National Graduate Development Programme 2018/19
Council information pack
The best leaders work hard to ensure their organisations attract and develop the highest calibre colleagues to meet today’s challenges and those we can’t even imagine in the future. The next generation of middle and senior level leaders will be essential to the effective functioning of local government. If councils are to thrive and continue innovating for the future then we need to work extra hard to attract and develop the right people to lead our teams and organisations. Our graduate programme provides the perfect opportunity for you to bring into our councils bright, talented and ambitious people.

Over the last twenty years, the Local Government Association (LGA) has been bringing graduate talent into the sector through our national graduate development programme for local government (ngdp). The programme has been set up to provide local government with the high-calibre managers and leaders that communities need and attracts top graduates who are driven, passionate and committed to improving public services.

The ngdp is highly regarded by councils, graduates and the wider sector, ranked in The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers and Guardian UK 300. It increases the credibility of a career in local government and has provided a flow of consistently high quality trainees to over 160 authorities through 20 previous cohorts. Evidence shows that councils who hire our national management trainees can expect:

- individuals with leadership potential, who are able to rise to a challenge and make a valid contribution from the very start
- increased capacity to deliver change and transformation
- good value for money.

I know from my experience working in councils the value of employing an ngdp graduate. This pack provides an overview of the ngdp and shares the experiences of some of the councils and individuals who have been involved. It provides a compelling case for your council to be part of the scheme this year. If you are interested in getting on board please get in touch so that we can help you attract and retain the brightest and best in the public sector.

Mark Lloyd
Chief Executive
Local Government Association
What is the National Graduate Development Programme?

The only national graduate programme specifically for local government.

Known as the ngdp, the LGA's flagship management trainee programme offers councils a unique opportunity to grow their own local government leaders. Every year it provides the sector with high quality graduates ready to work on strategic projects which contribute to the delivery of your council’s goals.

The ngdp is a two year programme, where graduates are employed by councils and undertake a minimum of three placements. Alongside their employment, the LGA provides a prestigious complementary learning and development offer. This is carried out in parallel so that the graduates can implement their learning whilst working on real projects. At the end of their two year programme the graduates will have developed a range of skills across a variety of services. The ngdp acts as an opportunity for talented graduates to fast track their local government career and gives councils the opportunity to nurture and develop their own talent.

We are great supporters of the ngdp graduate scheme because we believe in investing in talent, leadership and our future.

“Doncaster Council has participated in the ngdp since 2004. Subsequently our management trainees have forged diverse careers with us in a variety of roles and topic areas. Having that breadth and depth of services to experience is one of the strengths of the programme and opens up new and numerous opportunities for graduate trainees to experience.

Doncaster has benefitted from their work and skills and they have, and are playing, a real part in shaping our services to our borough as part of Doncaster Growing Together. We have big aspirations for our place and we want to match them with people who can help us and our partners deliver.

The different and new perspectives that graduates bring is an invaluable resource to us. We invite and enjoy their challenge to think differently about the way in which we deliver services, interact with our communities and partners in reacting to the changing future of local government.

Fundamentally the scheme gives national management trainees the chance to build fantastic foundations. It is a privilege of great value to benefit from the NGDP scheme whilst providing the opportunity to shape and grow the next generation of leaders.”

Jo Miller
Chief Executive
Doncaster Council
The local government’s national graduate development programme

The ngdp provides councils with management trainees who have leadership potential and the capacity to work enthusiastically on innovative and strategic projects. To help realise this potential, it also provides a bespoke and prestigious learning and development programme to all graduates recruited through ngdp.

Why should my council take part in the ngdp?

Future proofing
Being part of the ngdp allows councils to start thinking earlier about longer-term succession planning and future leadership potential. Growing your own talent is less costly than recruiting higher up in the management structure, and taking on a graduate through the ngdp ensures you will have additional corporate capacity and capability at a senior level. Amongst our alumni you’ll find assistant chief executives, heads of service and managers of flagship and transformational local government initiatives.

Benefits to your council
By employing graduates as part of the ngdp programme, your management trainees will be provided with national networking and learning opportunities across sectors and have access to partners such as central government, from the private sector and other local authorities. This not only enriches the experience for the management trainee, but brings a wealth of best practice and knowledge back to your council.

Recruiting for you
As a national scheme, the ngdp promotes local government to the graduate market on behalf of councils in England and Wales. Last year, ngdp attracted applications from over 2,700 graduates. The LGA runs a rigorous assessment process to ensure that the most high-calibre graduates are then put forward to interview at your council. All applicants must have a minimum of a 2:2 degree and are subject to numerical, verbal, situational judgement and video assessments before taking part in a bespoke local government assessment centre. Graduate recruitment can be time-consuming and demanding on council resources, and that is why we run a national marketing and recruitment campaign to help identify the most promising future leaders for your council.

Attracting the best
The ngdp recruits graduates from all different backgrounds, universities and degree disciplines; our aim is to reflect the diverse communities that we serve. We will market ngdp at a national level, attending university career events and promoting in national publications such as the Times Top 100 and Guardian 300. For councils who sign up before candidate applications close (3 January), we will also promote with your local universities and provide additional support to attract graduates specifically interested in your council.
Recruiting locally
Taking part in the ngdp offers councils access to a national pool of high calibre graduates, however we recognise that some councils may wish to recruit from their own communities. We are able to provide a range of options for councils who wish to participate in the programme at a local level. We can work with you to support your own local recruitment campaign, where you would market the opportunity to candidates from the local area. This is undertaken in the same timeframes at the national recruitment campaign, which means that successful candidates become part of the national programme and have access to the same learning and development opportunities as the other trainees.

Developing your talent
The ngdp can offer an exciting and appealing development opportunity to internal staff who you have identified as the future managerial leaders of your council. We can support you to grow your own talent, by offering your existing graduate employees the opportunity to join the ngdp and access the learning and development offer.

What is the learning and development offer?
To support graduates to fast-track their career, we provide a complementary learning and development programme. This includes a mixture of residential training modules, regional events, online learning and action learning opportunities.

The learning and development programme has been designed to develop future leaders and ensure that your council gets a significant return on investment. The objectives of the learning and development are:

- to provide participants with a strong understanding of key local government areas of work and management
- to enhance personal effectiveness as a leader and manager
- to increase self-awareness and awareness of others.

What’s expected of my council?
The full list of council commitments is available in the ngdp partnership agreement, however at a glance we ask councils to:

- Promote ngdp to raise the profile of the programme locally and attract a diverse and talented pool of candidates.
- Conduct a local interview at the end of the recruitment process. At this stage the candidates will have been through a rigorous series of assessments, but we want to give you the opportunity to ensure they are the best fit for your council.
- Employ national management trainees on a minimum two-year fixed term contract.
- Pay national management trainee salaries at national local government spinal column point (SCP) 20 (£25,295 excluding London Weighting, from 1 April 2019).
- Nominate a member of staff to be the placement coordinator for the programme, once the council’s national management trainee(s) is in place.
- Organise a minimum of three placements for each national management trainee over the two years.
What kind of placements should be offered?

Your council will have full control over what placements to offer the trainees, based on where the need is most prevalent and their skills can be developed and utilised. Placements have included but are not limited to roles within adults or children’s social care policy teams, innovation and transformation teams, communications, democratic services, executive support and regeneration. Some councils ask services to bid competitively for a graduate trainee and others allow trainees to steer which kind of placements they might want to take on, as they progress through the scheme. We can provide advice and guidance on appropriate placements to ensure that trainees work at a high competency level.

What does it cost my council?

- The salary of the graduate over the term of their two year contract is set at a minimum of spinal column point 20 on the local government national payscale. From 1 April 2019 this will be £25,295. Each option outlined below comes with a one-off fee of £2,750, paid to the LGA once the national management trainee has started.

How can my council get involved?

- Talk to the LGA about signing up to the scheme
- Discuss participation in the programme and how you can benefit from the next cohort of high-calibre national management trainees.
- We can come to you
- We can come and meet you team to talk in more detail about the ngdp and how it can work for you.
- Speak to a council that is already involved
- If you’d like to hear some first-hand experience of the ngdp and how it has worked in another council, please let us know. The LGA can put you in touch with another authority that can tell you all you need to know about participating.

Please contact Helen Jenkins, Programme Manager for Leadership and Localism.

Telephone: 020 7664 3068
Email: helen.jenkins@local.gov.uk or ngdp@local.gov.uk

What will the LGA do?

- Annually subsidise the programme on behalf of councils in England.
- Market the programme to high-calibre graduates across the UK.
- Assess candidates’ suitability through a rigorous and established multi-stage recruitment process.
- Support councils to access and market their councils to candidates.
- Fund and organise a national programme of learning, development and networking.
The National Graduate Development programme – 2018/19 council information pack
### The options

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option Description</th>
<th>Cost per Graduate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. National management trainee (NMT)</strong></td>
<td>£2,750 per graduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Full participation in the ngdp: Promoting local government</td>
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<tr>
<td>We market local government as a premier career choice for graduates across the UK and promote the ngdp roles available in your council.</td>
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<td>Meeting the standard</td>
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<td>We recruit and select the highest calibre graduates for you to interview.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing capacity</td>
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<tr>
<td>We support each NMT on the programme with a high quality learning and development programme and provide access to national networking and knowledge events.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Shared national management trainee</strong></td>
<td>£2,750 per graduate, split between the councils</td>
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<td>All the benefits of participating in the full programme but NMT(s) and their placements are shared between councils.</td>
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<td>Partnerships and practical arrangements are the responsibility of councils involved.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Local recruitment for management trainees</strong></td>
<td>£2,750 per graduate</td>
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<td>Supported recruitment and equal access to the ngdp's learning and development programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your council markets its NMT position(s) to candidates from your local area in the same timeframe as the ngdp's national campaign. You can shortlist applications if you wish. The ngdp then facilitates the assessment of your nominated local candidates in line with national candidates to ensure they meet the same standard. Successful candidates will become part of the national cohort with access to ngdp learning and development, networks and knowledge events.*</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Grow your own management trainee</strong></td>
<td>£2,750 per graduate</td>
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<td>Giving qualified graduates you employ access to the ngdp's learning and development programme.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your council markets its NMT position(s) to new or existing graduate employee(s) in the same timeframe as the ngdp's national campaign. You can shortlist applications if you wish. The ngdp then facilitates the assessment of your nominated internal candidates in line with national candidates to ensure they meet the same standard. Successful candidates will become part of the national cohort with access to ngdp learning and development, networks and knowledge events.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>5. Learning and development programme</strong></td>
<td>£3,500 per graduate</td>
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<td>Graduates employed by your council who have not been recruited through the ngdp can be enrolled onto our learning and development programme.</td>
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*All candidates must pass the ngdp’s assessment benchmarks to take part in this initiative. Recruitment and assessment will be supported in line with the national timetable. For more information please contact our team: ngdp@local.gov.uk