

Rob Brooks Level 5 HR Consultant / Partner

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You can access the standard [here](#).

This role could be called a HR consultant or a HR business partner in different organisations. Individuals in this role will use their HR expertise to provide and lead the delivery of HR solutions to business challenges, together with tailored advice to the business in a number of HR areas, typically to mid-level and senior managers. They could be in a generalist role, where they provide support across a range of HR areas – likely to be the Core HR option; or a specialist role, where they focus on and have in depth expertise in a specific area of HR – likely to be Resourcing,



Meet Rob Brooks who works at Health Education England (HEE).

Rob recently completed his Level 5 HR Consultant / Partner apprenticeship. We spoke with Rob about his experiences as an apprentice, keep reading to find out more.

1. Why did you decide to do the Level 5 HR Consultant / Partner apprenticeship?

There were a few reasons, I decided to undertake the L5 HR Consultant / Partner apprenticeship. Firstly, having come to the NHS with expertise in the world of apprenticeships I found myself employed within an HR/OD (Human Resources / Organisational Development) team with a role that crossed a range of new areas of the workforce agenda so there was a skills gap that I felt I needed to address. Also, I didn't hold a level 5 qualification and it felt like a perfect opportunity to develop myself in a way which took advantage of a more vocational way of learning that was linked to my job. Finally, it felt like a great opportunity to practice what I preach and undertake an apprenticeship as well as promote the opportunities to others.

2. What do you feel the benefits of apprenticeships in the People Professions are for the NHS?

People professions in the NHS are so extremely varied that they require a variety of skills and knowledge to deliver the service. Apprenticeships offer a really good opportunity to diversify the workforce within the profession and potentially ensure that it is representative of the wider NHS workforce. Furthermore, the NHS can sometimes struggle to compete with private sector employers for non-clinical talent and the opportunity to grow our own provides a chance to ensure we have excellent people within the profession.

3. You were involved in the development of the L7 Senior People Professional apprenticeship standard, why do you feel that was important?

It is crucial in the retention of talent to ensure that there is a pathway for people to develop within their career as a workforce professional. As previously mentioned, getting the best talent into the organisation can be a challenge and equally, without a structured pathway it is easy to lose the best talent too. Additionally, the key resource within the NHS is its people so the opportunity to develop workforce professionals at all levels enables us to manage and support that key resource as best we can. Given the opportunities presented by the apprenticeship levy, a level 7 apprenticeship seemed to be an ideal solution.



[Click here](#) for further information about the Level 7 People Professional

Senior People Professionals are found in all industries and are a key component of virtually all types of business model where there is a workforce to support and manage. The broad purpose of the occupation is to improve people practices in organisations in order to drive organisational performance and effectiveness. Senior People Professionals are the in-house experts in people, work and change. They champion the people agenda to create working environments and cultures that help get the best out of people, delivering great organisational outcomes.

4. Before moving to HEE you were the Apprenticeship Lead at Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, how did you utilise apprenticeships in the Trust?

There were 2 key ways we utilised apprenticeships at the trust. Firstly, we used them as an opportunity for existing colleagues to develop their skills, knowledge and behaviours to be able to be more effective within their role as well as to support their progression where this was an aspiration. This had a positive impact on engagement and retention for staff within the trust. Secondly, we used apprenticeships to recruit new talent into the organisation with the aim of diversifying the workforce. In particular, we had an “apprenticeships first” approach to band 2-3 roles, a model where roles that were advertised at this level would have to be considered as an apprenticeship before going out as a non-apprentice role (where an apprenticeship was not suitable).

5. Do you believe apprenticeships support career progression?

My experience is that apprenticeships significantly support career progression, both in clinical and non-clinical professional pathways. For example, I recruited a cohort of 6 degree management apprentices at Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust who came into the organisation as band 3 employees on a specific management development pathway. Out of those 6 apprentices, 2 of them are in band 7 service manager roles and 3 are in band 5 or 6 assistant service manager roles, all within 18 months of completing their apprenticeship.

6. What would you say to anyone considering an apprenticeship?

An apprenticeship is a challenge and it is important to recognise that you will need to put work into the programme in order to achieve. However, it is a rewarding challenge and you will grow considerably throughout the process. I recommend you give some real thought at the start of the programme as to where your opportunities to develop skill and knowledge might naturally occur in your work role as this makes it easier to balance study/work commitments and also, reach out to people around you within your teams to take advantage of their experiences

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(HR & OD) Apprenticeship
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