ensuring the quality, integrity and of the placements, and for the overall management of the Graduate Management Trainees. Objectives include:

- General scheme management and overall line management of the trainees
- Liaison with scheme sponsor
- Marketing plan, recruitment and selection of graduates
- management of support roles, including mentors, placement managers and admin support
- Managing and selecting appropriate placement bids (internal and external), including ensuring they meet the requirements, e.g. HEIF
- Oversight of the Graduate Management Trainee experience
- Continuous review and evaluation of the scheme
- The design, organisation and oversight of placements
- Local trouble shooting and problem resolution
- Overall performance management and wellbeing of the Graduate Management Trainees and ensuring placement managers complete expected performance management documentation, including probation documentation
- Ensure mentors are equipped to carry out their role. Ensure mentors are meeting their requirements.
- Manage programme budget
- Manage associated Apprenticeship scheme requirements
- Support Graduate Management Trainees' transition out of the scheme into a permanent role

Anna Chapman will support with any escalation where needed.

### **Placement Manager**

The PM is the placement manager, responsible for the day-to-day management of the Graduate Management Trainees during the time they are placed with them. The PM, working in conjunction with the Programme Lead where appropriate, is responsible for identifying suitable projects, developing project briefs, monitoring activity and giving timely and informed feedback to Graduate Management Trainees. **All work must be linked to the HEIF funding requirements.** They are responsible for:

- General day to day line management, including feedback, coaching and any training aligned with the specific activities of the placement, annual leave sign off (during placement duration, refer to the PL if there is a requirement for after the placement) and return to work process after any sickness leave. All annual leave and sickness leave must be reported to the PL so the SuccessFactors system can be updated accordingly. The PL will support any escalation required, for example, occupational health referral or reasonable adjustments review.
- Agreeing general project and other work activities are agreed with the Scheme Manager prior to the placement in a SMART format.
- Graduate Management Trainees do not take part in the PDR process, however the placement manager will be required to take part on formal performance reviews as outlined in this scheme.
- Meeting with the Scheme Manager at scheduled intervals to review the performance of the trainee.

### **Senior Mentor**

Each trainee will have a Senior Mentor. The Mentor is responsible for providing practical, confidential and independent support and guidance to the Graduate Management Trainees whilst they are on the programme. They will act as:

- Sounding Board – to help the trainee explore ideas
- Enabler – to highlight potential opportunities
- Advisor – to provide objective advice
- Champion – to encourage achievements
- Challenger – act as a critical friend to question assumptions and encourage alternative thinking

Resources to support you in your role as a mentor can be found [here](#).

### **Peer Mentor**

Each Graduate Management Trainee will have a peer mentor, this will be a previous Graduate Management Trainee who is continuing to work at University of Warwick to help them navigate through the scheme, making the most of the development and opportunities available.

- Help the Graduate Management Trainee explore ideas and opportunities
- Provide impartial advice and encouragement
- Develop a supportive relationship
- Assist with problem solving

Resources to support you in your role as a mentor can be found [here](#).

### Administration Buddy

Each Graduate Management Trainee will have an administration buddy in each placement. The administration buddy will help the trainee navigate the logistics of working at Warwick, for example, how to use the printer, how to book rooms and catering, email distribution lists, minutes and report formats to name a few. This will hopefully take any stress out of starting to work in a new team.

### Placements

The scheme commences on Monday 7th October 2024 and consists of three, eight-month placements:

- Placement one: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2024 – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- Placement two: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 – Friday 30<sup>th</sup> August 2026
- Placement three: Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026 – Friday 25 September 20236

In line with the University of Warwick hybrid working model, there may be some homeworking. Please detail the working model for the placement in the placement bid form.

### Placement Criteria, Selection and Management

As this scheme is funded via HEIF, it is essential that the activity the Graduate Management Trainees are involved in it relates to the HEIF criteria. Please refer to the diagram below for examples



The Graduate Management Trainees' placements are the key building block of their practical learning, and so it is essential that they are challenging and varied. They should provide in-depth exposure to university operations and development opportunities. Placements are normally project-based but should be sufficiently varied to be stimulating; and can also include day-to-day operational work although it must relate to activities which are applicable under HEIF.

## Graduate Management Trainee job role and purpose

The University of Warwick Graduate Scheme aims to provide Graduate Management Trainees with a high-quality training and development programme via a series of rotational project placements across the University. The role holder will work on a range of projects providing the role holder with an introduction to project management within the context of Professional Services. The role holder will gain experience of working with a wide range of key internal and external stakeholders on a variety of projects. One project will take place with an external organisation to allow the role holder to share their knowledge and develop skills associated with partnering with external organisations. During each project, the role holder will work towards a set of objectives aligned to the unique nature of the project, which need to be completed by the end of the work placement.

Principal Accountabilities	%
This section contains the same information as the 'Duties and Responsibilities' of the Job Description	
1. To undertake and successfully complete a range of rotational projects (3 X 8-month placements) supporting key activities across the University with a Professional Services theme. This may involve, but not limited to stakeholder engagement activities, facilitating and sharing information and knowledge, root cause analysis, providing recommendations, research, testing and the design and implementation of processes and procedures, contributing to policy development and future planning and strategy development. In addition to this the role holder will contribute to or carry out presentations and develop reports.	55
2. To work with the designated placement manager to agree individual, project specific objectives to be completed during the agreed project duration. Progress to be recorded and monitored against targets and reported to line manager through the standard processes.	15
3. To provide necessary administration and project management during each project placement, this may include organising events, collating information on project activities, providing progress reports, and coordinating activities.	10
4. To develop strong working relationships on each rotational project with the designated supervisor, collaborators, stakeholders and other staff. Ensuring the needs of different audiences and stakeholders are fully understood and considered as partners throughout all work.	5
5. To develop an understanding of the work of key business functions within the Professional Services Group and the wider Higher Education context and key stakeholder communities' scheme-led collaborations, projects and initiatives.	5
6. To support the Graduate scheme management with graduate engagement initiatives, including but not limited to, university presentations, recruitment and careers events, marketing and communications initiatives and support with assessment days and recruitment processes.	5
7. To successfully complete a relevant Apprenticeship development programme, within the expected timescales. Participate fully in other professional development opportunities provided by the University.	5

### **What Makes a Good Placement?**

A successful placement is one which benefits the trainee through the development of their skills, knowledge and experience, and delivers tangible outcomes. The placement must meet the HEIF funding criteria, contributing to an economic or social benefit.

1. A project/projects the graduate trainee leads which will take approximately 8 months to complete and that has tangible deliverables and outcomes for which the trainee is responsible
2. A series of other tasks/activities of shorter duration
3. Some day-to-day operational work allowing the trainee to contribute to the ongoing work of the team in which they are based

Placements must be challenging and varied, but realistic and achievable. The Graduate Management Trainee(s) must be appropriately supported to deliver on their objectives and develop their skills.

Please note, in parallel with their placements, trainees will undertake their project management qualification and development programme, approximately 20% of their time each week will need to be focused on these activities.

### **Equipment**

The Graduate Management Trainee will be issued with a laptop for the duration of the scheme. Any other specific equipment needed for the placement will need to be issued by the placement team.

### **Mid and end of Performance Review**

The review is designed to be a supportive, developmental opportunity to assist the trainee to make progress and achieve their potential. At least twice during each placement, the Placement Manager should meet with the Graduate Management Trainee to review their performance against the skills framework. The performance review form is supplied separately. The Graduate Management Trainee should prepare by completing the form prior to the review and sharing this with their Placement Manager. It is noted that there may not be the opportunity for every skill to be worked on in every placement.

Once the form has been completed, copies should be sent to the Graduate Management Trainee and the PL. If there have been any issues or challenges during the placement, the PM should raise these with the PL to decide upon the most appropriate course of action.

### **Reflective Practice**

The Graduate Management Trainee is encouraged to regularly reflect on their personal development and progress, using a tool like Gibbs Reflective Cycle for example. This reflection can be then used at the mid and end of performance reviews and the 1-2-1 meeting with the Programme Lead.



# Gibbs Reflective Cycle



## Skills Framework

The Skills Framework has been developed to ensure that each Graduate Management Trainee has the opportunity develop key skills whilst on the programme.

<p><b>Skill 1: Leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes a proactive role.</li> <li>• Demonstrates ownership.</li> <li>• Manages upwards where appropriate.</li> <li>• Understanding their preferred leadership style and has the ability to flex their approach when needed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skill 2: Delivering Results</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes responsibility for prioritising activities on the basis of what needs to be done.</li> <li>• Manages time effectively and efficiently to produce both the quality and quantity of work required.</li> <li>• Adopts a structured and logical approach from planning to delivery and evaluation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skill 3: Overcoming Challenges</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses initiative.</li> <li>• Seeks compromises to find solutions when required.</li> <li>• Perseveres to find creative ways around obstacles and barriers.</li> <li>• Encourages the early resolution of problems by quickly identifying solutions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skill 4: Dealing with Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands their emotions; thinks rationally about their emotion before taking action.</li> <li>• Demonstrates tenacity and resilience during times of uncertainty.</li> <li>• Considers the impact of change on others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skill 5 Analysis and Decision Making</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regularly monitors project(s) against targets, deadlines and milestones.</li> <li>• Appreciates the wider context in which Higher Education works.</li> <li>• Has an objective and methodical approach to the analysis of information.</li> <li>• Makes well-reasoned decisions based on the information available.</li> <li>• Knows when to make a decision and when to defer.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skill 6: Innovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes account of resources and strategic aims in making plans.</li> <li>• Considers issues from a number of different angles.</li> <li>• Comes up with creative and original solutions; has the courage to try something different.</li> <li>• Identifies opportunities for better ways of working.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Skill 7: Teamwork</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a 'can do' attitude</li> <li>• Works collaboratively and effectively with others.</li> <li>• Proactively builds relationships and networks with others.</li> <li>• Spots opportunities to learn and develop within HE and shares their insight with others; demonstrates enthusiasm for HE.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Skill 8: Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respectful and considerate towards others.</li> <li>• Mindful of the impact their words and actions have on others.</li> <li>• Speaks clearly and articulately across a range of situations, e.g. face-to-face meetings, presentations to a group etc.</li> <li>• Writes clearly and articulately.</li> <li>• Adapts communication style to suit the needs of the situation, audience and message.</li> </ul>

## **Graduate Trainee Terms and Conditions**

### **Contract of Employment**

Each graduate trainee will be issued with a 2-year grade 5 fixed term contract of employment from University of Warwick.

### **Sickness Absence**

In the event of any sickness absence, the trainee should report this to their Placement Manager and the Programme Lead should be notified. The Programme Lead will update SuccessFactors.

Long term sickness absence (more than one month) or continued intermittent absences, may result in the placement arrangement being reviewed. Advice should be sought from the Placement Lead team in such instances.

### **Other Absences**

For periods of absence which are not connected to sickness, e.g. compassionate leave, maternity leave and paternity leave, institutional policies should be followed. The Placement Lead should be notified.

### **Notice Period**

The notice period of the Graduate Management Trainee should be in line with relevant Warwick policy.

Any Placement Manager who is aware that a Graduate Management Trainee may be considering leaving the scheme is asked to contact the Programme Lead, so that the implications can be considered. Graduate Management Trainees are also advised that if they are considering leaving, they should discuss this with their Programme Lead.

### **Conduct**

We expect that all Graduate Management Trainees will make the most of their time on the programme, to act in a professional manner and as ambassadors for Warwick University. Whilst on external placement, Graduate Management Trainees are expected to adhere to their partner institution's policies and regulations.

Placement roles may include access to confidential, personal or commercially sensitive information. Trainees must follow their host and partner institutions' policies on confidentiality, data protection and intellectual property.

### **Social Media**

Please refer to the Warwick policy. Graduate Management Trainees should understand the impact that any misuse of social media can have on themselves, their fellow cohort, members of staff or the reputation of the University.

### **Expenses**

Expenses should be claimed by trainees in accordance with the institution's expenses policy and agreed with the Programme Lead. If they relate to the placement requirements, the placement department will be responsible for the payment of the expenses.