

# Why apprenticeships matter at DVLA

Richard Saunders is DVLA's Talent and Learning Consultant. To celebrate National Apprenticeship week, Richard tells us more about the how, what and why of apprenticeships at DVLA.



## **A little background**

What is a talent and learning consultant? I advise DVLA teams of opportunities that will develop the skills and nurture the talent that we need to reach our objectives. Part of this is helping to shape apprenticeship opportunities at DVLA.

I've been involved in apprenticeship programmes for many years and I was excited to bring this experience to my role when I started at DVLA just 3 months ago. There's quite a lot of myth busting to do when talking about apprenticeships. Many still think that these are mainly for school leavers who want to earn while they learn – a trade for example. In reality, apprenticeships are great opportunities to develop new skills whilst already in a role. DVLA offers the perfect platform for this.

## **Different professions and roles**

The career opportunities in DVLA are endless. There are so many different occupations, professions and skill sets. These include roles in customer service, IT, finance, communications, commercial, drivers medical, policy and more.

Why do we have apprenticeships at DVLA? They support our staff with their personal development and meet the needs of our work, both now and in the future.

With so many roles and skills, it's really important that my team and I understand the specific skills needed for each one and decide how to plug any gaps. An apprenticeship helps to do just that. It requires commitment from the business area and the apprentice.

Contrary to popular belief, our apprentices include experienced professionals who are committed to their development. As a new starter, it's been really interesting discussing apprenticeship opportunities with a range of teams and departments, and finding out what might be the best fit for them. At the same time trying to find my way around an organisation housing almost 6,000 staff!

### **What the future looks like**

I'm currently working with some of our senior managers to improve apprenticeships even further by aligning them closer to all our professions. The idea is to make the overall experience more relevant and beneficial to all parties – both the apprentices themselves, and DVLA. We'll roll it out, have a look how it works and refine it as we go along to make it the very best it can be.

It's certainly an exciting time. We're looking forward to launching these new opportunities and continuing our commitment to develop our staff. DVLA is already enjoying great success with apprenticeships so my challenge is to make sure we maintain and exceed this!

### **To find out more**

You can read more about what it's like to work at [DVLA](#). You can also take a look at our latest vacancies on [Civil Service jobs](#).

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**[News story: Expert Advisory Group set-up to review paclitaxel drug-coated balloon catheters and drug-eluting](#)**

## stents

Following recently published findings by Katsanos et al raising concerns over the use of paclitaxel eluting balloons and stents in the treatment of patients with peripheral arterial disease (PAD) and in particular the femoropopliteal artery in the leg.

We have formed an independent Expert Advisory Group (EAG). The EAG has begun the process of reviewing the available, but highly complex information on these medical devices. The group is made up of leading UK clinicians from specialist societies, including interventional radiology, vascular surgery and scientists with toxicology, medicines and statistical expertise.

The [publication](#) suggests a possible increased mortality rate from 2 up to 5 years in PAD patients treated with paclitaxel-coated balloons and paclitaxel-eluting stents. This is compared to patients treated with non-coated balloons or bare metal stents. A causal relationship for this observation has not been identified and may reflect limitations in the way the data were analysed, but this has yet to be determined.

Patient safety is our highest priority and we take information questioning the safety of any medical device very seriously. Since the publication we have been collecting and analysing information from a range of sources to try to understand the significance of the findings for future patient treatment options.

The devices in question have valid CE certificates and remain on the UK market. The outcome of our investigation will determine if new advice is required or if we need to undertake any other regulatory action.

The EAG has been asked to consider whether the publication's findings and device-specific clinical study results are statistically robust and whether there is any evidence of a causal relationship between the drug, paclitaxel, and increased mortality.

There are a number of other publications which put forward different results and opinions taking into account other factors such as the overall health of the patient.

To assist them they have been provided with the full spectrum of source material available to MHRA, together with all relevant published information we have gathered. The aim is to provide a greater understanding of the potential benefits and risks to patients and will help to guide any possible future MHRA action. The EAG has agreed to undertake and complete their review, including reporting their findings to MHRA, within the next few months.

Additionally, we are collaborating with the major clinical and regulatory stakeholders, including the British Society of Interventional Radiology (BSIR), the UK Basil-3 trial and NICE, as well as other European and global

regulatory authorities.

If you are worried that you might be affected by this matter, we advise you to contact your GP or specialist.

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## **News story: Women in Innovation: 9 female-led businesses backed**

The winners of the 2019 Women in Innovation awards have been announced today, International Women's Day. The awards are part of Innovate UK's Women in Innovation campaign, which aims to encourage female-led innovation and help women achieve their business ambitions.

The 9 entrepreneurs will receive £50,000 business funding and a package of bespoke support to help grow their business and boost the UK economy.

To further inspire future innovators and celebrate the winners' achievements, Innovate UK has partnered with schools across the UK to install commemorative purple plaques.

Cintia Kimura, founder and COO, KG Protech.

### **Tackling society's biggest challenges**

The winners are tackling some of society's biggest challenges set out in the government's modern Industrial Strategy, including artificial intelligence (AI) and the future of mobility.

Business Secretary Greg Clark, who announced the winners, said:

The winning women are developing pioneering innovations to tackle the grand challenges we face as a society, from a new paper coating to cut down single use plastic, to helping us train mechanics using simulators.

This is our modern Industrial Strategy in action, backing businesses of all sizes across the UK to grow and boost the economy with the skills and inventions we need for the next generation.

Dr Fanya Ismail, CEO & founder of SGMA, is developing a plastic-free coffee cup coating.

## The 2019 winners

From reducing cold and damp in Britain's homes to revolutionising the factory floor, the winners are working on a range of innovative solutions:

- Agnes Czako, [AirEx](#) – smart-tech airbrick that improves a home's energy efficiency by using AI to monitor and respond to the environment, weather and occupant behaviour
- Alex Haslehurst, [Vitruv Health](#) – a tool to help clinicians assess patient health, particularly motor function, more efficiently
- Cintia Kimura, [KG Protech](#) – a remote practical training system for car mechanics
- Daniela Paredes Fuentes, [Gravity Sketch](#) – virtual reality software that allows designers to sketch in a 3D space
- Dr Debbie Wake, [MyWay Digital Health](#) – digital platform that provides diabetes patients with personalised advice using patient information and home-recorded data
- Dolores Sanders, [Total Control Pro Ltd](#) – using big data-sharing to streamline small businesses' manufacturing processes
- Dr Fanya Ismail, Sol-Gel Coatings and Advanced Materials – using a 'sol-gel' chemical process to create plastic-free coffee cup coating
- Jessica Bruce, [Run3D](#) – using 3D gait analysis originally conceived for runners to help older adults and those recovering from surgery to walk pain-free
- Sheana Yu, [Aergo](#) – wheelchair seating system which uses air cells to ensure the user remains comfortable and supported

Alex Haslehurst, co-founder and CTO, Vitruv Health.

Sheana Yu, one of the 9 winners and founder and CEO of Aergo, said:

It's such a huge encouragement to be recognised for the work you've done. If my story can motivate more women like me, that will be a really exciting part of the journey.

This award will be a great platform to grow by learning from other female founders, and be a part of a network of inspirational women

Sheana Yu, founder & CEO of Aergo.

## Breaking down barriers

Innovate UK launched Women in Innovation in 2016, after research revealed that just one in 7 applications for Innovate UK support came from women. Boosting the number of female entrepreneurs [could deliver £180 billion to the economy](#).

By running a women-only competition, [partnering with Getty Images](#) to create stereotype-shattering portraits of female entrepreneurs, and running a mission to Boston for women in tech, Innovate UK increased the proportion of

females registering for Innovate UK support by 70%.

To continue to energise the next generation of innovators, this year Innovate UK has partnered with schools across the UK, installing commemorative plaques from Forfar, Scotland to London recognising the winners' innovative businesses. Currently, [just 14% of blue plaques in the UK celebrate the achievements of women](#).

Dolores Sanders, Strategic Director of Total Control Pro Ltd.

Dr Ian Campbell, Interim Chief Executive of Innovate UK, said:

Innovate UK's Women in Innovation Awards address a key barrier for diversity in innovation – a lack of female role models. By recognising their achievement with purple plaques, we are making sure that our 9 newly-crowned winners inspire the next generation of female innovators.

Whether it's inspiring young students showing a passion for STEM, someone with the spark of an idea or an innovative business ready to be taken to the next level, the Women in Innovation 2019 campaign aims to drive long term and far-reaching change.

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## [Press release: You're hired!](#)

The Work and Pensions Secretary will today (Friday March 8) help to celebrate the opening of a new 'Youth Confident' workshop that will see young people matched with talent-hungry employers.

The Youth Confident Roadshow is helping people aged 16 to 24 overcome barriers that could be preventing them from finding work, such as a lack of confidence, health issues or limited work experience.

Work and Pensions Secretary Amber Rudd said:

Behind every employment number is a person and a family whose self-esteem, mental wellbeing, economic circumstances and life changes are all vastly improved by being in the workplace, and we're helping to create a better life for young people across the country.

I'm determined to ensure that there are no barriers to the young people of Hastings accessing the job market.

That's why it's so good to have such dedicated staff from Hastings

Jobcentre at the fantastic event today

Helen James from Hastings Jobcentre said:

We're keen to take an innovative approach to helping young people into work. This event is the first of its kind, delivered outside of the Jobcentre, focusing solely on the region's young people.

The event is aimed at engaging young people in a more relaxed environment – live acoustic music will be performed by young local artists and there will be a draw featuring prizes donated by local businesses.

Follow DWP on:

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## [News story: Third wave of the UK's science and innovation audits published](#)

Wave 3 of the science and innovation audits (SIAs) have been published today, which have identified a number of strengths in different industries across the country. From the marine economy in the Highlands of Scotland to Steel Innovation in South Wales, the SIAs have boosted the country's understanding of the UK's scientific and research strengths and the commercial opportunities that exist in different regions.

Opportunities to enhance both industry and research were identified through the SIA process. These include integrating digital technologies into manufacturing processes in the North East to enhance long-term UK competitiveness; and a proposal to develop a 'living lab' with Heathrow communities, businesses and experts in 'connected and automated vehicles' (CAV) to explore solutions for sustainable airports.

Universities and Science Minister Chris Skidmore said:

We are world-leaders across a range of science and research disciplines, and the SIAs published today show the whole nation contributes to that reputation.

From boosting our cyber security strengths in Worcestershire to improving the sustainability of airports led by Brunel University London, we have much to be proud about and we are committed to building on these strengths and others in our modern Industrial

Strategy.

The 12 consortia that have published their SIAs are:

- Cyber Resilience Alliance (led by Worcestershire LEP with support from The Marches, Gloucestershire and Swindon and Wiltshire LEPs)
- Maximising the Marine Economy of the Highlands & Islands (Led by Highlands and Islands Enterprise)
- North West Nuclear Arc Consortium (led by Bangor University with support from Welsh Government and North West England LEPs)
- North West Coastal Arc Eco-Innovation Partnership (led by Lancaster University with support from North West England LEPs and the Welsh Government)
- Northern Powerhouse Chemicals & Processing Science (led by Tees Valley Combined Authority with support from North East, Humberside, and Liverpool City Region LEPs)
- Northern Powerhouse in Health Research (led by Northern Health Science Alliance and includes LEPs, universities and teaching hospitals from across the Northern Powerhouse)
- The South Wales Crucible (led by Swansea University)
- Upstream Space (led by UKSA/Scottish Enterprise comprising Scotland; Leicester; Belfast and a corridor between Cambridge and Portsmouth)
- Precision Medicine Innovation in Scotland (led by the University of Glasgow)
- Applied Digital Technologies (led by North East LEP)
- Sustainable Airports (led by Brunel University London, looking at Heathrow)
- The Knowledge Quarter, London

The science and innovation audits are an important element of the Place foundation in the modern [Industrial Strategy](#) that seeks to ensure the UK's cities, towns and rural areas reach their full potential. The audits, undertaken by universities, businesses, local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and others, reveal distinct local and regional strengths and opportunities for collaboration across the UK.