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Apprenticeship Scheme

(Ben's Story)

Site engineer, Ben Williams, 23, joined HCE at 16, straight from school, hungry to learn every aspect of the business. HCE's investment in Ben's vocational education, onsite experience and latterly in CPD has seen Ben establish his own business with HCE's encouragement and support – providing skilled surveyors for HCE contracts. Seven years of HCE'S training and development is reaping dividends and driving HCE's strategy to secure the big contracts.

Said HCE MD Michael Howard: "Our apprentices are key to our sustained growth and profitability. To achieve our business goals we will increase staff from 120 to 200 by 2017.

"The Apprenticeship programme underpins our vision and ethos of being the best and investing in lifelong learning. We've also strengthened our corporate governance by appointing Gary Lumby MBE as our first non-executive director. His considerable financial and management expertise are helping to drive continued expansion."

HCE measures the success of its Apprenticeship programme via a series of Key Performance Indicators which include feedback from clients and partners, managers and mentors and from Leeds City College – the learning provider.

Trust us to deliver

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HARD LANDSCAPING, PAVING & EXTERNAL WORKS | DRAINAGE | HIGHWAYS & SURFACING

The programme's success is also evaluated by the number of apprentices who stay on after completing their training. An additional incentive sees apprentices given a lump sum at the end of their training. Most attend Leeds College of Building one day a week, are paid for half the day and then paid for the other half on completion of their training.

In just seven years Ben Williams, 23, progressed from site labourer and minimum wage to site engineer, earning upwards of £35k and about to purchase his first house. HCE recognised that by giving Ben a wide variety of on-the-job experience, coupled with the right support and mentoring, he was capable of acquiring the skills and confidence that would quickly propel him into a senior role.

Ben comments: "On my first contract as site engineer for that project I realised I would have to tell employees with decades more experience what to do. It was a sink or swim moment and I will be forever grateful to Michael Howard for seeing that I had what it takes to crack it - well before I knew I could do it. That takes some exceptional vision, leadership and trust. The support at every stage has been brilliant."

(Liam's Story)

Says site engineer Liam Pearson: "Starting off as a trainee site engineer I was grateful and very willing to learn from the experienced HCE team. During my 3 years I've progressed to a site engineer with support from staff at all levels. Every job is different and each throws new challenges that I have overcome through my own knowledge and with help from colleagues. As my confidence and skills grew, I underwent training courses to gain my SMSTS and First Aid certificates - giving me better insights into civil engineering and safe site management. My site engineering career is also thriving,

through my decision making, supervision, commercial awareness, setting out quality and knowledge, and my determination to exceed expectations to keep HCE the professional company it is.”

(Callum’s Story)

Accounts apprentice Callum Gabbett joined the finance department in September 2013. Once a week he attends Kaplan Business College where he is studying for an AAT accountancy qualification.

Says Callum: “My apprenticeship is first class - particularly as I work very closely with the firm’s management accountant. My weekly reviews make me feel extremely supported and HCE is really helping me embark on a career in accountancy. Joining HCE has been the best decision I ever made. I find it far more beneficial to be training and studying on the job as I can what I’m learning at college to my work – it is great that I can link my knowledge in this way. “

HCE will fund the next part of Callum’s training when he embarks on the Chartered Institute of Management Accountant (CIMA) qualification in three years.

To find out more about Howard Civil Engineering’s Apprenticeship Scheme, please contact 0113 249 8569.