

# News story: Graduation ceremony takes place for UK's first Degree apprentices

Eleven Capgemini Degree apprentices were awarded Bachelors of Science (BSc's) in Digital and Technology Solutions, following 3 years of working at Capgemini combined with study.

64% of apprentices from Capgemini achieved a 1st class honours degree and all others received 2nd class honours degrees.

Skills and Apprenticeships Minister Anne Milton said:

I am delighted to offer my own personal congratulations to the UK's first ever degree apprentice graduates. The hard work and commitment involved is truly admirable and highlights the opportunities apprenticeships can bring.

I hope this will encourage more people to consider a degree apprenticeship. It is a great way to earn while you learn at some of the UK's top Universities and to go on to secure a rewarding job. Well done to all the students and also congratulations to both Aston University and Capgemini for breaking new ground.

Also being recognised today at the Aston University School of Engineering & Applied Science graduation ceremony was Sue Husband, Director of the National Apprenticeship Service who collected an honorary Doctorate in Science (Dsc), conferred by Vice Chancellor, Professor Alec Cameron.

Sue Husband said:

I am absolutely delighted to attend the graduation of the first cohort of Degree apprentices in the country, for what is a momentous occasion.

Degree apprenticeships are a significant step forward, providing the opportunity to develop and nurture talented individuals, and are a key part of our apprenticeships reform programme – with the ambition of creating 3 million quality apprenticeships by 2020 – and includes apprenticeships at higher levels, in more occupations and sectors.

The 11 Degree apprentices receiving their degrees today highlight the significance of higher level apprenticeships and the benefits to apprentices and their employer. Capgemini must be extremely proud of their successes.

As someone who has worked in the education and skills sector for many years, it is also a real privilege for me to receive an honorary DSc. I am a huge advocate of the transformative power that gaining skills and qualifications has on a person's life and I am thrilled to have been recognised by Aston University.

Degree apprenticeships give people the opportunity to attain a Degree from some of the country's best universities and higher education institutions whilst training in a top flight career. They are already available in sectors such as Automotive, Banking, Digital Industries, Chartered Surveying, Aerospace and the Nuclear industry. Many universities and colleges are offering higher and degree apprenticeships across the country.

Higher and Degree apprenticeships are available at levels 4 to 7 and combine work with study and may include a work-based, academic or combined qualification or a professional qualification relevant to the industry. Level 6 is equivalent to a Bachelor's Degree and level 7 is equivalent to a Master's Degree. Typically, higher apprentices study part-time at college, university or with a training provider.

Currently, over 240,000 workplaces employ an apprentice including Capgemini, Ford, ITV, Airbus, Rolls-Royce, Barclays and the BBC, alongside many small and medium sized enterprises. There are between 12,000 and 20,000 apprenticeship vacancies across all levels on the [find an apprenticeship](#) site at any one time.

Find out more about [apprenticeships](#) on GOV.UK.

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## **[Press release: Bicentenaire de la disparition de Jane Austen](#)**

Véritable icône de la littérature britannique, l'écrivain Jane Austen est disparue le 18 juillet 1817. Avec ses livres et ses personnages, aussi adulés au Royaume-Uni qu'en France, le bicentenaire de sa disparition est symbolique des liens historiques et culturels qui unissent nos deux pays. Pour célébrer son œuvre, l'Ambassade de Grande-Bretagne en France et le British Council ont préparé une saison culturelle dédiée à Jane Austen avec un bal, un cinéma en plein air, des conférences et une compétition pour visiter sa ville fétiche.

### **Le Bal Jane Austen: Une discothèque du début du 19ème siècle**

La saison culturelle a démarré le 30 juin à la Résidence de l'Ambassadeur avec l'association Carnet de Bals qui a effectué une démonstration d'un bal

de l'époque de Jane Austen devant des jeunes Français étudiant l'anglais et des associations de fans de Jane Austen. Accompagnés par des musiciens et habillés en robe et costume d'époque, les membres de l'association ont fait valser la Salle de Bal de la Résidence, elle-même construite au début du 19ème siècle. Suite à la démonstration, les étudiants et autres invités ont rejoint la piste de danse pour un cours de danse à la Austen avant de danser aux rythmes plus contemporains d'un DJ électro. Résultat : une discothèque qui a chevauché les 19ème et 21ème siècles en plein cœur de Paris.

## **Le Cinéma Jane Austen: Raison et Sentiments et Orgueil et Préjugés au clair de lune**

Les soirs du 10, 11 et 12 juillet, trois adaptations cinématographiques des œuvres de Jane Austen ont été projetées sur grand écran dans les jardins de la Résidence de l'Ambassadeur. Malgré la menace de pluie, plus de 500 fans de Jane Austen, dont des gagnants d'une compétition organisée par Livre de Poche, se sont installés sur des plaids et dans des transats prêtés par La Villette, pour savourer le drame, la romance et l'humour de Raison et Sentiments, Orgueil et Préjugés, ainsi que Bridget Jones inspiré par ce dernier. Les invités ont pu apprécier une courte intervention dédiée à chaque film par Marie-Laure Massei-Chamayou, maître de conférences en anglais à l'université Panthéon-Sorbonne et expert en Jane Austen. Avec en bonus l'option de déguster un Pimms – cocktail estival so British – ainsi qu'un fish'n'chips du food-truck installé au fond du jardin.

## **Les Conférences Jane Austen**

Deux conférences (en anglais) organisées par le British Council. La première à la [Sorbonne](#), le 18 juillet, et la deuxième au [British Council](#) le 21 juillet avec Nicolas Watson, spécialiste de la littérature romantique du 19ème siècle, qui explore l'influence de 'L'Austenmania' sur la culture britannique et européenne.

## **Compétition pour visiter la ville de Jane Austen**

Compétition en ligne organisée par [Visit Britain](#) pour un weekend à deux au [festival de Jane Austen](#) en septembre à Bath, ville régence classée au patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO et où l'écrivain a vécu. La compétition ferme le dimanche 23 juillet.

Si vous ou des membres de votre rédaction souhaitez couvrir ces événements ou avoir plus d'informations, merci de contacter [Tess Mendibe](#), Tel : 01 44 51 33 39.

Le programme bicentenaire de Jane Austen s'inscrit dans notre programme 'Les Voisins', lancé en mars 2017 par Leurs Altesses Royales le Duc et la Duchesse de Cambridge lors de leur première visite officielle à Paris. 'Les Voisins' célèbre les liens culturels, historiques et humains entre la France et le Royaume-Uni, vécus au quotidien par les centaines de milliers de Français et Britanniques qui habitent, travaillent ou voyagent de part et d'autre de la

Manche.

Pour en savoir plus sur notre campagne [‘Les Voisins’](#).

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## [Press release: Welsh Secretary tells business leaders ‘capitalise on Region deal’](#)

The Secretary of State for Wales will today (Friday 14th July) tell Swansea business leaders that now is the time to capitalise on the Swansea Bay Region City Deal.

Delivering his first key note address in West Wales since the General Election at Swansea Business Club, Alun Cairns will commend businesses for their role in creating record low unemployment rates in the region and challenge them to use the City Region deal as the springboard to generating increased economic growth.

### **Mr Cairns will say:**

The UK Government has a responsibility to create the right conditions for a thriving and prosperous economy but it is the private sector who are the risk takers, driving that success. The Swansea Bay Region City Deal provides a fantastic opportunity for business leaders to capitalise and reap the long term benefits that it will bring. The deal is a great example of the UK Government coming together with local authorities, Welsh Government and the private sector to deliver a local plan that will have wide felt impact.

The Welsh economy grew 2.8% in 2015, second only to the North West for the UK’s countries and regions, and since 2010 only growth in London has exceeded Wales.

Mr Cairns will go on to reassure business leaders in the room that the UK Government will help ensure certainty and stability as we leave the EU, through the EU Withdrawal Bill.

## Mr Cairns will say:

We are under no illusion about the scale of the challenge we currently face as we prepare for negotiations to leave the EU. I am here to affirm that the Repeal Bill, introduced yesterday is about delivering certainty and continuity for businesses across Wales and giving assurance that the UK will not face unexpected changes on the day we leave the EU.

This is a Government that has been listening to businesses and hears their need for certainty. I want to reassure them it is their interest that we have at heart and that we will continue to sell Wales across the globe.

## Notes to editors:

- The Government yesterday (Thursday 13 July) introduced the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill, known as the Repeal Bill, to Parliament. The Bill prepares the statute book for the exit from the European Union and delivers on the promise to end the authority of EU law in the UK. It provides maximum legal and administrative certainty for business, the public sector and everyone across the UK.

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## [Press release: Threatened native species finds safety in Lincolnshire](#)

Efforts to protect the UK's only native species of crayfish have seen almost 600 specimens moved to protected new homes in Lincolnshire.

The endangered white-clawed crayfish have been transferred to two secluded locations, chosen for their potential as safe havens.

Known as 'Ark Sites', the carefully selected refuges have all the characteristics needed for the crayfish to establish a thriving colony, including good-quality water, suitable habitat, and an isolated location.

Most importantly, they will be safe from the threat of their non-native counterparts, the North American Signal crayfish. This invasive species out-competes our own for food and habitat, and carries a fungal disease that devastates native populations.

Dr Chris Extence, Environment Agency team leader for Analysis and Reporting, said:

Bringing our native crayfish into the safety of an Ark Site is vital to protecting them from these threats, safeguarding their long-term survival and stability.

White-clawed crayfish are the only native species of crayfish in Britain. Although protected by law, numbers have declined dramatically in recent years and established populations are becoming increasingly vulnerable.

In Lincolnshire, the Upper Witham has long been a stronghold for native crayfish, but they are increasingly under threat from Signals. In total, 572 specimens were moved into two undisclosed locations in Lincolnshire two weeks ago: a limestone stream in the county's south west and a chalk stream in the Wolds.

Dr Extence added:

In the case of the latter, this is the first time in many years that this Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty has been home to native crayfish.

A number of organisations, including the Environment Agency, Natural England, Lincolnshire Rivers Trust, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Lincolnshire Chalk Stream Partnership, were involved in the two-day operation. Environment Agency specialists will now monitor the colonies in their new homes.

Dr Extence continued:

The use of Ark Sites is nationally-recognised best practice, and just one of the ways we can safeguard the future of the native crayfish.

A previous attempt at creating an Ark Site in Lincolnshire has been successful, with evidence of breeding – a strong sign of an established colony.

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## **[Press release: North West awarded £1 million funding for natural flood scheme](#)**

People, homes and businesses across the North West will be better protected from flooding thanks to a £1 million natural flood scheme, the Floods

Minister Thérèse Coffey announced Friday (14 July).

More than 1,000 properties across Delph, Uppermill, Stalybridge, Mossley, Hayfield, Glossop and Whaley Bridge will benefit from the pioneering 'Slow the Flow' project. The project will 'slow the flow' of water reaching rivers and watercourses upstream of communities at flood risk.

Measures to slow the flow of water – from peat restoration to woodland planting and leaky barriers – will trap sediment and help to reduce the need for channel maintenance. The project will be carried out by a wide range of partners, including the Irwell River Trust, United Utilities and Cheshire Wildlife Trust.

The scheme is one of 58 across England which will benefit from £15 million of government funding for natural flood defences.

Floods Minister Thérèse Coffey said:

I am thrilled to announce £1 million to help communities across the North West make the most of the innovative natural flood management measures now on offer. By restoring peat and planting woodlands, multiple 'slow-the flow' schemes across the region will help protect families, homes and businesses from flooding, benefiting the wider environment and the people who live in those communities.

Emma Howard Boyd, Chair of the Environment Agency, said:

Natural flood management is an important part of our approach, alongside traditional flood defences and helping homeowners to improve their own property resilience. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to flooding and this scheme is a fantastic example of how we can use a variety of measures that work together to reduce flood risk.

Two other projects aiming to 'slow the flow' of water in catchments in the Pennines have each been awarded £50,000 funding from the natural flood management pot. One will reduce flood risk to nearly 300 homes in the Upper Dove catchment, while the other will benefit approximately 50 homes in the Upper Dean catchment.

David Brown of the Environment Agency said:

In the Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire area, we are pleased with this funding allocation and are keen to work in partnership going forward on projects that will benefit nature at the same time as reducing the risk of flooding.

The more of these schemes we have, the more we can use our natural habitats to build-up flood resilience, so it really is a win-win situation. We are now looking forward to developing a programme of projects in the catchment to 'slow the flow' and reduce flood risk.

Natural flood management involves restoring the natural function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts. This can include methods such as reinstating floodplains, creating wetlands, installing debris dams and planting trees.

The government's natural flood management drive builds on the 1,500 flood schemes the Environment Agency is already building across the country to better protect more than 300,000 homes by 2021.

The £15 million of government funding also includes the £1 million competition for smaller community projects to fund natural flood management schemes.