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APPRENTICESHIPS

TRAINING + PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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DEGREE

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Philippa Evans  
Building Service Engineer Apprentice

Philippa, aged 23, is a building service engineer apprentice at West Sussex County Council and is studying towards a Higher National Diploma in Building Service Engineering.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET INTO DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP?

There is a really useful national website apprenticeships.org.uk, which allows you to explore your options. A filter tool is available for apprenticeships by role and/or salary. I started here and found it particularly useful to think about how much money I needed to support myself. There is also helpful information and a toolkit for employers thinking of taking on an apprentice.

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE AN APPRENTICESHIP?

With a background in engineering, I was looking for the chance to further my skills, whilst earning. I moved from Scarborough to Chichester upon accepting the three year apprenticeship with the council.

I work four days a week in the Facilities Management Team and one day a week at London South Bank University where I am enrolled on a Higher National Diploma (HND) in Building Service Engineering. I can convert this into a degree with a further years study.

Q: WHAT’S BEEN THE MOST REWARDING PART OF YOUR APPRENTICESHIP SO FAR?

Apprenticeships are a great starting point for a young person’s career and I have also benefited from being part of our Apprentice Ambassadors Network. This is an opportunity to network and promote apprenticeships. Through the network I have delivered assemblies and worked at careers events fronted by young people.

Q: WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP?

It is a great way to make connections and as an apprentice I have been given a lot of opportunities that I would not have had otherwise. This summer I attended the Young England and Wales Program 2014. Run by two charities, it aims to promote research, writing and presentation skills. It helped to build confidence as well as enhance the talents of more experienced participants. The programme is open to anyone 18 years plus.

Q: WOULD YOU RECOMMEND APPRENTICESHIPS TO OTHERS?

I highly recommend apprenticeships and The Young Programme for those starting out or perhaps uncertain about their careers. I am very thankful for the opportunities that I have had through my apprenticeship so far. Apprenticeships are not just for those who don’t make the grade to go on to further education; there is a level suitable for everyone.

I encourage businesses to take on apprentices because it is a great way to build and train up your work force. Young people who apply for the roles integrate well into the work place and are eager to learn.
Case Study

Tom France  
Care Apprentice

Tom is a Health and Social Care Intermediate Apprentice who was working with Adult Services at Marjorie Cobby House in Selsey whilst studying his level 2 qualifications. Through his apprenticeship he has managed to secure a job with Southeast Coast Ambulance, something he’s always wanted to do.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?
I am an aspiring Paramedic. My apprenticeship has helped me to secure a job with Southeast Coast Ambulance as an Ambulance Care assistant! Without the experience of care that I’ve had working for Marjorie Cobby house I doubt that I would have got it!

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR FUTURE APPRENTICES?
Get stuck in! Don’t hide away from any opportunities or training that West Sussex offers you because you never know where it might take you!

Q: HOW DID YOU GET ONTO THE APPRENTICESHIP?
I was finding my A levels really difficult so the college suggested a vocational course. I had a careers meeting with the college who suggested an apprenticeship in Health and Social Care as it would give me experience in care, a recognised qualification and I’d earn while I learn.

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE IT?
I went for the apprenticeship as the work experience is very valuable! Lots of people go and do A Levels and go on to university however, not everyone has actual experience at work. Work experience is just as valuable as qualifications like A levels and degrees!

Q: HOW HAS YOUR APPRENTICESHIP BENEFITTED YOU?
I have learnt so much! It has built my confidence in working with clients and staff. I have acquired knowledge by doing training courses like manual handling and food hygiene. This stuff can’t be learnt from a text book, you learn how to do Care by watching other staff and practical, hands-on learning.
CASE STUDY

Jamie Rowlatt
Caretaker Apprentice

Jamie was a Caretaker Apprentice working at West Sussex County Council. He studies a two year apprenticeship with the Council starting in September 2010.

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO DO THIS APPRENTICESHIP?
I wanted to get into the workplace and felt that the role fitted my skills and interested me greatly.

Q: HOW HAS THE APPRENTICESHIP BENEFITED YOU?
I feel that my job has helped me learn how to be a useful person at work; I am always on time, have a great deal of responsibility, and can work well alone and as part of a team. I am also enjoying the apprenticeship training at college.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?
I hope that this apprenticeship will lead to full time employment for me with West Sussex County Council. Jamie achieved his goal and now works permanently for the Council as a Facilities Assistant.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR FUTURE APPRENTICES?
To try and make sure the college course starts as soon as you start in employment, mine was delayed for 5 months while they got my place sorted.
CASE STUDY

Josie Smith
Nursery Assistant Apprentice

Josie is a Nursery Assistant Apprentice working at Desmond Anderson Primary School, Crawley. She has been undertaking her apprenticeship with the Council in May 2010.

Q: WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO DO THIS APPRENTICESHIP?
I wanted to combine my experience with learning and also be qualified up to Level 3. I had previously been temping at various nurseries and pre-schools through agencies and had also studied Childcare at both school and college.

Q: HOW HAS THE APPRENTICESHIP BENEFITED YOU?
I have become more confident with children and talking to the parents, also the day to day running of the nursery. The people I have worked with have given me great advice and support.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?
I have always enjoyed the practical side of learning, but I may decide to go back to college for further education/higher education a year to do Play Practitioning.

Q: DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR FUTURE APPRENTICES?
If you are a practical learner this is a good way to gain experience and help you do your work in your workshops at college.
Aaron Gumbrell
Higher HR Apprentice

Aaron is a Higher Apprentice studying level 5 in Human Resource Management, whilst working with the HR Policy and Practice Team in West Sussex County Council’s. Aaron has been an Apprentice with the Council since September 2010, when he started by doing a level 2 apprenticeship in Business Administration.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS APPRENTICESHIP?
I applied for an apprentice administration role through the National Apprenticeship Service’s website. The role was within Communities and Commissioning in the Driver Training Department and was a level 2 apprenticeship in Business Administration. After finishing my level 2 I was offered a permanent position as a Project Support Officer, with the chance to work towards an advanced apprenticeship (level 3) in Business Administration. After successful completion of my advanced apprenticeship, I was notified, along with other WSCC apprentices of an internal vacancy in the HR Policy and Practice team. This role was a higher apprenticeship, and I am now working towards a Level 5 in Human Resource Management.

Q: WHAT MADE YOU CHOOSE THIS PATHWAY?
I wanted to start a career with room for progression. University never appealed to me due to the cost attached, and the fact that experience is as vital as qualifications when getting work. Being an apprentice gives you that experience in conjunction with qualifications, whilst getting paid! I chose WSCC when looking for work because of the size of the organisation the variation of what they do and the amount of opportunities that come with that. Also I was made aware that WSCC has a reputation for developing staff along with providing opportunities to build a career, rather than it being, just a job.

Q: WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP?
One of the main things, for me, is the level of support you get from your colleagues, everybody is happy to help and pass on their experience. It’s also great to learn at college and then have an instant opportunity to put that into practice at work. I learn as much at work as I do at college, and both complement each other very well, giving a more rounded level of knowledge.

Q: WHAT ARE YOUR CAREER ASPIRATIONS?
My main career aspiration at this point is to finish my level 5 and to secure a permanent position with WSCC afterwards but I’m also looking at the possibility of working towards my level 7 in HRM.
Case Study

Sean Stallard
Science Technician Apprentice

Sean is a Science Technician Apprentice working at Worthing High School. He has been working at the school since September 2013 and holds the honour of being the first Science Technician Apprentice appointed in the South East region.

Q: Why did you apply for this apprenticeship?
I applied to be an apprentice lab technician at Worthing High because, after doing my A-levels, I knew that I wanted to do something Chemistry related. I had a look around for apprenticeships related to Chemistry, because they would give me work experience as well as providing me with some extra education I could use for higher education.

Q: What appealed to you about this apprenticeship?
The Lab Technician post appealed to me because it meant I would learn all about how chemical solutions would be made, and how to prepare practicals. As well as that, I would always be busy and doing something, I don’t like the idea of doing a job that involves being sat at a desk.

Q: How has the apprenticeship been going so far?
Straight away I found work really interesting, I learnt a lot about how to prepare practicals, as well as keeping track of stock. I’m always busy doing something due to the constant need of practicals in the department. As well as that I’ve met a lot of new people, and everyone has been really welcoming.
CASE STUDY

Annie Horrigan
L3 Business Administrator

Q. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO DO AN APPRENTICESHIP?

I originally studied a levels and then planned to go to university to study history. I decided to take a gap year in between a levels and starting university so I began to look for a temporary job. I saw an advert for this apprenticeship online and thought it looked interesting as it involved working in different sections of the council as well as offering a business qualification which I thought could come in useful in the future.

Q: WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP OVER OTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION?

It has been 100% a hands-on experience. Working and studying alongside work has been extremely motivating because I have clearly been able to link theory with practice. I think employers see the benefits in that too. I have been earning a salary and I also get all the usual employee benefits that come with this—eg paid holidays, sick pay, additional staff training etc. I am not planning on going to university now. This means I will not have a large student loan to pay off. When I progress from a L3 Apprenticeship to a L4 Apprenticeship I will also receive a salary increase.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE

So far I have worked in different sections of the council carrying out work in finance, contracting, general administration and event planning. I also visit schools with our careers adviser telling them about my experience as an apprentice. Every day is different and I love the variety. My assessor visits me in the workplace every 2 months for an hour to review my progress and I submit all my assignments and evidence online. I am allocated one day a week to study and attend workshops at college to support my learning.

Q: HOW HAS YOUR APPRENTICESHIP HELPED YOU PROGRESS IN YOUR CAREER?

I am no longer going to university. Instead I am progressing to a L4 project management apprenticeship with the council who are continuing to invest in my future. It may well be that I eventually progress to a higher degree apprenticeship.
CASE STUDY

Benjamin Marshall
L3 Town Planning

Q. WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO DO AN APPRENTICESHIP?
I originally studied a levels at college but on achieving them I was still unsure of potential future careers. Some of my friends had started university and did not seem to be enjoying it so I decided to look at alternatives. I have always loved geography and saw a job advertised as an apprentice town planner with west sussex county council. I applied, made sure I showed a lot of enthusiasm at interview and was lucky enough to get the job.

Q: WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP OVER OTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION?
Obviously not having to pay back a student loan was a huge advantage along with earning a salary and having employment rights such as holiday and sick pay. I also liked the fact that I was working alongside experts in their field and was able to apply the theory I learnt at day release to my actual work practices. Studying towards an apprenticeship was definitely not an easy option but I really benefitted from the professional attitude of my work colleagues and line manager towards me.

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE
The training consisted of day release at college during term time and on the job training at work. An assessor from the college came to the workplace to check my progress regularly and to set new targets. My line manager provided excellent support throughout the apprenticeship and I think it is absolutely vital to have this support because it is a large change from college to work in terms of responsibility.

Q: HOW HAS YOUR APPRENTICESHIP HELPED YOU PROGRESS IN YOUR CAREER?
I recently applied for a job as a planning technician at a neighbouring district council. I was the successful candidate and the job is full time and permanent. My ultimate goal is to be fully qualified as a town planner by progressing to an apprenticeship degree in town planning or working my way up.
CASE STUDY

Georgia Birch
L3 Business Administrator

Q: WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO DO AN APPRENTICESHIP?
I completed A levels and progressed to a L4 foundation degree in art. However there aren’t many openings in fine art (which is my specialism) so I decided to do something different. I looked on ‘find an apprenticeship’ website and saw this job advertised. I applied and was successful!

Q: HOW HAS YOUR APPRENTICESHIP HELPED YOU PROGRESS IN YOUR CAREER?
My next step will be to progress to a L4 apprenticeship in project management. This will include a foundation degree. I will be attached to a new team working on 21 improvement projects across the council.

Q: WHAT DO YOU FEEL ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF DOING AN APPRENTICESHIP OVER OTHER TRAINING OR EDUCATION?
I don’t think you can learn enough just by being in a classroom environment. I have really benefitted from working as part of a team. When I started working here I was very quiet and lacked confidence but I have learnt really important skills like the importance of everyone contributing towards team goals. I am certainly not quiet now!

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCE
My job is to support a team of careers advisers working with young people who are not in employment, education or training. We try to encourage the young people to progress to a traineeship or an apprenticeship. I provide admin support to the team and have also given talks to schools about my experience. Every week I am given one day to study towards my apprenticeship. This includes attending lectures at college, self supported study or meeting my assessor in the workplace. All the written work I complete is uploaded onto an e portfolio and marked online so I can clearly see what progress I am making.