

February 2025
Issue #2



SAF Newsletter

The latest news, views and announcements

Letter from the Forum

Congratulations to everyone who took part in National Apprenticeship Week! This week was all about celebrating each apprentice and the incredible achievements you've made along your journey - whether you're just starting out or have completed your apprenticeship and are moving onto exciting new opportunities. Our community is all about sharing and celebrating each other's successes, and it's been fantastic to see all your LinkedIn posts and interviews, showcasing inspiring apprentices across the country. Well done!

We're already looking ahead and are excited to start planning the 2025 Science Apprenticeship Forum Conference. This will be another great opportunity to showcase your achievements, connect with industry leaders, and continue building our supportive apprentice community. Stay tuned for more details soon!

We'd love for more apprentices to get involved with SAF. Our next meeting is on 10th March, and we encourage you to join us! It's a great platform to have your voice heard, contribute ideas, and help shape the future of the forum.

Thank you for your continued enthusiasm and hard work. Let's keep the momentum going!

Best Wishes,

The Science Apprenticeship Forum Team



Calls-to-Action (CTA)

Share Your Story for National Science Week!

Want to inspire the next generation of scientists? The SBSA are looking for volunteers to create short case studies or 'day in the life' videos showcasing the amazing work apprentices do!

Your stories will be shared across their socials and could even feature in major events like the Heads of University Bioscience Conference.

Sign up now to be part of this exciting opportunity! Contact us at: scienceapprenticeshipforum@gmail.com to express your interest!

Inspire the next generation!

I'm a Scientist, Get me out of here is an outreach activity engaging school students with people working in STEM, supported by the Royal Society of Chemistry and a range of other [scientific organisations](#). Students connect with scientists in online, text-based live chats, ask follow-up questions, and vote for their favourite scientist to win £500 to put towards further outreach. By taking part, you can:

- Help school students learn more about the wide range of roles that use chemical sciences.
- Improve your communication skills.
- Gain experience of public engagement in an easy and enjoyable way.
- It all happens online. It's flexible – take part from the office or home, at times that suit you.

Find out more and sign up to take part at: <https://imascientist.org.uk/signup/c/rsc/>



Calls-to-Action (CTA)

Introduction to Python and R!

The S&A Academy are the UK leaders in professional career training courses and government funded apprenticeships in the Technology, Science & Business sectors across the UK.

They are gauging interest from members in a potential R studio workshop focused on data analysis in April.

R is a powerful programming language and open-source software environment specifically designed for statistical analysis, data visualization, and data manipulation. Information on previous courses can be found [here](#).

If you believe this workshop would benefit you or someone you know, please express your interest by completing the form found [here](#).

Institute of Environmental Sciences Updates!

- **Calls to Action:** Day in the Life series - we run a day in the life series which takes form over a lunchtime webinar ([example](#)), it would be great to interview an apprentice! To get involved, email: education@the-ies.org
- **Key Updates in the Science Apprenticeship World:** We recently interviewed some environmental practitioner apprentices for National Apprenticeship Week [here](#).
- **Key Updates in the Scientific Industry:** We have released '[Our Shared Mission for Sustainable Wellbeing](#)' with key priorities for UK Government. We have also launched a series of case studies highlighting case studies for effective environmental engagement throughout the policy process [here](#).
- **Upcoming Events:** We run webinars on a weekly basis and have conferences coming up in the next few months on specific topics - all of our events are advertised [here](#).



Calls-to-Action (CTA)

TikTok Content Creator Wanted

Are you a creative, social-media-savvy individual who loves making engaging videos? The Science Apprenticeship Forum is looking for a TikTok Helper to create fun and informative content about science apprenticeships!

What you'll do:

- Film short videos in the workplace
- Interview apprentices and professionals
- Edit and post engaging TikToks
- Help grow our audience

All you need is a passion for storytelling and social media! Work around your own schedule, network with like-minded individuals, and build evidence for your KSBs!

What's not to love?

Interested? Please contact **Erin** at scienceapprenticeshipforum@gmail.com



Apprentice of the Month: Peace Kanengoni



Congratulations to Peace Kanengoni, our Apprentice of the Month! Peace approaches every task with optimism, determination, and a commitment to excellence in both her work and studies. A valuable member of her placement department, Peace also leads the Black Employee Resource Group, where she has spearheaded impactful projects such as raising awareness about sickle cell disease and advocating for mothers from ethnic minority backgrounds. Her enthusiasm and leadership inspire those around her, making her not just an apprentice, but an essential contributor to her company's culture and values. Well done, Peace!

Apprentice Spotlight: Peace Kanengoni

Q: Can you tell us a little about yourself and your background?

A: I initially pursued nursing after sixth form, with hopes of becoming a midwife. I didn't get the grades I required so went into Adult Nursing. However, I had to take a break due to personal and health reasons. During that time, I reflected on my career interests and realised I missed the sciences as this was a passion of mine during school / A-levels. I explored apprenticeships, applied to several without fully understanding the process, and ultimately secured one—proving that "you only need one yes!" Now, I'm excited about the opportunities that come with working and studying simultaneously in clinical trials.



Apprentice Spotlight: Peace Kanengoni

Q: What does a typical day look like in your role?

A: My current placement is with the clinical trial diversity team, where I conduct research on global clinical trial representation. Syneos Health is one of the few companies with a dedicated diversity team focused on ensuring clinical trials accurately represent the population, and I am the first team member based outside the U.S.

My day starts with admin tasks and reviewing relevant research—right now, I'm studying Canada's research infrastructure and government investment in diverse trials. I also take training sessions and attend meetings to update the team on my findings. Additionally, I'm developing a survey with a patient advocacy group to understand cultural attitudes towards clinical research.

Q: What's the most exciting or rewarding part of your job?

A: Being the chapter lead of the Black Employee Research Group has been incredibly fulfilling; I came into this role after being involved in the African Caribbean Society in School and University. It has helped me develop project management skills and build strong relationships. One of my proudest achievements was working on the Maternal Health Series, which highlighted disparities in maternal health for Black women. Instead of just focusing on statistics, we explored advocacy as a way to improve birth experiences. Through this initiative, I connected with professionals in medicine and sociology and expanded my network.

To view the video series, visit [here](#).



Apprentice Spotlight: Peace Kanengoni

Q: Are there any challenges you've faced, and how have you overcome them?

A: Time management has been my biggest challenge, balancing work, university, and personal projects. I've learned to delegate tasks, set clear timelines, and use time-blocking techniques. My apprenticeship advisor and workplace supervisor helped me create a structured plan, including breaking up study time and tracking progress. Seeking support—both at work and university—has been crucial. Coming from a school and sixth form background, I was used to having a structured routine—being told what to do, where to be, and having everything taken care of. Transitioning to university I didn't take time management as seriously, which made it challenging to adjust. However, working alongside people with strong time management skills has helped me develop better strategies and improve my own approach.

Q: What advice would you give to someone considering an apprenticeship in your field?

A: Do your research and understand what you're getting into. Clinical research and pharma can be complex industries, so use LinkedIn and AI tools to explore different companies and roles. Stay curious—even after securing an apprenticeship, keep learning and building your CV. Graduation is around the corner for me, and I'm already preparing for the next step!

It was a pleasure meeting with Peace to discuss her nomination and hear about her journey into the science apprenticeship sector.

A huge congratulations to Peace for being our very first Apprentice of the Month! In addition to this newsletter feature, she will also receive a certificate to share with her workplace.

To get involved in the next 'Apprentice of the Month', see more information on page 9!



Key Updates

Functional Skills Requirement

- Apprentices who began their apprenticeship training when aged 16-18 will continue to be subject to the mandatory requirement to study towards and achieve English and maths.
- Apprentices who began their apprenticeship training when aged 19+ will no longer be subject to the mandatory requirement to study towards and achieve English and maths.
- However, for apprentices aged 19+, the apprentice or their employer can still choose for the apprentice to study towards an English and Maths qualification. Funding for those apprentices that wish to study towards the English and maths qualification will continue.
 - Note: If you begin the apprenticeship aged 16-18 and take a break in learning e.g., maternity leave, when you return, you will still be required to complete English and maths, regardless of age upon return.
- Initial assessments will be conducted to determine apprentices' starting points to monitor their progress

Apprenticeship Duration

- The minimum duration of the **training period** within an apprenticeship will be reduced from 12 months and 8 days to 8 months of on program learning. Gateway and EPA will still be required which may increase this time.

Laboratory Scientist Standard Changes

- The title has been changed to Scientist, encompassing Biology, Chemistry, and Physics
- The revised standard includes a core curriculum with optional modules for better alignment with professional membership.
- Unlike the previous Level 6 Laboratory Scientist apprenticeship, which lacked mandatory qualifications, the new degree must fully align with the apprenticeship, ensuring that all learning is occupation specific.



Upcoming Events / Dates:

Ramadan

28 Feb - 30 Mar 2025

Eid

31 Mar 2025

International Women's Day

08 Mar 2025

Neurodiversity Week

17 Mar - 23 Mar 2025



Any Other Business (AOB):

Apprentice of the Month Nominations!

To celebrate the hard work, achievements, and dedication of our amazing apprentices, we are featuring a standout apprentice who has gone above and beyond in their role, whether through exceptional performance, great teamwork, or making a positive impact in the workplace.

Apprentices and line managers / mentors / work colleagues are encouraged to nominate someone deserving by sharing a brief story about their accomplishments.

Let's shine a spotlight on the incredible talent within our apprenticeship community and inspire others to reach new heights!

Use the link [here](#) to nominate now!

Feedback!

We hope you enjoy the new format of our newsletter!

We're always looking to improve, so we'd love to hear your feedback. Are there any sections you'd like to see added, or changes you think would make it more useful or engaging?

Your suggestions are invaluable in helping us create a newsletter that truly works for you.

Drop us a quick message with your thoughts - we'd really appreciate it!

