



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM



SYSTEMS THINKING AND LEADERSHIP PRACTITIONER

JOIN CAMDEN'S LEVEL 7 SYSTEMS
THINKING AND LEADERSHIP
PRACTITIONER APPRENTICESHIP
COHORT

A pathway to a PGDip and MSc

Introduction

We are delighted to offer Camden's voluntary and community sector (VCS) leaders the opportunity to join a fully funded [Level 7 Systems Thinking and Leadership Apprenticeship](#), delivered by the University of Birmingham's Leadership Institute.

Degree apprenticeships combine university study with invaluable on-the-job training. Our aim is to support participants to become effective Systems Practitioners and Systems Leaders — equipped to diagnose, design, and implement systemic interventions within Camden's VCS and beyond.

Drawing on world-class research, the Birmingham Leadership Institute (BLI) brings together extensive academic expertise and real-world leadership and systems thinking experience, offering a unique qualification rooted in systems thinking and leadership theory and practice.

Programme Overview

The Birmingham Leadership Institute (BLI) was launched to meet the urgent need for leadership that embraces complexity, difference, and disruption.

In Camden's dynamic and diverse VCS environment, leaders face interconnected challenges that demand new ways of thinking and working. This programme will help Camden's leaders:

- Strengthen leadership practice, rooted in systems thinking.
- Build capabilities in systems thinking practice, together with the leadership skills to support you to bring others with you.
- Build cross-sector relationships across Camden's civil society, public sector, and communities.
- Gain skills and knowledge to enable you to tackle systemic issues such as inequality, exclusion, and social injustice.

Participants will join a growing community of academics and practitioners, encouraging self-reflection, critical challenge, and inclusive leadership development.

The part-time programme would be delivered through a blend of in-person sessions locally in Camden and online learning, supported by expert faculty and professional systems practitioners.

This apprenticeship would be aligned with the national [Level 7 Systems Thinking Practitioner Standard](#).

Why Choose This Programme?

- **Tailored for Camden's VCS:** Designed to develop strategic leadership capabilities across Camden's diverse voluntary and community sector.
- **Practice-Based Learning:** Participants apply learning in real time to systemic challenges facing their organisations and communities.
- **Expert and Peer Support:** Be part of a small, Camden-focused cohort, learning alongside peers and practitioners from across the borough.

- **Part-Time Structure:** Flexible delivery over two years to fit around professional commitments (one day a week study release required).
- **Fully Funded:** The programme is fully funded through Camden Council's apprenticeship levy (value £18,000), with no tuition costs to the learner or organisation.

On successful completion, participants may convert their Postgraduate Diploma into a full MSc over a third year of study.

Success and Impact

The Birmingham Leadership Institute has pioneered high-impact leadership development programmes across sectors, supporting leaders tackling real-world complexity. Participants in this Camden VCS cohort will have opportunities to:

- Engage with BLI's research and events.
- Build leadership capacity and systems practice in Camden and beyond.
- Develop skills that strengthen both their organisation and Camden's wider community.

We look forward to supporting Camden's current and emerging leaders to make a lasting impact on the borough's future.

Important Information

- **Borough-Based Delivery:** Learning sessions will take place in Camden, building a strong local systems practice and leadership network.
- **Commitment:** Participants must be released by their organisation for **one day per week over two years** to complete the programme.
- **Funding:** Tuition fees are fully covered through Camden's apprenticeship levy. **Salary back-fill for the day release is not covered;** this will need be absorbed by your employer.
- **Application:** Apply now, submit your application by **15th June 2025**.

Please carefully consider your capacity to commit meaningfully to the programme alongside your existing responsibilities, this course combines academic study with practice-based application and will require a significant amount of time and commitment. You will be invited to discuss this with a member of the academic team ahead of starting the programme.

Timeline

Assuming we are able to enrol 20 applications, the course will begin with an induction session on 31st July 2025 with teaching beginning fully in the Autumn.

Please note, the course will only go ahead if 20 or more students enrol on the programme. Confirmation that the course will go ahead will be made in early July 2025.

Getting In Touch

For general information about BLI Apprenticeships: bit.ly/4iGrA0w

For enquiries about the course, please contact: degreeapps@contacts.bham.ac.uk

Bursary Opportunity

Camden's Diversity Mission seeks to increase diversity in leadership positions in the organisations across the borough. As part of this work, we are hoping to secure funding to make a small number of bursaries available to support small voluntary and community sector organisations who may struggle to release staff for the required time. If you are an emerging VCS leader and think this applies to you, please submit a course application. We'll contact all those who have submitted applications with details of the bursary if funding is secured for this.

Making Your Application

Make your application for the Level 7 Leadership and Systems Thinking Apprenticeship by completing this [Expression of Interest form](#). Please submit your application by 15th June 2025.

If you are considering the course, please do start this application process as soon as possible as it will enable the University of Birmingham to assess the feasibility of us meeting the minimum cohort requirements.

*This opportunity is conditional on a minimum number of applications enrolling.