

March 2025  
Issue #3



# SCIENCE APPRENTICESHIP FORUM

# SAF Newsletter

The latest news, views and announcements

## Letter from the Forum

Hello Forum members, both new and old!

This month has been a busy one behind the scenes, with many of you getting involved in outreach, projects, and improvements to our forum's infrastructure. A special shoutout to Olivia, who has been working tirelessly to update our GDPR policies, membership sign-up forms, and promotional materials.

This reminds me of the work we do as apprentices—both visible and behind the scenes. For instance, many of you will see and appreciate our new promotional brochure, but fewer might notice the effort that went into updating the GDPR policy, which required extensive writing and editing. Similarly, while outreach activities showcase the impact of our work, much of what we do—optimizing methods, revising for exams, or researching for coursework—often goes unnoticed. Yet, these behind-the-scenes efforts are crucial to our success.

With that in mind, we'd love to celebrate all your achievements, both seen and unseen. Whether apprenticeship-related or personal, share them with us so we can highlight them in our newsletter and on social media—because even the silent work we do makes a big impact!

As the weather warms up and many of us feel that extra boost of motivation, I also want to acknowledge the hard work of the organising committee in planning the 2025 conference, developing best practice documents, and creating new EDI promotional materials.

Personally, this month has been especially hectic, and I'm grateful to colleagues who stepped in to support me when needed. At the start of my apprenticeship, I found it difficult to ask for help, but as I near the end, I've come to truly appreciate the value of community and mutual support. Balancing our many responsibilities can be challenging, so if you ever find yourself needing extra support, don't hesitate to reach out—to colleagues, to this forum, or to apprentice networks in your learning provider. Maintaining a healthy work/learn/life balance is key to thriving as an apprentice!

Looking forward to celebrating all your achievements—keep up the great work!

Best,  
Tyler



## 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](#).



The graphic displays the S&A Academy logo and contact details. The logo features a red shield with a white arrow pointing right, followed by the text 'S&A ACADEMY'. Below the logo are several accreditation logos: matrix, a green circular logo, Ofsted, and a disability confident employer logo. To the right of the logo, contact information is listed: a phone icon with the number +44 20 8152 6605, an email icon with the address jemma.perks@sandaacademy.ac.uk, a globe icon with the website https://sandaacademy.ac.uk, and a location pin icon with the address 6th Floor, 2 London Wall, London, EC2Y 5AU. Below this information is a red horizontal bar. Underneath the bar, the text 'Apprenticeships | Commercial Training' is centered. Below this text are four circular icons in a row, each with a red border and a white background. The first icon contains a red shield with a white arrow, labeled 'S&A Academy'. The second icon contains a red shield with a white atom symbol, labeled 'Science Academy'. The third icon contains a red shield with a white briefcase, labeled 'Business Academy'. The fourth icon contains a red shield with a white shield, labeled 'Technology & Data Academy'.

**S&A ACADEMY**

matrix | Ofsted | disability confident EMPLOYER

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**Apprenticeships | Commercial Training**

S&A Academy | Science Academy | Business Academy | Technology & Data Academy



## Calls-to-Action (CTA)

### **Apprentice professional registration workshop**

**23 April | 1.30-2.30pm**

On 23 April the RSC will be running a workshop for apprentices on how to become professionally registered with the RSC. Apprentices in England are eligible to apply via a streamlined application route, so we'd love to spread the word about how they can achieve this recognition. Membership of the RSC is free of charge for apprentices.

Attendees will learn about:

- What professional registration is, and gain an understanding of the relevance and benefits for apprentices
- The benefits of achieving Registered Scientist Technician (RSciTech) and Registered Scientist (RSci) status
- The application process and an overview of what that entails
- Support and resources available for apprentices from the Royal Society of Chemistry

Please invite any apprentices you work with, and you would also be welcome to come along to learn more about professional registration.

Registration for this free webinar is now open here:

<https://www.rsc.org/events/detail/81392/professional-registration-for-apprentices>



# Interested in Apprenticeships?

Find out more with the University of Kent

Apprenticeships are a great way to upskill or bring new talent into a business.

## Online Information sessions -

Laboratory Scientist (L6) -

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> April at 11am

<https://forms.office.com/e/uzDj0XWAMS>

Research Scientist (L7) -

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April at 2pm

<https://forms.office.com/e/uzDj0XWAMS>

Biomedical Scientist (L6) -

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> April at 12pm

<https://forms.office.com/e/3GGRjRFQDH>

CMDA (L6) and SLA (L7) -

Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2025 @ 12:00

<https://forms.office.com/e/JCC1UGmLa8>

Email [recruitapprenticeships@kent.ac.uk](mailto:recruitapprenticeships@kent.ac.uk)  
for a 121 call to discuss further



## 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](mailto:scienceapprenticeshipforum@gmail.com)*



## Apprentice of the Month: Kimberley Webster



Congratulations to Kimberley Webster, our Apprentice of the Month! Kimberley has recently joined the Clinical Trials Specialist degree apprenticeship programme at Northeastern University London (NU London). From the very first day, she has made a remarkable impression on her colleagues. Currently, she works as a Clinical Research Associate at the East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust, where she adeptly manages several clinical trial projects. Her enthusiasm, expertise, and dedication to her role are evident in every conversation.

*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 10!

## Apprentice Spotlight: Kimberley Webster

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

A: I worked at Ipswich Hospital for 11 years, starting as an apprentice in business before moving into clinical roles. I spent a year in gynecology theatres, eight years in the eye clinic, and two years in clinical research. Currently, I work on cancer and dermatology studies, focusing on recruiting patients for a variety of cancer trials.

**Q: What inspired you to pursue an apprenticeship in this field?**

A: I have a deep passion for research and love meeting patients from all walks of life. On a personal level, my nan's battle with breast cancer was a huge inspiration. Seeing her journey motivated me to apply for this role, and I'm grateful to work with such a fantastic team.



## Apprentice Spotlight: Kimberley Webster

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

A: Every day is different—some busier than others. I spend time phoning patients, checking in, answering their questions, and addressing concerns. I also introduce new studies to eligible patients and organize informed consent appointments. Depending on the study, I coordinate blood or tissue sample collection and follow patients throughout their research journey.

**Q: Have you faced any challenges, and how have you overcome them?**

A: Yes, I have Functional Neurological Disorder (FND), which affects my mobility and speech. I'll soon be part of a research study exploring whether music can help with pain management—so I'm looking forward to experiencing research from a different perspective. Balancing a disability, full-time work, and being a student is challenging, but I've received a lot of support.

**Q: How has your apprenticeship helped you grow personally and professionally?**

A: I've built strong friendships through WhatsApp groups, and our 'Scientific Six' cohort has really stuck together. We all work in research but have different roles within the industry, which makes for great learning and collaboration. Being part of the first cohort on this course has been an amazing experience.

**Q: What are your career goals for the future?**

A: My goal is to reach practitioner status. I'm also interested in nursing, so it's been great to gain insight into that field. Right now, I'm proud to be pursuing my degree—something I always wanted to do but never felt smart enough for. So far, I'm doing well, and I'm excited to take on my next module.

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

A: Don't be too hard on yourself. It's a challenging role, but remember: 'anyone who is an expert was once a beginner.' Take your time, be kind to yourself, and know when to stop and take a break. Self-care is important!



## Key Updates

### **Download "Your Apprenticeship" App**

The "Your Apprenticeship" app is designed to help current apprentices effectively manage their apprenticeship journey. It offers features such as viewing apprenticeship details (including planned end dates), organising workloads with task additions and reminders, and preparing for end-point assessments (EPA) by linking tasks to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors acquired. Additionally, the app provides access to apprenticeship guidance and support.

Available for both iOS and Android devices, apprentices can download it from the App Store or Google Play Store. To sign in, users need to confirm their details in the My Apprenticeship service, create a GOV.UK One Login account, and use the email address registered with their training provider.

For more information, visit the website here:

<https://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/apprentices/download-your-apprenticeship-app>

### **Apprenticeship Achievements on the Rise!**

The latest data on apprenticeship achievements shows fantastic progress, with the achievement rate increasing by 6 percentage points to 60.5% in 2023/24—the biggest rise since the introduction of apprenticeship standards. More apprentices are completing their training, and 94% of those who finish go on to employment or further training. The government is also making improvements, including a simplified payment system, more flexible English and maths requirements, and streamlined assessments. With these changes, apprenticeships are becoming more accessible and impactful, helping both learners and employers thrive.

Read the letter from Baroness Smith here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-standards-achievement-rates-update>



## Key Updates

### **Apprenticeship Growth in 2024/25**

The latest statistics for the 2024/25 academic year reveal positive trends in apprenticeships across England. Apprenticeship starts have increased by 1.0% to 202,520 compared to the previous year, with under-19s accounting for 27.9% of these starts. Higher apprenticeships are on the rise, showing an 8.7% increase to 76,970, and Level 6 and 7 starts have grown by 12.5% to 36,570, representing 18.1% of all starts this year. Additionally, participation has risen by 1.9% to 633,600 learners, and achievements have seen a 7.4% boost to 78,970. These figures highlight the expanding opportunities and successes within the apprenticeship landscape.

Review the full statistics here:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships/2024-25>

### **Upcoming Changes to Apprenticeship Funding Rules for 2025/26**

The 2025/26 apprenticeship funding rules will be published in May 2025, with no draft version released in March. This allows for the latest policy developments to be incorporated. Key updates include adjustments to active learning policies for flexible delivery, clearer guidelines for prisoner apprenticeships, changes to end-point assessments, refined eligibility criteria, and further guidance on English and maths requirements. These rules apply to providers, employers, and apprentices starting from 1 August 2025. Stay informed to understand how these changes may impact your apprenticeship journey!



## Upcoming Events / Dates:

**Autism Awareness Month**

April 2025

**Passover / Easter**

20 April 2025

## Any Other Business (AOB):

### **Apprentice of the Month Nominations!**

We're celebrating our amazing apprentices by featuring those who go above and beyond—whether through outstanding performance, teamwork, or workplace impact. Nominate a deserving apprentice by sharing their achievements and help us highlight the incredible talent in our community!

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

