

# You're Hired!

## Employing and valuing young people

### H&F Apprentices reach IMPORTANT MILESTONE

**Welcome to a bumper Spring edition of You're Hired dedicated to celebrating our apprentices' achievements to date. It's packed with success stories and evaluates both the apprentices and supervisors experiences thus far.**

Our business administration apprentices have now passed the half way mark of their one year programme and yes the time has flown! They have all now commenced their second placement in a new workplace and team in order to develop further skills and experiences. **We wish them the very best of luck with their placements.**

As you shall see from the testimonies of apprentices featured, many have found this to be a positive and motivating experience. Important lessons have been learnt, vital and transferable skills acquired, confidence gained and above all tenacity and passion to succeed and progress, has been evident for many apprentices on the scheme.

Our aim has been to develop a holistic apprenticeship model nurturing and encouraging the development of these young apprentices and we are pleased to say that they have not let us down! We look forward to hearing about their experiences and continued

professional development as they move onto the next stage of the scheme.

We have received a lot of positive feedback from both the apprentices and their supervisors and the scheme is progressing well with all apprentices on target to complete their NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration.

We continue to enjoy cross directorate support with all departments hosting placements and supervising apprentices throughout their journey.

Finally, we must of course thank all of the supervisors, departments, external organisations and individuals who are taking part in this scheme; they have been generous with their time, advice, encouragement and inspiration and we look forward to a continued and successful working partnership.

Particular thanks to the local Connexions service, the BBC for providing business sector mentors, education business partnership (EBP) and Ealing Hammersmith and West London College (EHWLC).

**Amanda McDonagh**  
Apprenticeship  
development officer



# Apprentices under the spotlight



**Chanico Laing, aged 22, lives in Shepherds Bush  
Placement: Youth offending service**

"Since I started working at the youth offending service, I have gained a lot of confidence and enthusiasm by actively contributing and undertaking small tasks to achieve the goals of the

division. My supervisors have been extremely supportive throughout my time as an apprentice. I felt comfortable with asking as many questions in order to bring clarity to my own understanding. Settling into a new environment was very easy because of the fact that my division was welcoming and had helpful team

players and kind individuals who were always there to provide assistance, this made my experience first class.

I am looking forward to gaining further experience and exploring new opportunities in order to enhance my development"

**Joel Hall, aged 23, lives in Hammersmith  
Placement: H&F Advice**

Joel spent the first six months of his placement in H&F Advice, a 'one stop' point of contact for H&F housing services and adult social care. Joel focussed on occupational therapy referrals and general business administration.

"My experience as an apprentice has been very challenging and covers everything that I expected. In my first placement I was placed in a team that has great work ethic and everyone works well together in order to ensure the highest quality of work and service. My approach to work became more professional and I feel that my verbal and written communication have improved significantly.

I hope that my second placement in parks and culture has the same challenging environment and that I will be tested to use the skills that I have developed on this scheme so far"

With four months left until the programmes ends, Joel is already making plans for the future and hopes to secure a permanent position with the council.

"On completion of the placement, I hope that I have made a good and big enough impression on the council to be considered for a permanent job role or an advanced apprenticeship scheme in either of the departments that I have worked in."



**JOEL'S SUPERVISORS,  
EMILY AND NATALIE**

**Joel's supervisors were pleased to take on an apprentice, share their experiences as mentors and the benefits of having an apprentice for their own development and learning.**

*"We have really enjoyed our role as supervisors on the apprenticeship scheme. It has been so rewarding to see Joel gain new skills and build on existing ones; identifying his strengths as well as areas where improvement can be made. He has come a long way in developing a professional approach and has contributed significantly to the department through the work he has done. It has been a great opportunity and positive introduction for us as supervisors into people management and we expect that it will be beneficial for future career developments."*

**Tanya De Leon, aged 18, lives in Parson's Green  
Placement: Recycling division**

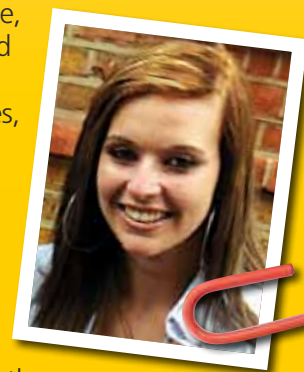
Tanya finished her first placement in the resident services - recycling team. Throughout this period, she has been learning on the job as well attending college one day a week to work towards her NVQ Level 2 in Business Administration.

"During the first six months I have found some of the work enjoyable and some challenging. I loved school visits as I enjoyed seeing how children

had the ability to learn quickly about recycling and playing games to learn in a fun way. My initial challenge was familiarising myself with an open planned office which I had never worked in before as well as meeting deadlines. "

Tanya was impressed with the support provided by the apprenticeship scheme.

"Due to the workload of the programme, I felt that I needed to dedicate more time to my studies, this issue was resolved by the coordinator of the programme, Amanda, who was very supportive and understanding of the situation"



### **Ben Sheehan, aged 22, lives in Fulham Placement: Children's rights service**

Ben Sheehan is currently in his second placement and is studying part time towards his NVQ.

"I really enjoyed working at the children's rights service and the independent visitors scheme. The team I worked with were friendly and welcoming and my supervisors were very supportive as they would always make sure that I had work to do and that I was not doing the same jobs everyday.

The placement taught me a lot about the importance of confidentiality and handling sensitive information, I also got a chance to learn IT skills through help from my colleagues and training courses.

One of the highlights of the job was being able to visit and work with volunteers and young people who were also involved with the Independent Visitors Scheme.

I am now placed with the recycling team and have had the chance to work with the team on their visits around the borough. At the end of my apprenticeship I hope to get the opportunity to continue my NVQ to a higher level or gain full employment with the council."



## **ADDED SUPPORT FOR APPRENTICES**

**In addition to gaining a full apprenticeship, apprentices are able to access a range of information, advice and guidance services:**

- Drop in services have been introduced at the Connexions One Stop Shop to provide personalised support and assistance for apprentices.
- Monthly 'personal effectiveness' sessions at the Irish Cultural Centre, tackling issues such as anger management and confidence building.
- Apprenticeship development officer - Intensive pastoral care/information, advice and guidance; one to one sessions to discuss individual needs.
- Each apprentice is assigned a business mentor based within the borough and normally has contact on a monthly basis. Mentor employers include the BBC, Coca Cola and Disney.

## **Team building - Ready Steady Cook**

Apprentices have also taken part in initiatives to develop their team building skills, they participated in a Ready Steady Cook exercise which took place in November 2009 at Hammersmith College and included 40 participants: 23 supervisors and 17 apprentices. The exercise involved splitting into four teams with a chef on hand for advice and support. The event concluded with a taste test of the finished results to select a winner. All participants expressed how much they enjoyed the day as it allowed apprentices and supervisors to get to know more about one another, their role and experiences. A great team building day.



## **National Apprenticeship Week 1 - 5 February**

**The week's celebrations gave those involved in apprenticeship schemes across the UK a chance to celebrate their achievements and value the work of apprentices.**

Apprenticeship week took place from Monday 1 February to Friday 5 February. The week was organised by the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) and provided the opportunity to celebrate the talents and skills of apprentices. Participants included apprentices, employers, providers and all those involved with the apprenticeship programme and it offered an opportunity to come together and value the essential role that apprenticeships are playing in today's business world, ensuring that the workforce has the skills it needs especially during the tough economic circumstances.

We at Hammersmith & Fulham decided to dedicate Thursday 4 February to celebrate our achievements as a borough.

10 apprentices supported the event by working in pairs at a stall in Hammersmith Town Hall reception; sharing their experiences with staff, offering advice to H&F customers on apprenticeships and promoting the apprenticeship scheme.

## FUTURE SCHEMES

Following the successful launch of our business administration apprenticeship scheme last year, economic development are now looking to recruit 20 local residents aged 16-24 for our second business administration scheme and 15 local residents aged 19-24 for our new health and social care scheme; both due to start in October.

We are now seeking cross directorate support from managers for the business administration scheme and would like to hear from staff who would be interested in hosting an apprentice within their division, offering a six month or one year placement.

If you would like further information on the council's apprenticeship schemes, please visit our website or contact Amanda McDonagh - apprenticeship development officer on 020 8753 3412, email [amanda.mcdonagh@lbhf.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.mcdonagh@lbhf.gov.uk) for further information.

## NVQ 2 Business Administration WHAT DO APPRENTICES DO?

To achieve an NVQ Level 2 in business and administration, apprentices are required to complete five units - two mandatory and three optional.

### CORE UNITS (MANDATORY)

- Carrying out your responsibilities at work
- Working within your business environment

### APPRENTICES CHOOSE THREE OPTIONAL UNITS - SOME OF THE MOST POPULAR UNITS CHOSEN ARE:

- Dealing with visitors
- Store retrieve and archive information
- Manage diary systems
- Organise and support meetings
- Use IT to share information
- Operate office equipment
- Produce documents
- Database software

Apprentices also work on their functional skills - (communication/English) and application of numbers (maths), as well as a technical certificate - (Certificate in Business Administration), as part of the apprenticeship framework.

Whilst studying, apprentices are offered three hours paid study time a week, as well as weekly day release to college. Additional learning support is also provided where this is required. An NVQ assessor arranges visits to observe apprentices in practical work situations, offer advice and collect evidence. Apprentices and supervisors are fully supported throughout the completion of NVQ.

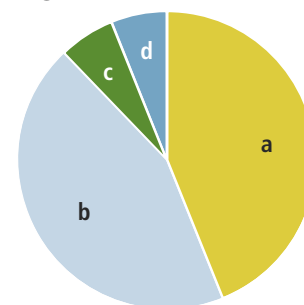
## Six month's apprentice and supervisor evaluation

Following the end of the first six month placement, both apprentices and supervisors were asked to complete questionnaires to evaluate about their experiences. This has given an overall indication of the positive impact that the scheme is making for young people and their supervisors.

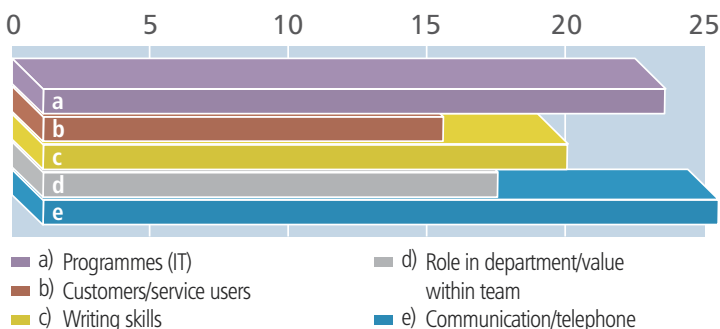
### BELOW IS A SAMPLE OF SOME OF THE QUESTIONS ASKED:

#### Apprentices' enjoyment of first placement

- a) Always
- b) Most of the time
- c) Rarely
- d) Not at all

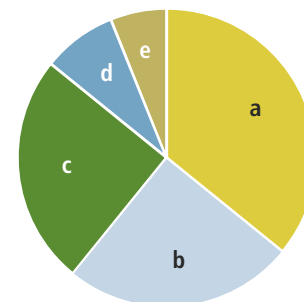


#### Apprentices' skills developed during placement



#### Things most enjoyed by apprentices

- a) Staff friendly and respectful
- b) Being busy
- c) Being treated like a member of staff
- d) Flexibility
- e) Supervisor



### USEFUL WEBSITES/LINKS:

For more information about the apprenticeship or partners involved, please visit:

#### Connexions

<http://www.connexions-direct.com/>

#### Ealing Hammersmith & West London College

<http://www.wlc.ac.uk/>

#### Hammersmith & Fulham Council

<http://www.lbhf.gov.uk/>

#### National Apprenticeship Service

<http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk/>

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