



Evolving the data professional in an AI-driven world

Key insights and practical takeaways



The core problem: data-rich, insight-poor

The cost of **poor data utilisation** is measured in wasted time, inaccurate decisions, and missed opportunities. This manifests as:

- **Endless spreadsheets and silos:** Teams wasting time manually compiling data, leading to multiple versions of the “truth”.
- **Delayed insights:** Reports arrive too late to inform timely action, forcing critical decisions to rely on “gut-feel”.

The evolution: from technician to strategist

The role of the data professional is shifting dramatically to solve this problem, moving from a reactive function to a proactive, strategic one.

Traditional data role (Technician)

- **Reactive:** Primarily responds to requests.
- Focuses on cleaning data and answering: “What happened?”
 - Value judged on technical accuracy and speed.



Modern data role (Strategist)

- **Proactive:** Business partner embedded in teams.
- Uses AI to explore: “Why did it happen?” and “What will happen next?”
 - Value judged on ability to influence decisions and drive business outcomes.

The new AI-native skillset

To build a high-impact data function, your talent needs a blended skillset that leverages AI to democratise and accelerate analysis:

1. **AI co-pilots & code generation:** Using AI tools to rapidly write, debug, and optimise code.
2. **Prompt engineering:** The ability to “ask the right questions” of large datasets using natural language.
3. **Understanding of LLMs:** Knowing where to apply AI models ethically and effectively (e.g., for sentiment analysis or data classification).
4. **Advanced data storytelling:** Creating interactive, narrative-driven dashboards that guide leaders to a clear conclusion.

Every Kaplan data and technology apprentice gains the internationally recognised Generative AI for the Business Professional (GenAIBIZ) credential.

This course ensures your employees are ready to:

- Describe the fundamentals of AI and Generative AI.
- **Generate text and code** using AI to automate tasks.
- Identify the challenges of Generative AI and use it **ethically**.
- Implement organisational strategies for Generative AI adoption.

Building your talent pipeline: The strategic solution

Hiring experienced AI-savvy data talent is competitive and expensive. Apprenticeships offer a strategic, cost-effective pathway to build this talent within your organisation.

Why choose the apprenticeship route?

- **Context is king:** Apprentices learn skills applied directly to your specific business, your data, and your unique problems from day one (as demonstrated by Bas Ward's work at Arriva).

- **Future-proof curriculum:** Kaplan's programmes are designed to teach the blended, AI-native skillset necessary for tomorrow's business challenges.
- **Clear ROI:** Apprenticeships are a cost-effective way to utilise the Apprenticeship Levy and deliver a measurable return by directly solving expensive problems like poor data utilisation.

Kaplan programmes

Kaplan offers two core programmes to cultivate the talent needed for a modern data function:

Programme	Target Role / Focus	Learn More
Data User Level 3	Focuses on foundational data skills, clean data practices, and generating basic reports and visualisations. Ideal for upskilling existing staff or hiring new talent to support multiple business functions	Data User Level 3 Programme
Data Analyst Level 4	Focuses on deeper analysis, predictive modelling, data storytelling, and using advanced tools to extract actionable business insights. Ideal for those leading data projects.	Data Analyst Level 4 Programme

Where Kaplan can help

Speak to our experts to find out how Kaplan can help transform your organisation: [Contact Us](#)

Explore other Data and Technology Apprenticeships: [Data and Technology Apprenticeships](#)