



Healthcare Science Practitioner L6 (Degree)

Name, age, what Apprenticeship are you doing, level, and for how long?

My name is Lyndall Pease, I'm 22 and I work in the Microbiology Department at Frimley Park Hospital as a Medical Laboratory Assistant. I'm currently in the 3rd year of completing my Level 6 Healthcare Science Practitioner Part Time BSc degree through the apprenticeship route. It is a 4 year degree through the University of Westminster.

Why did you choose that specific Apprenticeship?

I have always wanted to study Biomedical Sciences, but I never knew there was an option to do it as an apprenticeship when I first joined Frimley Park Hospital. Not long after I started as a medical laboratory assistant this apprenticeship opportunity became available. It was all very much a whirlwind in the beginning as it all happened so quickly, but I am so grateful for the opportunity I have been given. A requirement of the apprenticeship is to also complete your Institute of Biomedical Science (IBMS) registration portfolio, which will enable me to be fully state registered as soon as I complete my degree – this was a big positive when it came to deciding to do the apprenticeship. The modules of this course are all mapped in a way to cover both the IBMS registration portfolio process, as well as all the relevant departments within Pathology.

Was there any decision between the Apprenticeship route, and any other, E.G., university etc.

I have always thought that an opportunity to 'Earn while you learn' is the best option. As I have found throughout the apprenticeship I have learned so much more practically as opposed to mostly theory based learning. This allows me to have real world practice and to experience day to day life in my chosen career from day one. The apprenticeship that I am a part of is laboratory based, with part time day release once a week. On this day, pre-COVID, I would attend the university; however I now attend online classes through the university.

What has been your proudest achievement on your Apprenticeship to date?

I have had the opportunity of attending the IBMS Service User, Patient & Carer Engagement Group conference at the end of last year. I have also achieved so much personal and career growth over the last 3 years. The apprenticeship programme has grown my confidence in the laboratory and I feel like this is an invaluable achievement for me. I am also very proud of how I have juggled the busy day to day like of working for the NHS, completing a degree in science and maintain a high standard of work, all while throughout a pandemic.

What has work been like since COVID-19 outbreak, and how has your work changed because of it?

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic work in the Pathology Department hasn't really changed, it has only got busier. Although we are non-patient facing we still play a valuable role in the care and treatment of every patient. Although universities are not doing face-to-face teaching I have still be able to attend my online courses despite the department being busy.

How do you see your Apprenticeship helping you to build your career for the future?

Following the completion of my degree and end-point assessment I will be able to progress in the laboratory and become a Biomedical Scientist. I feel like the apprenticeship route allows for a much more direct way into this career as both the portfolio and degree are combined and completed simultaneously.

What would your advice be to anyone thinking about doing an Apprenticeship?

If you're thinking about starting an apprenticeship it is so important that you are organised and can be self-motivated. This is your journey and you need to be the one to keep yourself motivated and committed. I always try and remind myself that all of this hard work is going to pay off; it's all about the bigger picture and making a better future for yourself now.