

Ashley, Technical Trainee

Year 2 – Electrical /ICA apprentice



Ashley is currently completing her UET Level 3 apprenticeship standard and is in her second year of studies.

Ashley is based at our Esher sewage treatment works site and is currently working with her mentor to complete her NVQ level 3 in mechanical and electrical engineering.

In year 1 & 2 of Ashley's apprenticeship she studied her PEO (performing engineering operation) units and BTEC in engineering at Guildford college, full time in year one and day release in year two.

Can you tell me about your background?

I always enjoyed school growing up as I genuinely enjoy learning. College was good fun as well! My parents taught me to work hard; they told me that almost anything is achievable when you work for it, so I've tried to apply this in all aspects of my life. In school I was really bad at physics, I never understood the principles and found it so complicated.

When I got to college however, everything sort of clicked and I knew for sure that I would work in the engineering field. Before secondary school however, I actually wanted to work as a dentist.

Why did you choose to apply for a Thames Water apprenticeship?

I initially never considered Thames Water, but one of the Lecturers from my college recommended that I apply here. For this reason, I never knew much about the company, only that they provide clean water and have reservoirs. I knew that sewage went into sewers and about the clean water treatment because we went on a trip to a Thames site when I was in primary school, but

that was just about all the knowledge I had. My previous knowledge was a reality, just not in the field I was working in.

I work in the Waste networks and so my job involves working with sewage. I was not prepared for the smell, but as time has gone by, I've gotten used to it and it's really not as bad as you would think. I've been fortunate enough to work on the pumping team as well as at the Sewage Treatment Works so I have now seen and completely understand the Sewage treatment process. No two days are the same which is really cool, because I'm always learning here.

Can you tell me about your life and career journey?

From secondary school, I knew that I wanted to work in the engineering sector. My first job was actually as a receptionist in a beauty clinic, whilst I was studying engineering in college. I then did part-time work with a super car mechanic for three months. I've enjoyed all the jobs that I have had. I learnt a lot from them and have been able to use some of the skills I learnt with Thames.

I am hopeful that I will stay with Thames as I work with a great team. Everyone's really encouraging, friendly and helpful and they don't spoon feed us, which has helped me to learn some things very quickly. Once I finish the apprenticeship, I would eventually like to get a degree in electrical engineering.

