

Dave Taylor - My Apprenticeship Experience

Who are you?

Dave Taylor, Campus Safety Officer

Where do you work?

Aston University Campus Safety Team. In south Wing Formally known as Aston University Security.

What apprenticeship are you doing?

First Line Manager Level 3 Apprenticeship through Mercury training

Why did you choose this apprenticeship?

I didn't really choose the First Line Manager Level 3 Apprenticeship it was chosen by the campus safety Management team after discussing the needs of the department. This is said that this is one of the best courses within the industry. The course delivery best suits the need of the department and is delivered through a blend of learning on line and face to face delivery with a mixture of assessments including written assessments, presentations and professional discussions.

What are you enjoying about your apprenticeship?

I am enjoying gaining the skills and knowledge that is required to manage people working specifically in the security environment within the university. I am also enjoying learning about the Universities policy's specifically how to develop staff with regards to the university's staff development strategy. I am also enjoying researching why I need to do what I need to do with regards to the acts and regulations of the governing bodies such as the SIA and the surveillance commissioner to be able to provide a high service while operating within the remits of the law.

What are you learning?

On the Security First Line Managers I will be competent in supervising people and activities in line with regulatory requirements; undertaking security risk assessments; providing security advice to others; understanding threat, vulnerability, and risk; security methods, operations, and activities; incident management and planning; stakeholder management; business communications and data security manager.

What challenges have you faced?

I have found that if you don't keep on top of the workload of the courses it can run away from you however the support from the campus safety management and colleges helps a lot.

How have you worked through them?

I have been able to work through the challenges by the support given by my Tutor Jayne Greaves, My co-workers and the support of my Managers by Discussing Ideas and having their points of view explained to help me think of alternate views I have never considered.

What would say to someone who's interested?

If you're thinking of an apprenticeship but unsure I would highly recommend speaking to your team leader and management team. If you are still unsure, I would recommend speaking to the provider and tutor as they will be able to discuss the course more in-depth about what you will learn, how you will be assessed and the progression after the course.

Hayley Venables - My Apprenticeship Experience

Who are you?

Hayley Venables

Where do you work?

I am part of the HR Systems team within the HR Department

What apprenticeship are you doing?

Level 4 Associate Project Manager

Why did you choose this apprenticeship?

My role involves a lot of project work on system developments and enhancements. Whilst I had a basic understanding of how a project should flow, this was self-taught. I felt I needed a more in depth understanding of project management, the ins and outs, rather than simply understanding the term 'Project Management'.

What are you enjoying about your apprenticeship?

It is really good to get an understanding of everything that is involved in project management, what is interesting is finding out how others work within their own organisations compared with yourself. The cohort that I am part of is made up of a mix of organisations which is great in a sense of, if you do not fully understand something, you have others to bounce ideas off.

What are you learning?

Even though there is 'best practice', it is rare that any organisation is following the rules of project management to the letter. I am learning tricks that I can apply to my work, to improve the way I look at projects and things have fallen down previously.

What challenges have you faced? How have you worked through them?

The biggest challenge that I have faced is allotting the 20% of my week that the course requires. I feel that dedicating a whole day can be daunting, especially when your day job is waiting. I have found that dedicating smaller segments of time to the self-study modules, assignments and exam prep has worked better for me.

What would you say to someone who's interested?

For anyone that is interested in doing an apprenticeship, not even a project management one, I think the key is doing your research. You need to fully understand the requirements and expectations of the provider and also the commitment that is required from yourself. There is a log involved, more than I ever imagined there would be and this can feel overwhelming when you have assignments stacking up and self-study modules to get through. In the current environment and the lack of face to face learning with some providers, make sure that home based learning suits your way of learning as not being able to sit in a room with people and interact with them can have a huge effect on your learning experience and not always in a positive way.

Lynne Cheshire - My Apprenticeship Experience

Who are you?

Lynne Cheshire, Marketing Manager.

Where do you work?

College of Health and Life Sciences.

What apprenticeship are you doing?

MBA.

Why did you choose this apprenticeship?

I wanted to top up my qualifications to a masters level and at the same time study a qualification that is well-recognised and would also provide a challenge. The MBA is a great way of enhancing your skillset as the knowledge you gain is at a high level and covers such a broad spectrum of business.

What are you enjoying about your apprenticeship?

The knowledge obtained and the engagement with study peers and academics. Academic knowledge and the delivery is very high which is pleasing. I also like engaging with study peers and have met some amazing people at a very high level. I also like the part time flexibility of learning.

What are you learning?

So much! The course covers a great depth of business at a high level, learning how to think more strategically and to reflect on business practice and enhance processes. Strategic discussions are a great way of problem solving.

What challenges have you faced?

Juggling time! You have to be very focussed and plan your time. You also need to allow time to really research your subject discussions.

How have you worked through them?

I am still working through them – the challenge if time is constant. You have to be very strict with your commitments to time.

What would you say to someone who's interested?

Talk to your line manager and have a good discussion about how the opportunity can enhance your role and your future development – look at the study commitment in terms of time allocation and how it can fit into your working practice. It's a great opportunity and can be thoroughly rewarding.

Joshua Samra - My Apprenticeship Experience

Who are you?

Joshua Samra – Campus Safety Team Leader

Where do you work?

I work within the Campus Safety Department on Aston University campus.

What apprenticeship are you doing?

I have just completed the Security First Line Manager Level 3 apprenticeship.

Why did you choose this apprenticeship?

I picked the apprenticeship because I felt it would benefit both myself and the department by giving me a greater understanding of what my role is, and how it can further my department and support the University. I also think it is a great way to learn, whilst being in employment.

What are you enjoying about your apprenticeship?

I specifically enjoy understanding new ways of critical thinking and directly applying it to my job. There is real satisfaction when an idea comes to fruition when learning, and then implementing it within my role and department.

What are you learning?

I learnt how to manage teams and people, and how adapting to situations can have positive impacts on people. I also studied resource management, contact management, staff development and coaching/mentoring. I also carried out risk assessments, H&S reports and site surveys.

What challenges have you faced?

The main challenge for me was finding time away from my role to complete my coursework/lessons. As I work a shift pattern, I slowly gained an understanding of how to adapt the lessons around my shifts and I would carry out most of my coursework on nights, as it suited the team best.

How have you worked through them?

I am still working through them – the challenge if time is constant. You have to be very strict with your commitments to time.

What would you say to someone who's interested?

I would say to take the opportunity with both hands and apply yourself. The information you learn is invaluable and can help you with all walks of life, both professional and personal aspects. It is always a positive thing to see your employer investing both time and money into your personal development.