

## St Helens Chamber Apprenticeships



We talk to Jack Parker, Business and Sales Tutor at St. Helens Chamber and Beth Large, Workforce Development Administration Apprentice, about what apprenticeships bring to their business and the apprenticeship experience.

### The Employer Perspective:

Jack Parker, Business and Sales Tutor

**Q.** How has your organisation benefitted from recruiting apprentices?

**Jack:** Massively. I started working at the Chamber as an apprentice and developed into a teaching role. Many of our apprentices share a similar story, developing into responsible roles. Our Business administration apprentices have had a big impact on our procedures. They've helped develop administration systems for our AEB, traineeships for young people and New Enterprise courses. Our apprentices are ambitious, bring their own ideas and help evaluate current processes to determine new development needs.



Jack Parker

**Q.** What advice would you give to potential apprentices wanting to join your business?

**Jack:** There are great long-term prospects for apprentices in the Chamber once you are qualified. These provide greater experience, with more responsibility, and career paths that will help shape their future. Having an apprenticeship on your CV shows you are ambitious, dedicated and open to learning new things. It also gives you the opportunity to work for a business that interests you. Joining St Helens Chamber as an apprentice is a great opportunity to work for a social enterprise that is helping the economic success of local businesses and upskilling individuals to achieve their goals. We are an award winning business that our apprentices play a massive part in. Our future apprentices will too.

**Q.** What advice would you give to other businesses who are thinking about recruiting apprentices?

**Jack:** It's a chance to gain dedicated employees, watching them develop and seeing what they bring to the team. Apprenticeships can transform your business. Our apprentices have new ideas and develop new procedures that improve our processes. They often go above and beyond, they are committed to learning new things and gaining new experiences. We found the quality of work procedures improved as apprentices' qualifications were both insightful and relevant. Qualified apprentices raised standards across the teams they work in and the whole company.

### The Apprentice Perspective:

Beth Large, Workforce Development Administrator Apprentice



St Helens Chamber

**Q.** How did you find out about your apprenticeship?

“ I heard briefly about apprenticeships at school, but they were only shown as an option for labour or physically intensive jobs. They were shown as a second choice if you don't do well in your exams. So, at first, I was reluctant to go down the apprenticeship route. After college I wanted to go straight to work and into an office job. I was rejected continually due to lack of experience and qualifications. Then I signed up to some adult courses at St Helens Chamber. One of the tutors told me about the business administration apprenticeship and how this would give me the qualification I needed to secure a job. I signed up to a traineeship at the Chamber. They played a massive part in supporting my apprenticeship journey. Work experience in their office made me determined to get a Business Admin apprenticeship. The Chamber offered me a job as they didn't want to lose me and delivered my business administration qualification. I now help other people find and begin their apprenticeship journey. ”



Beth Large

**Q.** What's being an Apprentice like?

“ It's extremely interesting, with a lot more responsibility than I thought you would have. The amount you learn is also fascinating. It changes your outlook on your job role, company and the industry you work in. I also see how a lot of other teams work. During your apprenticeship you have lessons with your training advisor. They talk through a topic and set you tasks to complete that relate strongly to your job role. These increase your confidence and improve your performance. I enjoy the observations and reviews we have. You look back on everything you've learnt and how you apply it to your job. I love the support from your colleagues and training provider. They are eager to show you what they know and help where they can. They have also helped me get a balance between my job role and apprenticeship assignments. ”

**Q.** What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about becoming an apprentice?

“ Pick your company wisely. Choose somewhere that you will enjoy working and has a supportive culture. There are a lot of tasks and deadlines, so a supportive manager, who can help balance these with your job role, will help massively. Write everything down and date it. This helps to provide evidence of your progress. Learning is different from school, it's related to your job and the company. Being organised and prepared is an advantage. Also, look where your qualification can take you in the future. You might find an apprenticeship gets you your dream job. ”