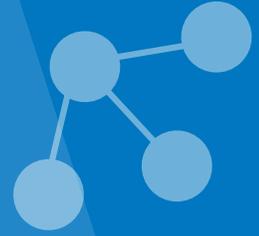




Government
Communication
Service



GCS
ACCELERATED
DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMES



“GCS is committed to developing exceptional communicators and establishing a strong talent pipeline for the future. Our talent programmes aim to develop strong leaders who are visible, trusted, strategic partners across government. To ensure we keep up a rapid pace of professional improvement in the GCS, we need to continue to raise the bar on leadership skills, to deliver best in class communications.”

Alex Aiken,
Executive Director of
Government Communications

ABOUT THE GCS ACCELERATED DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The Government Communication Service (GCS) runs two accelerated development programmes designed to support high potential government communications professionals. They aim to develop excellence in leadership skills and build a strong talent pipeline for the profession. The Inspire programme is targeted at grades 6 and 7, while the Impact programme is targeted at IO to SIO level.

Both programmes include interventions appropriate for the challenges faced at the different levels and career stages, and are structured around the Civil Service Leadership Statement: Inspiring, Confident and Empowering Leadership.

By the end of both programmes, participants will:

- show improved leadership skills
- show increased confidence, drive and personal impact
- have increased self-awareness of leadership strengths and areas for improvement
- have a good understanding of their career development goals
- have built a network of peers and key stakeholders across government and arm's length bodies (ALBs)

In addition, Inspire participants will have completed a Diploma in Strategic Communication Leadership from the University of Huddersfield. Participants on Impact will have completed a post graduate level qualification from a chartered body.

PROGRAMME FORMAT

The programmes are delivered by the GCS Professional Standards Team in partnership with providers including Civil Service Learning and Civil Service Resourcing, as well as communication leadership experts. We also source world-class speakers and academics from within and outside of government. Participants must commit to attending all core programme modules.

“It’s a great thing to do in terms of your learning and development, it helps move you from being a manager and task focused to thinking of the bigger picture and being a bit more strategic and ultimately becoming a better leader.”

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF PARTICIPANTS?

The Inspire and Impact programmes are intensive and rewarding programmes. All participants will need to take responsibility for their own development and will be expected to:

- be committed to developing skills and breadth of experience
- be open to regular feedback on performance and leadership behaviours throughout the programme
- engage in mentoring/coaching activity and act as a mentor for others
- build, maintain and progress career development plans
- support the development of talent in their own organisation and beyond
- contribute fully to GCS project work and learning activities outside the core modules
- act as role model and champion for the talent programmes and for GCS
- complete assessments throughout the programme, leading to the academic qualification

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants to both programmes must have a talent rating in the top 4 boxes of the 9 box grid (Star/Excellent/Strong/High Potential).

Applicants must have the aspiration to progress to the next grade and beyond and take on key leadership roles within government communications. They should also be confident that they can dedicate enough time and energy to get the most out of their participation in the programmes and that they can attend all the mandatory modules. The programmes are open to all members of the GCS.

Applicants should not be participating in any other government accelerated learning programme.

Places on both programmes are limited and unfortunately we cannot guarantee that everyone who applies will be selected. Previous applicants, who were not selected for either programme, are welcome to reapply.

PAYMENT

Both programmes are centrally funded by GCS, and there is no participant fee.

NOMINATION PROCESS

In line with best practice and for consistency with other accelerated learning schemes across government, we are asking applicants to both programmes to complete a nomination form.

Nominations for Inspire will be submitted by the departmental Director of Communications. Impact nominations need to be supported by line managers and endorsed by the development advisor with Director of Communication sign off.

“Best training experience in my professional career, and likely to remain so. Hard work, but well worth it.”

INSPIRE

Inspire includes a wide range of development opportunities, in order to build a rich learning experience and enable a strong network of support for the cohort.

The programme includes:

- **Four quarterly core learning modules**
Delivered in partnership with the University of Huddersfield. Participation in these core modules and successful completion of the associated assignments will lead to a Diploma in Strategic Communications Leadership with the option to progress to a Masters degree
- **Mentoring**
You will be matched with a senior communications leader as a mentor
- **Digital skills**
Learning event focused on building digital and creative skills
- **Leadership**
A bespoke leadership module

- **Masterclasses and training courses**
 - These sessions are dependent on development priorities for the cohort
 - For example, they could include a focus on neuroscience, interview skills and personal impact
- **Support in career planning**
You will be helped with identifying roles across government
- **Group work to complete**
Short-term projects on areas of GCS priority focus
- **Executive coaching**
Access to a network of professional executive coaches
- **360 degree feedback**
Alongside other tools to build self-awareness
- **A peer network**
Access to a network of colleagues and senior leaders across the Inspire talent cohort

In addition, you will be supported by:

- sponsorship of the cohort by Directors of Communication and the GCS Senior Talent Forum
- access to the GCS Professional Standards Team for support with career and development planning

“The Inspire Programme has helped me to get myself a seat on the Executive Team in our organisation and that’s the thing that really hit home to me from the Inspire programme, about being able to be there, at the top, influencing and making sure communications has a role at the table.”

COMMITMENT

- You will spend 8 days attending the core modules. It is expected that you will attend all core modules scheduled throughout the programme.
- You will spend 2 days attending the leadership module.
- In addition, you will undertake a range of other learning activities (including project work, masterclasses and mentoring) that are likely to involve being out of the office for a further 4 days during the programme.
- You will need to find time around work commitments to complete assignments.
- After 15 months participants will join the Inspire Alumni.

INSPIRE CONTACTS

If you would like to discuss any aspect of Inspire or have any questions, please contact:

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in the GCS Professional Standards Team.

“Inspire has really helped me to focus on what already makes me a good leader and what more I can do to develop further to become a more impactful leader.”

“I would thoroughly recommend Inspire to anyone who wants to learn more about themselves, to be exposed to the best and latest leadership thinking and with a desire to become the best leader they can be.”

IMPACT

Previously known as the Early Talent Programme, Impact includes a wide range of development opportunities on the key skills and behaviours required to be a successful communications grade 7.

- **Regular core learning modules delivered by a chartered organisation**
Completion of these modules and final assignment will result in a professional qualification
- **A bespoke management and leadership module**
- **Face-to-face interactive learning events**
Delivered by experts to explore: personal impact, presentation skills, resilience and much more
- **Speaker events**
Discussions based on hot topics in the world of communications and the development needs of the cohort

- **Executive coaching**
Access to world-class, professional coaches concentrating on individual development and personal growth
- **Communications specific mentor**
The opportunity to be matched with an experienced communications leader to meet regularly and share experiences
- **Action Learning Groups**
Peer-led discussion groups that take a coaching approach

“I have found the Early Talent Programme very self-reflective. It has helped to focus my mind on where I want to take my career and how I am going to get there. It has also provided me with an invaluable network of colleagues across government, and has helped me to feel part of the wider GCS community.”

COMMITMENT

- You will spend approximately 6 - 10 days attending the core modules and virtual classrooms.
- It is expected that you will attend all core modules scheduled throughout the programme.
- In addition, you will undertake a range of other learning activities (including speaker events, coaching, mentoring and Action Learning Group sessions) that are likely to involve being out of the office for short periods of time.
- You will need to find time around work commitments to complete short assignments and to take part in coaching, mentoring meetings and project work.
- After 12 months participants will join the Impact alumni.

IMPACT CONTACTS

If you would like to discuss any aspect of Impact or have any questions, please contact:

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Martina Arduino

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in the GCS Professional Standards Team.

“My direct report has more confidence in dealing with senior people and a real willingness to help and support junior members of the team.”

HOW TO IDENTIFY TALENT – 9 BOX MODEL



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you have any questions regarding the talent programmes and the nomination process, please contact the GCS Professional Standards Team:

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Talent and Professional Development
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You can find the contact details for your departmental development advisor on the GCS website:

www.gcs.civilservice.gov.uk



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