Service Designer, Level 6 Apprenticeship

The degree-level qualification, taught by service designers and assessed by Academy4PM.

JGA

Developing Futures

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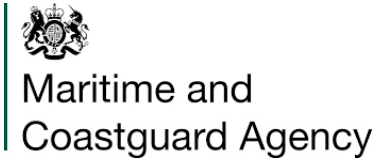

We are the JGA Group

Start an apprenticeship programme with us today

We are a Queen's Award-winning training provider, judged to be "Outstanding" by Ofsted; priding ourselves on our high-quality and inclusive programmes. Our range of apprenticeship solutions for marketing and communications teams is one of the most comprehensive in the country.

Organisations choose us because our coaches and tutors are not just teachers. They are industry professionals with extensive experience; experience which they regularly draw from to support, challenge and benefit apprentices.

Ofsted
Outstanding Provider

Awards

West London Business Awards Best Education & Training Provider 2025 & 2023

AAC Creative and Design Apprenticeship Provider of the Year 2023

The Queen's Award for Enterprise: Promoting Opportunity 2021

Return on investment

Improve business performance from day one

All JGA programmes require the learners to identify opportunities to improve delivery and performance within their business and to propose thoughtful recommendations. Each module is tailored to the specific needs of the apprentice's organisation, ensuring both the learner and employer see immediate benefits.

Crafting the service designer apprenticeship

We designed our programme to bridge the needs of both the public and private sectors, collaborating with a leading service design consultancy and leveraging insights from the trailblazer group of employers. The result? A course that aligns seamlessly with real-world employer priorities.

With early cohorts already thriving, we actively gather feedback and continuously refine the programme to ensure it stays cutting-edge and practical.

This apprenticeship is all about the job—empowering learners to grow into exceptional Service Designers who make a real impact in their organisations.

Service Designer Apprenticeship

The service designer level 6 apprenticeship offers a unique opportunity to develop the skills necessary for designing user-centred services that address real-world challenges. This comprehensive programme not only equips learners with the technical tools needed to transform services, but also focuses on building confidence and practical expertise. Service designers learn to approach projects holistically, combining user research with system design to ensure services meet both user needs and organisational objectives.

The apprenticeship is particularly beneficial for those who have experience in roles that involve problem-solving and improving user experiences, enabling them to formalise and refine their expertise. Through a combination of structured learning and hands-on application, apprentices are able to integrate new knowledge directly into their daily work, making the learning process both relevant and impactful.

A key strength of the apprenticeship is its focus on real-world projects, where apprentices have the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts to actual service design challenges. This can include anything from improving user interfaces to streamlining complex processes, ensuring that services are both effective and accessible.

Throughout their journey, apprentices benefit from mentoring and the opportunity to collaborate with experienced colleagues, enhancing both their technical and soft skills whilst driving tangible improvements within their organisations.

Why is service design needed?

In today's competitive market, service designers help organisations stand out by ensuring services are user-centred, efficient, and adaptable to changing needs. It drives customer satisfaction, which is crucial for retaining happy customers and staying ahead in the industry.

- Improved service quality
- Enhanced customer loyalty
- Reduced risk
- Efficiency and cost reduction

What job role should a learner be in to undertake this apprenticeship?

Apprentices need to be in a role that is responsible for shaping user experiences and service strategies.

Typical job roles include: Experience designer, Human-centred Designer, Service designer, Senior Service Designer, Lead Service Designer, Principal Service Designer, Service Design Specialist, User-Centered Service Designer, Strategic Service Designer, Service Design Manager, Service Design Researcher, Digital Service Designer, Service Innovation Designer, Service Experience Designer, Service Delivery Designer, UX Service Designer and Agile Service Designer.

Service Designer Apprenticeship Level 6

Typical duration of course

18 months (including 3 months for end point assessment).

Course format

Monthly industry masterclasses, monthly 1-to-1 online coaching sessions, online study materials and project work.

Time commitment

Approximately 20% of the apprentice's time - this will not be abstract theory, but project work that specifically supports business performance.

Apprenticeship qualification level

This is a level 6 apprenticeship which is equivalent to an undergraduate degree.

Cost of training

Apprenticeship training is free to levy payers and the Government provides 95% funding for smaller organisations. The value of this apprenticeship training is £18,000.

Learn more about government funding on the JGA website.

Eligibility for a service design apprenticeship

Apprenticeships provide an excellent opportunity to invigorate your workforce with fresh talent or upskill your current employees with relevant industry training.

Prospective apprentices will need GCSE grade A-C/4-9 or equivalent in English and Maths. Additionally, applicants should have a career or academic background that demonstrates their capability to successfully complete an advanced-level apprenticeship.

"At Dorset Council we are pleased to be part of the service design apprenticeship programme. It has allowed us to adopt a growth mindset whereby we are learning new skills to complement those we had already. The programme has drawn upon a lot of service design experience and has a great variety of materials that are being used. The level 6 (degree equivalent) will be the standard that we will be seeking to move towards in our working practice."

James Symonds, Senior Service Designer, Dorset County Council

Service Designer Apprenticeship Level 6

Over 18 months, apprentices will develop knowledge, skills and behaviours in:

- The service design mindset
- Ideation and prioritisation tools and techniques
- Continuous improvement
- Pain point identification
- Research methodologies and ethics
- Evaluation methodologies and measuring impact
- Digital and physical prototyping
- Collaborative design
- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Successful concept delivery
- Project and change management
- Equitable and sustainable service design
- Regulatory and legal considerations

Learning as you go is actually the core fundamental to service design, right? So I think apprenticeships are by far the best, best way to learn the craft."

Denise Mulgrew, Head of Service Development and Design at TSO

Service Designer Apprenticeship Level 6

Core benefits of the programme:

For the learner

- Learn to design and manage user-centred services in complex environments
- Build confidence in tackling ambiguous and evolving service challenges
- Gain skills in mapping service journeys and adapting solutions to changing user needs
- Develop the ability to see the interconnections between service touchpoints and stakeholders

For the employer

- Enhance team capabilities with a trained service designer
- Gain clarity in designing and improving services
- Make better, more informed decisions on service delivery and user experience
- Shift from quick fixes to creating sustainable, long-term service solutions

This programme is ideal for individuals who:

- Are in a service designer role
- Like asking questions and guiding design projects to ensure they meet both big-picture goals and day-to-day needs
- Enjoy researching to understand users by using surveys, interviews or data to learn what people need and expect from a service
- Can organise research findings to identify themes, insights or areas where services can improve
- Can analyse data and use it to build a strong case for changes that will enhance a service
- Are comfortable generating ideas or using creative tools to find solutions
- Enjoy creating prototypes, testing them with real users or refining designs based on feedback to maximise impact
- Are interested in leading projects through the testing phase, setting success goals or helping bring new ideas to life
- Are ready to coach, support or work with others, building a team that can help improve service design

Service Designer Apprenticeship Level 6

18 month degree-level programme

Introduction to service design and simulation

Why service design matters

Key principles of service design

How to adopt a service design mindset

Simulation to understand and practice the service design process

Theoretical approaches and methodologies in

Theory of service design and thinking

Ideation and prioritisation tools / techniques

Digital service design tools e.g. AI

New and emerging trends

Continuous improvement

Discovery methods

Research methodologies

Research ethics

Pain point identification and analysis

Customer journey mapping and service safaris

PROJECT

Mapping user experience and co-creating service design solutions

Apprentices identify an organisational problem or opportunity for service improvement. They research the situation, develop solutions and collaborate with stakeholders to explore both big-picture and detailed approaches.

Service prototyping

Evaluation methodologies

Digital and physical prototyping

Rapid prototyping

Measuring impact

Collaborative design

Working with multi-disciplinary teams

Collaboration tools

Co-creation

Training needs identification

PROJECT

Prototyping and blueprinting a service design solution

Apprentices develop and test prototypes through pilot projects to refine solutions. They create a blueprint for final implementation. The project emphasises evaluation, alignment and inclusivity to ensure solutions fit for purpose.

- Regular interactive seminars
- Live, small group sessions led by experienced service design practitioners
- Comprehensive support for both apprentices and line managers

Service Designer Apprenticeship Level 6

		PROJECT	PROJECT		ASSESSMENT
Successful concept delivery	**Equitable and sustainable service design**	**Facilitating, leading implementation and continuous improvement**	**Service design challenge**	**Demonstrating user-centered service design and preparation for Assessment**	**Gateway readiness and Assessment**
Project management Change management Agile principles Service blueprinting	Equity, justice, diversity, and inclusion Regulatory and legal considerations Sustainability approaches	Apprentices plan service design by engaging stakeholders, colleagues and users. They develop strategies for implementation and improvement, ensuring alignment, shared ownership and attention to both big-picture and detailed perspectives for effective delivery.	Apprentices lead a user-centred project, conducting research, creating personas, developing prototypes and applying sustainable principles for accessibility and to reduce environmental impact. An implementation plan and reflection consolidate skills for real-world service design.		Work based project with presentation and questioning Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence **4 MONTHS**

- Resources provided for mental health and well-being
- Support from neurodiversity specialist

Assessment

Work-based project report with presentation

The apprentice will create a report based on a work-based project completed during their apprenticeship.

The report must include, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- Theoretical approaches and methodology in design work
- Data and research methods
- Working with and supporting others
- Project and change management
- Evaluation

As part of the examination process, the apprentice will deliver a presentation based on the work-based project report. The assessment will take approximately 60 minutes, comprising 20 minutes for the presentation and 40 minutes for the Q&A.

Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio of evidence

The professional discussion lasts for 90 minutes and is a two-way conversation between the independent assessor and apprentice. It will be structured to draw out the best of the apprentice's competences and cover the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) assigned to this assessment method.

To support the conversation, the apprentice will put together a portfolio of evidence during the apprenticeship. It contains content collated through the course of the apprenticeship and represents real on-the-job work and experience. The portfolio underpins the discussion and is not directly assessed.

Learners and apprentices feel safe in highly inclusive learning environments. They have excellent attendance to their sessions and at work...

Apprentices gain substantial knowledge and skills because of the expert way their coaches work with their employers...

Tutors and coaches have substantial subject knowledge and experience. They use this expertly to teach and support learners and apprentices. They make learning interesting, interactive and highly relevant."

Ofsted Report, 2025

Designing Better Services at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency

CASE STUDY

Eve Loughton's journey into service design is the culmination of years of working in roles centred on helping people and solving problems.

Reflecting on her career, Eve says, "I've never really had a career path... I've just sort of landed in roles and thought, oh, I really like this." Her experience at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) as a project coordinator, user researcher and now service designer shows her ongoing interest in user experience.

"I like to help people, make sure they're happy with their journey," she says and it was this motivation that led her to enrol in the Service Designer Level 6 Apprenticeship with The JGA Group. This course provided Eve with the essential skills to build on her previous experiences and formalise her understanding of service design, reinforcing the knowledge she had accumulated over the course of her career.

Pursuing passion projects

In her initial months as a service designer, Eve hesitated to voice her ideas, unsure of her capabilities. "You know the answer, but you're reluctant to give it because you're not 100% sure if you're getting it right," she explains. She sought out the apprenticeship to give her a stronger grounding in her work.

Through the apprenticeship, Eve found her footing. It has enabled her to combine her passion for assisting users with her expanding technical expertise. One of her earliest projects was a discovery around digitising the seafarers' Training Record Books (TRB), which helped establish pain points in the recording and submission of crucial training logs. She emphasises the importance of user-focused improvements, saying, "The tension I could feel from them [the seafarers] about losing their TRBs was real."

A key benefit of apprenticeships is the opportunity to apply learning directly on the job, which Eve highlighted: "To be able to put into the project what I was studying at the time, it just ran alongside so nicely - I couldn't have asked for it to work out any better."

Eve spearheaded several projects, including:

1. Seafarers' Training Record Book (TRB)

Eve led a research project to uncover pain points seafarers experienced with paper-based training logs. Understanding their anxiety over losing such crucial documents, she proposed a digital solution that would enhance security and accessibility. This transformation will streamline record-keeping and provide seafarers with easy access to their training history, ultimately improving their ability to track progress as they advance in their careers. Overall, the project aimed to enhance user experience while ensuring the integrity of essential documentation.

2. Menopause hub

Eve's launch of the menopause hub at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) is a deeply personal and impactful initiative. Drawing from her own experience with early menopause, Eve recognised a significant gap in support for colleagues undergoing similar challenges.

"I was lost," she admits, highlighting the confusion and anxiety many women face during this stage. The hub provides resources, information, and a supportive community where women can share their experiences and access guidance. Eve is also focused on implementing targeted training for line managers to foster understanding and support within the workplace. "We need to ensure that everyone knows how to help," she states, underscoring her commitment to creating a more inclusive environment.

The project aims to raise awareness of menopause and promote discussions around it, breaking down stigmas and ensuring that employees feel supported. Eve's initiative not only addresses a critical need but also empowers women at MCA to navigate their experiences with confidence and support.

3. Medals application process

Eve is currently working on the Merchant Navy's medals application process as part of her End Point Assessment Project. The change involves digitising the Merchant Navy's medals application process, traditionally a cumbersome, paper-based system. "At first, it sounded simple, but it's a lot more complicated," Eve explains, referring to the intricate eligibility criteria and the significant amount of physical documentation required from applicants.

Eve aims to streamline the application process by creating an online platform in which applicants can easily verify their eligibility before submitting their documents. This will simplify the process and reduce the stress of potential errors or lost paperwork. By enhancing the user experience, Eve hopes to ensure that veterans and their families can access the recognition they deserve more efficiently.

The apprenticeship experience

The Service Designer Apprenticeship provided Eve with the structured learning she needed to thrive in her role. The blend of coursework and real-world application helped her integrate new knowledge directly into her daily tasks. "It's been great because I can apply what I'm learning in real time," she explains. Eve especially appreciated how the apprenticeship framework aligned with her projects, allowing her to maximise the apprenticeship's value. "It's not a chore when you involve it in your everyday work," she advises future learners.

Eve attributes much of her growth to her line manager and colleagues, who created an environment where she could learn and thrive. "I feel really lucky that it's all slotted into place," she says. The apprenticeship's hands-on nature, combined with her team's support, helped her develop both technical and soft skills essential for service design.

Funding

How does the government funding work?

The government covers the majority if not all of the cost of training the apprentice. Government funding is available for anyone on an apprenticeship scheme.

It is not just available for new staff, it can also be used to enhance the skills of your existing team.

This not only allows staff members to reach the next stage of their career development in a cost-effective way, but it also builds loyalty to the company and helps to make your team members feel wanted and supported.

To receive the government funding for the scheme

Apprentices must complete a dedicated number of hours on learning activities during working hours. This is typically one day a week. They must have a contract of employment that covers the duration of the apprenticeship, including assessment.

Learn more about government funding here.

Get in touch

Whether you are recruiting or upskilling a current member of staff, the service designer apprenticeship is an effective way to grow and develop members of your team.

For guidance and support on any aspect of apprenticeships (including funding) contact us today:

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jga-group.com

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