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Broxbourne Council's Audit team is part of a shared service which includes Broxbourne, Harlow and Epping Forest District councils which means apprentices move from Council to Council which makes the work even more interesting, varied and very busy.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE AN APPRENTICESHIP?

I applied for an apprenticeship because I knew that I wanted to continue studying but I also wanted to begin building up my experience of working in a full-time job. An apprenticeship is the best option to develop my professional and educational self in the manner I wanted to best. I was notified that the vacancy was available through connections at the Council and I applied online.

WHAT DOES YOUR TYPICAL DAY LOOK LIKE?

Working in Internal Audit, there isn't really a typical day as my requirements change all the time due to working independently on a range of audits for all three Councils. During normal circumstances, I could be working on 2/3 audits and have other side tasks to complete. I focus my efforts on whatever audit I started first, however that doesn't mean that I will ignore the others. I could have days in which I will have 3-4 meetings, other days with on-the-job training sessions.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST IMPACT YOU THINK YOU HAVE MADE IN YOUR COUNCIL?

My biggest impact on the Council since joining has been as a result of my audit on data retention and disposals. The audit looked into the processes in different departments for following the rules of GDPR and maintaining consistency throughout. This audit was undertaken at Harlow and it has already had seen some big improvements to their disposal process and has allowed for greater collaboration between the Head of Departments and the Data Protection Officer.

WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST ACHIEVEMENT SINCE BECOMING AN APPRENTICE?

The most rewarding part of my apprenticeship so far has been achieving the level 2 AAT. However, the most rewarding aspect of my job is seeing the impacts of the audits that I am undertaking. Seeing changes and improvements based on the work that I have done and my recommendations is very satisfying.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BENEFITS OF AN APPRENTICESHIP ROUTE?

The main benefit of undertaking an apprenticeship in my opinion is the valuable working experience that you gain as an apprentice. You develop your knowledge in your area of a profession as well as developing academic knowledge of the subject at college or on courses. For my career, in particular, an apprenticeship is particularly useful because Internal Audit is such a complex area to jump into without any knowledge or understanding of the rules behind the job. Being an apprentice allows for me to develop my understanding of the job while following the experience of those around me.

HOW DO YOU BALANCE WORK AND STUDY AT THE SAME TIME?

I balance my time between working and studying by setting aside 1 working day per week (Wednesdays) to focus solely on studying. I chose to follow the same routine set out during my first apprenticeship at AAT level 2. Every week on Wednesday, I was required to attend college to gain my AAT level 2 which I have subsequently completed and passed.

HOW HAVE YOU FOUND THE EXPERIENCE OF BEING AN APPRENTICE IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT?

Being an apprentice in Local Government has been very insightful as it is very interesting to see the behind-the-scenes of how the Council works. It is particularly more interesting if you live in the area too as you can see the outcomes of your daily work on your surroundings.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH CAREER-WISE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

Over the next 5 years I hope to become fully qualified as an Internal Auditor and continue to benefit and add my contribution to the processes and controls set in place at the Council.