



## Meet the apprentice

We are introducing to you **Sian Meredith**, a business administrator apprentice at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

**1**

How did you get your apprenticeship?

I was attending Sixth Form before my apprenticeship and I studied Sociology, Religious Studies, and Geography. I applied for University and received an unconditional offer for my first choice university, however, I was unsure about what career path to take. At school, I was encouraged to go to university as they saw this as the 'best opportunity'. Therefore, I received little information about apprenticeships and felt that university applications came as a priority.

I did a lot of research and conclusively came to the decision to undertake an apprenticeship. I found my apprenticeship at a school's career fair, and the Oxford University Hospitals stand appealed to me instantly. I took the time to ask about the apprenticeships which they provided, not realising that they offered non-clinical roles. I was informed about the current vacancies and the process of applying. I left the career fair feeling particularly interested in the opportunities at Oxford University Hospitals and applied that night!

**2**

Who is your training provider and what is the study model like?

My training is provided by the Oxford University Hospitals training centre, who is an employer provider. I learn onsite and we have a training day once a month in which we complete the units of my course. There are also additional supported self-study days where the training provider offers guidance for our study. I am given 8 hours of self-study every two weeks; this is an opportunity to complete the tasks set on a file or to complete any timesheets for off-the-job training I undertook during the week.

**3**

What type of things have you been doing in your off-the-job learning?

Once a month I have a training day with my training provider in that we learn the units of my course. This allows me an opportunity to be assisted in any work I find challenging. I complete reflective journals each week to think about what I have learnt during the week. This is a good way for me to reflect on how my skills have developed. I have been lucky to have experienced a lot of workplace shadowing. I have attended multiple meetings with my manager where I have had the opportunity to get involved in new tasks. These meetings also allowed me to meet people from other organisations and form connections which I believe is particularly useful for my career. I have also received training from my colleagues to develop my computer skills. I have learnt how to effectively use Excel, Outlook and also how to use external websites including Eventbrite which I used to set up an event at the Trust and was running the admin behind this event.

**4**

**What has been the hardest part?**

The hardest part of my apprenticeship was the first few weeks. It took me a long time to feel settled. Although my team was lovely and welcoming, it took me a while to become used to a new working environment, especially from being a school student. I struggled to ask for work when I believed that I had no work left to complete. My colleagues were helpful and made me feel involved, however, I did not enjoy feeling unhelpful when work was inconsistent. I feel more settled now and am getting used to the working day and the challenges that I am due to face.

**5**

**What has been the best part?**

The best part of the apprenticeship was developing my confidence. Before my apprenticeship, I was really shy and struggled to talk to new people. However, after starting my apprenticeship I have encountered many social situations where I needed to have the confidence to engage with people that I don't know. Being able to engage with new people has been beneficial as I have formed relationships with other members of staff. I am grateful that I was encouraged to attend events in which massively helped to improve my confidence.

**6**

**What do you hope to do next?**

I currently work in the corporate division of Oxford University Hospitals but I would like to have the opportunity to work in different divisions in the NHS. The clinical side of work interests me so I would like to receive more information about this. My next step may include undertaking a higher-level apprenticeship and I feel that my future is working as a member of an NHS Trust.



What tips do you have for people who want to do the same apprenticeship as you?

**My main tip would be to take every opportunity that becomes available to you. I have been offered many chances to visit different organisations and attend events where I can meet new people. I was doubtful at first about attending these events as I didn't know anyone and have a small knowledge base as I am a new apprentice. However, I am so grateful to have met new people and get the opportunity to hear how other organisations work. I believe that the best way to progress in an apprenticeship is to build connections with others. This is why I am eager to take on every opportunity that becomes available to me.**