

Bethany Holroyd EngTech MICE

CASE STUDY

Education and qualifications: Level 3 Advanced Level Apprenticeship in Civil Engineering for Technicians, including a Level 3 BTEC diploma in construction and the built environment and a Level 3 BTEC extended Diploma in Civil Engineering for Technicians (NVQ). HNC in Civil Engineering and Level 5 NVQ in Construction Management

Which Institution are you a member of: Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

Grade of membership: Technician Member

Current job title: Civil Engineering Technician

Company: Moray Council

Length in current job: 18 months

Please briefly describe your current role and a typical working day

I am a Civil Engineering Technician for Moray Council. I work in the structures section and my role includes carrying out bridge inspections, project managing various bridge repairs and supervising construction sites. Last year I also took on the role of Harbours Asset Manager, looking after the six council run harbours in Moray. This work varies daily. Overall I manage the development of the Harbours Asset Management System, I decide what works will be carried out within the financial year and arrange inspections and dive surveys. I also sort through inspection data, prioritising work from the recommendations. I project manage the live construction schemes, supervise the construction sites and liaise with contractors and stakeholders. Recently I completed a works plan for the next five years to ensure the harbours remain in good condition.

What is the greatest challenge you face in your job?

One of the greatest challenges at a local authority is working to constrained budgets. You want to provide the best you can for the area you work in but due to current budgets it's hard to get maintenance work on existing structures done, let alone adding new assets that may be required.

What do you most enjoy about your job?

There are lots of aspects of my job that I enjoy. I love working in the Highlands, driving around such a lovely place to jobs in locations ranging from small towns to mountain ranges. Working for a local authority is also interesting. I work in a small team of engineers and technicians that are tasked with maintaining various assets in the area. Because of the size of the team, everyone is given a lot of responsibility and varied work, which I think is fantastic for career progression. I especially love my harbours work and being by the sea, although not when it is bad weather and the waves are crashing over the sea walls! I love maintaining these structures that have been here for hundreds of years. It's a very interesting area of engineering to work in.

Please provide a brief outline of your career so far

After school I enrolled at the Leeds College of Building (LCB) to study a Business and Technician Education Council (BTEC) Level 3 Diploma in Civil Engineering over a period of two years. However, after the first year I decided the best way to progress was to enrol on an Apprenticeship.



I managed to secure an Apprenticeship at Halcrow Group and completed the last year of my BTEC course part time. I then stayed with the company as a Civil Engineering Technician for two years before joining Moray Council, also as a Civil Engineering Technician.

How did you come to choose this career path?

At high school I was trying to decide what I wanted to do. My then boyfriend, now husband, was studying a BTEC Level 3 Diploma in Civil Engineering when we met and it sounded great! A mixture of maths, science and engineering as a vocational course, instead of A levels, appealed to me. I applied for a place at Leeds College of Building and as soon as I started I knew I was on the right path. All the lecturers were fantastic and the lessons were a mixture of practical and academic work and prepared us well for working in industry.

Describe your experience as an apprentice

After my first year at LCB I secured a place at Halcrow Group as an apprentice transport planner/technician, working four days a week and at college for one. It was meant to be a three year Apprenticeship but as I had already completed a year of full time study at LCB it was shortened to two years. In fact, I worked hard enough to gain the experience I needed to complete my Level 3 NVQ in just one year, alongside studying for my Level 3 BTEC. So after a one-year Apprenticeship Halcrow promoted me to Civil Engineering Technician and I was no longer considered an apprentice. Because of my hard work they enrolled me onto a Higher Apprenticeship to obtain my Higher National Certificate (HNC) in Civil Engineering.

Would you recommend an Apprenticeship as a way to start an engineering career?

I have worked closely with the National Apprenticeship Service, various colleges, schools and businesses to promote Apprenticeships as I truly believe they are the way forward. For me, doing one was one of the best decisions I've made.

I started out in transport planning but realised after six months that it wasn't for me. I was seconded to a highways department and really enjoyed that work. If I hadn't done an Apprenticeship I wouldn't have realised this and may have studied towards something I wouldn't ultimately enjoy. Also, I was always quite nervous speaking up at school but doing the Apprenticeship gave me a lot of confidence. Another big benefit is that at the age of 22 I'm fully qualified without debt and have five years of experience in industry.

What spurred you to work towards gaining professional registration as an EngTech?

When I secured my Apprenticeship, I was lucky enough to be at the forefront of the big push for technicians back in 2011. I met ICE past President Jean Venables and she encouraged me to pursue registration as an Engineering Technician.

How did you become registered as an EngTech?

I became registered via the ICE and opted for the technical report route. I have the relevant qualifications so I only had to submit one report, based on my experience, and I collated all the evidence of my professional development.

What advice would you give someone considering professional registration as an EngTech?

Becoming registered as an EngTech with the Engineering Council is a fantastic milestone to achieve in your career and shows the industry and clients that you are competent at your job.

What is your employer's attitude? Were they supportive while you were working towards professional registration as an EngTech?

My employer was very supportive and they actively encourage employees to gain professional registration. They held regular meetings to discuss my progression and were happy to help at any stage in order for me to become professionally registered.

What are your future goals?

One future goal is to become a Chartered Engineer and I would like to gain as much experience as possible working in industry. I have worked in a lot of different areas within civil engineering and very much enjoy working in harbours and also on highways. I would like to gain more experience working in both of these areas.

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