

Women in Leadership Level 5 Apprenticeship for existing managers

This 20-month programme will support you to become a modern, empowering female leader.

Despite progress in gender equality, women remain underrepresented in leadership positions. Although women make up a significant portion of the workforce, they often face barriers that hinder their advancement. Key challenges include unconscious bias, lack of mentorship, and systemic workplace issues. Research shows that organisations with more women in leadership benefit from enhanced **collaboration**, improved **decision-making**, and stronger team **performance**. Addressing these disparities is essential—not only for fairness but for building diverse, effective, and successful teams.

Happy's **Women in Leadership apprenticeship** is a transformational programme designed to help you uncover, celebrate, and nurture your potential as a female leader. It will empower you to:

- Unlock your brilliance
- Inspire and promote greatness in others
- Connect with a network of like-minded, inspirational women

This programme focuses on maximising your leadership impact and progression. By participating, you will:

- Gain the confidence and knowledge to lead more effectively
- Develop sustainable skills for long-term professional impact

At Happy, we support an inclusive definition of 'women.' This programme is open to anyone who is cis, trans, or nonbinary, for whom womanhood is part of their gender identity or experience.

Programme Objectives

Our apprenticeship aims to develop leaders who can:

- Build confidence, ethical leadership skills, and an inclusive workplace culture
- Strengthen decision-making, communication, and team management
- Drive positive change by creating high-trust, self-managing teams

Our leadership philosophy

Our programme is built on principles of **trust**, **freedom**, **empowerment**, and **innovation**. Our foundational belief is that leadership is the '**art of creating space for others to thrive**' and see the manager's role primarily as a coach who brings out the best in their team. These ideas are rooted in the 10 core principles outlined in Happy's CEO Henry Stewart's book, [*The Happy Manifesto*](#), and they form the foundation of everything we do at Happy.

Programme Overview

The Operations Manager Level 5 Apprenticeship is a **20-month programme** comprised of:

- **18 months 'On-Programme'** – with monthly workshops, 1-2-1 coaching, group portfolio building days, reviews with your managers, and customised support.
- **2-4 weeks 'Gateway'** where your facilitator and the apprenticeships team help get you prepared for your End Point Assessment (EPA).
- **1-2 months 'End Point Assessment' (EPA)** where you will be assessed by an Independent End Point Assessor (IEPA) who will ultimately award your final grade.

This programme is suitable for existing managers and/or those who have operational or project responsibilities and/or have responsibility for managing a team.

As of February 2025, **English and Maths are now optional requirements** in apprenticeships. This must be agreed with your employer at the start of the programme.

At Level 5, you will be assessed through:

- A professional discussion at the end of End Point Assessment, based on a portfolio of evidence you will produce while On-Programme.
- A project presentation you will conduct at the end of End Point Assessment, based on a project you will complete while On-Programme and write an evaluation report for during End Point Assessment.

Every programme is designed to ensure complete individual involvement and participation. It will stimulate your thinking and challenge you. The key focus is on **practical skills** and **real outcomes** throughout, with the blend of activities specifically chosen to help you directly apply it to your current performance and future success.

Below are further details of the components we have designed to maximise your learning and achieve our exceptional record for passing EPA:

Coaching Sessions	These flexible one-to-ones allow you to work individually with your facilitator to get the support you need throughout the course.
Workshops	This programme involves monthly, live workshops which are highly interactive and experiential, to give theories, ideas, and experiences you can bring back to your workplace to generate evidence for your portfolio.
Portfolio Building & Professional Discussions	These help you compile comprehensive evidence for your portfolio. Evidence needs to be presented to demonstrate the application of your learning throughout the course and may include written accounts, project documents, performance reviews, peer feedback, presentations, observation reports, video/audio clips and other relevant materials to showcase your development against the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours.

Evidence Pack Guidance	In addition to the workshops and portfolio building time, Happy have even put together suggested packs of evidence-building activities that you can do to gather all the evidence you need to demonstrate the criteria.
Training Packs	You and your line manager will use your training packs to identify and implement opportunities to apply your knowledge in ways that positively impact your organisation and review your progress during progress reviews.
Reviews	Review sessions will be scheduled at least every 12 weeks with you, your line manager, and your facilitator. You will discuss your progress and identify any barriers or new opportunities and adjust your personalised training plan accordingly.
Preparation for EPA (Gateway)	<p>We'll conduct comprehensive preparation sessions for your End Point Assessment, including mock interviews, presentation practice with Q&A, and a detailed portfolio review to ensure all your evidence is mapped to the required Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours.</p> <p>This will provide a thorough review of the programme's content, giving you the opportunity to clarify any questions and build confidence for your final assessment.</p>

Qualifications

- Operations Manager Level 5 Apprenticeship Qualification
- Departmental Manager Diploma Certificate of Achievement from the Institute of Leadership
- Automatic upgrade to Membership to the Institute of Leadership, including postnominal letters (MIoL) and digital credentials
- Access to CMI Chartered Manager status with CMI membership, including further postnominal letters (CMgr MCMI).

Our programme is accredited by the Institute of Leadership. This confirms our programme has been independently verified and meets the evidence-based standards of their 5 Dimensions of Leadership: Authenticity, Vision, Achievement, Ownership and Collaboration.

Key outcomes

- ☑ Can handle difficult people and difficult situations in a way that promotes a culture of inclusion.
- ☑ Gain the skills to become a credible leader that inspires trust and autonomy for your team and organisation to work at their best.
- ☑ Be able to participate fully in operational planning and organisational governance using effective communication and presentation skills combined with knowledge of the policy and the business environment.
- ☑ Develop project management skills including finance management, stakeholder influencing and negotiation, change management, and impact evaluation.

Programme Modules

<p>Module 1: Self Awareness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Understand how our minds work ★ Emotional intelligence theory ★ Communication and learning styles ★ Tools for receiving feedback ★ Plans for your personal and professional development <p>You will gain insight into your personal leadership style, how you relate to others, and explore where and how you have space to grow.</p>
<p>Module 2: Your Leadership Brand</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Understanding your assertiveness style – combining strength and compassion ★ Identifying and understanding your unique combination of strengths ★ Your leadership code of ethics, values, and purpose ★ Building your personal authentic brand
<p>Module 3: Personal Presence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Managing the likability expectations of being a woman in business ★ Bringing your ‘people pleaser’ into check ★ Enhancing your self-belief - understanding how and where you add value ★ Building the three resilience energies – physical, mental, and emotional to support your wellbeing
<p>Module 4: Leading Culture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Fundamental Happy leadership principles including trust and psychological safety ★ Multiplying behaviours ★ Ethical and values-based leadership theories ★ Tools and techniques for delegating and leading <p>You will develop a comprehensive understanding of positive leadership approaches, focusing on creating a supportive and empowering organisational culture.</p>
<p>Module 5: Managing a Team</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Recruitment techniques ★ Performance data analysis and performance management strategies ★ Motivation and collaboration theories ★ Conflict resolution and mediation techniques <p>You will learn to build, motivate, and manage high-performing teams through effective leadership, communication, and interpersonal skills.</p>

<p>Module 6: Organisational Governance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Compliance, regulations, and legislation ★ Organisational culture theories ★ Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion through a Power, Belonging, and Justice lens. ★ Creating responsible organisational policies. ★ Business continuity, contingency planning, and risk assessment. <p>You will gain comprehensive insights into the strategic and ethical foundations of organisational management, with a focus on governance, compliance, and inclusive leadership.</p>
<p>Module 7: Stakeholder Relationships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Negotiation and influencing theories and techniques ★ Assertiveness skills ★ Stakeholder mapping and communication planning <p>You will develop advanced interpersonal skills to effectively manage and communicate with stakeholders across different contexts and organisational levels.</p>
<p>Module 8: Operational Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Internal and external operating environment ★ The current and future needs of the sector ★ Strategic thinking and vision development ★ Designing operational plans using systems thinking ★ Asset-based community development strategies <p>You will learn to develop strategic operational plans that align with organisational goals and respond to dynamic business environments.</p>
<p>Module 9: Change Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Continuous improvement ★ Change management theories ★ Forms and techniques of communication ★ Techniques for crucial conversations and delivering candid feedback <p>You will acquire an understanding of how to formulate organisational transformation and guide teams through it effectively.</p>

<p>Module 10: Project Management (With a specialised Facilitator)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Defining project scope and objectives ★ Writing project plans ★ Mapping stakeholders and managing resources ★ Analysing risks and mitigating issues ★ Creating communications plans and monitoring progress ★ Reviewing impact <p>You will understand the end-to-end process of project management, from initial conception to successful completion and impact evaluation.</p>
<p>Module 11: Problem Solving & Decision Making</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Differentiating problem solving and decision-making ★ Root cause analysis of problems ★ Ideation of potential solutions ★ Researching, analysing, and evaluating options ★ Systematic approaches to making decisions <p>You will enhance your critical thinking and analytical skills to solve complex organisational challenges effectively.</p>
<p>Module 12: Finance (With a specialised facilitator)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Financial vocabulary and reporting ★ Setting and managing budgets ★ Financial forecasting ★ Analysing budget impacts on projects ★ Resource management beyond financial metrics <p>You will develop financial acumen to make strategic financial decisions and manage resources effectively and learn how to manage finances in values-based organisations.</p>
<p>Module 13: Presentation and Technology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Presentation methods and techniques ★ Using different media for effective communication ★ Managing and analysing data ★ Applying technology for business needs, budgeting, and performance management. <p>You will develop advanced presentation skills and technological competencies to communicate and analyse business information effectively.</p>

Why Happy?

We help organisations create happy, productive workplaces, where people feel trusted, work to their strengths and are confident with their IT software. Our aim is for everyone to find joy in at least 80% of their work.

We are a B Corp workplace consultancy and learning provider. Founded in 1987, our courses cover all areas that create a happy workplace: Leadership, personal development and IT skills. Our leadership programmes are based on creating cultures of trust, freedom within clear guidelines and coaching your people to find their own solutions.

Happy was recognised as 13th in the 2024 UK's Best Workplaces™ for Small Businesses and 1st in the 2024 UK's Best Workplaces for Women™, based on our culture and values. Happy has also been listed as one of the Sunday Times 2024 Best Places to Work, and Highly Commended on the Best Places to Work for Wellbeing Spotlight.

Happy's Apprenticeships are also specifically audited by the **Matrix Standard** and **Ofsted**, of which we have a "Good" rating.



An Apprenticeship Programme at Happy comes with serious extra benefits, including:

- **Personalised** training plans, reviewed regularly throughout the course with yourself and your manager.
- Direct **1-2-1 support** from your dedicated facilitator including coaching, portfolio building days, and live workshops.
- A **carefully held space** encouraging peer-to-peer learning and powerful networking.
- Refined, **experiential learning materials** honed through years of expertise.
- Additional dedicated tutoring for Functional Skills exams if needed.
- Comprehensive and caring administrative support for both employers and learners.

Feedback

Today was my last formal session as part of my Level 5 Apprenticeship. This experience has changed the course of my career for the better. The theoretical knowledge I have left with has already transformed my leadership and is beginning to have incredibly positive impacts on my workplace. But actually, it is Sarah's facilitation and my peers within my group that have been the biggest gift. Sarah has given us all the opportunity to be unashamedly ourselves, and to share our experiences, difficulties, wins and losses with no judgement. As a result, my peer group have become an incredibly strong network that I've come to rely on for support, coaching and advice. With this apprenticeship, I am a better, more compassionate leader, someone committed to forming Happy workplaces and feel equipped to tackle the challenges that come with leading departments. I have witnessed our group be the epitome of what happens when diverse backgrounds, skills and experiences come together. I have learnt from them and been challenged by them every single session - and I am better off for it. Sarah shows me that leaders are not always the loudest in the room, but are those that listen and ask the most thoughtful questions. In short, I have learnt more than I ever could have anticipated I would, and I know my career will be driven by the skills I have developed. I will miss this apprenticeship so much.

Emma Halahan, Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust

How much does it cost?

If you pay the Apprenticeship Levy (ie, you have over £3 million of payroll), it is paid for out of the levy. If not, it is 95% funded by the government. Eligible learners can be funded for Apprenticeships through the Department for Education (DfE)

Apprenticeship Title	Cost for Levy paying org (per person)	Cost for non-levy paying org (per person)
Operations Manager (L5)	£9,000	£450

Additional costs: £60 per person for 1 year student membership to the Institute of Leadership.

Apprenticeship Requirements

To qualify for funding for this programme Happy must ensure you meet the eligibility criteria. These are:

Criteria	Evidenced by
You must be employed at least 30 hours per week (if you work fewer than 30 hours the programme must be extend)	Information provided by you and your employer
You must be learning significant new skills knowledge, skills and behaviours to be occupationally competent in your job role (eg if you do not have an existing L5 or higher management qualification)	Information provided by you and through initial skills assessments.
Have the right to work in England	ID – passport or birth certificate Visa Settlement status

<p>Spend at least 50% of your working hours in England if living in Scotland or Wales Have an eligible residence status</p>	<p>Information provided by you and your employer</p>
<p>English and maths are no longer mandatory in all apprenticeships. Your employer will decide whether you need to complete English and maths as part of your apprenticeship. This will need to be discussed and agreed before the start of the programme</p>	<p>Employer representative and apprentice complete and sign a Functional Skills declaration and waiver form</p>
<p>Complete at least 6 working hours per week in 'off-the-job' training through the duration of the training programme. These 6 hours per week will include training, coaching, assignments, work activities, projects, etc</p>	<p>Completed record of off-the-job training hours – Happy will provide a timesheet to keep these records</p>

You will need to provide Happy with evidence that you meet these requirements.