



Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Meet the apprentice

We are introducing to you **Shana Macdonald**, an apprentice administrator for Diabetes and Endocrinology at Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital.

1

How did you get your apprenticeship?

Prior to my Apprenticeship, I attended City College Norwich where I achieved a Level 3 Extended Diploma in Health Studies. I worked part time at McDonald's and applied for the Apprenticeship on the NHS jobs website.

**2**

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

**My course was provided by Poultec. I worked five days a week (8.30am-4.30pm) for the Diabetes and Endocrinology Department at the Hospital and I had a study day once a month offsite where I could choose to work from home or go to the hospital library. I would also meet with my course tutor every month to assess my work and set up new modules.**

**3**

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

**At the start of my Apprenticeship, there were a number of units my manager and I chose that we felt would be most suitable for the job role; for example: storing and retrieving information, communicating in a business environment and delivering customer service. I also achieved my Level 1 ICT certificate. Off-the-job evidence is provided in the form of questions & answers, case studies, and multiple-choice tests.**

**4**

What has been the hardest part?

**The biggest challenge I faced was my ongoing health issues; there would be days when the fatigue would be worse than others and I would struggle with illness and seizures. All of this meant my attendance was affected and for this reason I sometimes missed meetings with my tutor. I want my experience to help prospective apprentices understand that even if you have a lifelong illness, you can still undertake an apprenticeship to develop skills and create opportunities for yourself. Besides, the work can be completed at your own pace.**

**5**

**What has been the best part?**

The best part of this journey was to allow myself to reflect on my achievements and how far I have come, I was becoming more confident every day. Working around the hospital allowed me to meet new people and learn from their experiences. Most importantly, I am now a proud member of the NHS.

**6**

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

Since my Apprenticeship ended last year, I successfully applied for a Patient-Focused Booking role for the Rheumatology and Neurology Department. I am very happy in this role. I would like to progress further and recently had a six-monthly review with my manager where we discussed the possible options for future progression. I have also enrolled onto the Business Administration Level 3 NVQ, which I am enjoying very much.

**7**

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

If I could provide one piece of advice it would be to be prepared, working within a department for a year and then getting a job at the end of it can be difficult. Unfortunately, an organisation may not always have the capacity to employ you, therefore ensure that you take your time to write successful applications and apply for the jobs that attract you. The experience of having many interviews, albeit slightly stressful, each experience provided me with more confidence and helped develop my communication skills.