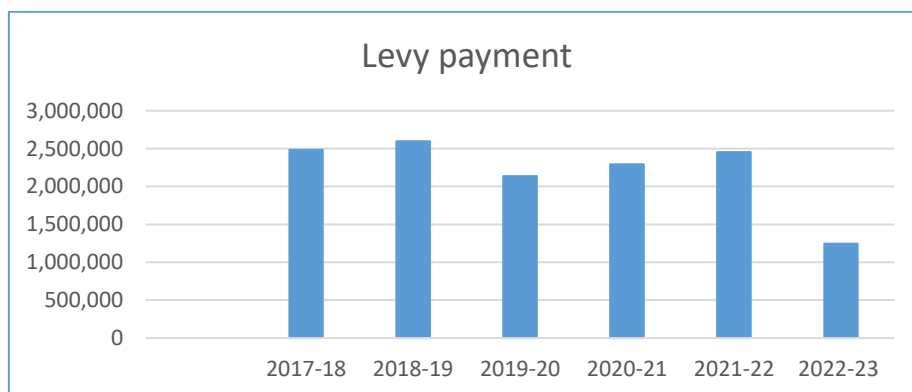


Appendix 1: Swansea Bay Apprentice Academy

The purpose of the Swansea Bay Apprentice Academy is two-fold: recruiting apprentices to new posts and offering existing staff upskilling opportunities through the apprenticeship frameworks that are available. Since 2017, Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges has supported the growth of the Academy by funding a band 5 post and an apprentice within the team.

Apprenticeship Levy

The introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy (0.05% of payroll) in April 2017 was the prompt to the creation of the Apprentice Academy. Welsh Government (WG) administers the Apprenticeship Levy differently than England by transferring the monies collected through the levy to approved training providers to fund the qualification cost of the apprenticeship frameworks that staff complete. Swansea Bay University Health Board (SBUHB) currently pays the Apprenticeship Levy of an average of £2.4m per annum. This is monitored against the cost of the frameworks that the training providers deliver for staff quarterly to ensure return on investment. The illustration below indicates the amount paid per year.

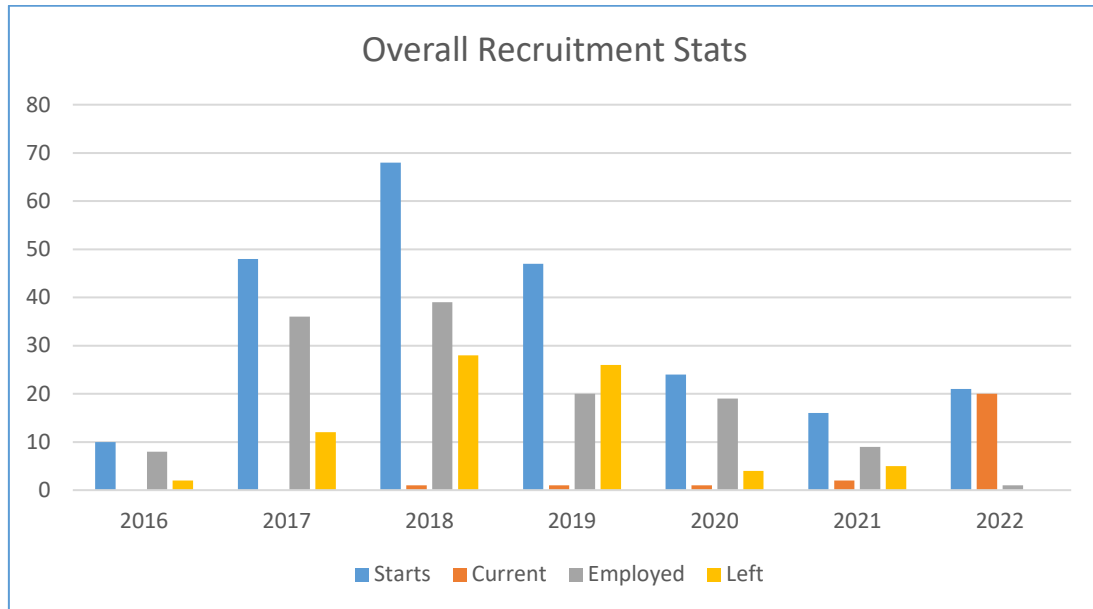


Recruitment of apprentices

The apprentice rate of pay is decided by each NHS Wales organisation in line with their policies and discussions with trade union representatives. This variation can make it difficult to compare the recruitment and retention rates across NHS Wales. This, along with differing workforce planning and recruitment needs, results in organisations offering varying apprentice opportunities.

In SBUHB, the initial pay rate was lower than other organisations. Initially apprenticeship recruitment was ambitious, introduced to offset recovery and sustainability plans and the organisation agreed to pay the nationally agreed hourly apprentice rate. This resulted in apprenticeships being considered as part of the vacancy control process as opposed to band 2 / 3 A4C posts. The large number of apprentices recruited initially were supported by the dedicated Apprentice Academy and their ability to work with departments on the recruitment process and provide pastoral care to new apprentices in post.

In June 2022, the organisation became a 'living wage employer' and the apprentice rate of pay was increased to the national living wage of £9.50 per hour. This will increase to £10.42 per hour in April 2023. ([National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage rates - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates)). Whilst there may be other deciding factors linked to a reduction in apprentice intake, a higher wage may have had an impact on the decision of some departments to recruit an apprentice.



Key points from graph:

- Fewer apprentices were retained when the Apprentice Academy was first established as they were not linked to vacancies
- Increase in retention in 2021 / 2022 where apprenticeships are linked to substantive posts

We have changed our recruitment methods for apprenticeships in line with workforce planning. Apprenticeships are now linked to current vacancies within the Service Group / department staffing establishment at band 2 and band 3 levels. On successful completion of the programme, apprentices slot into current vacancies and this has resulted in a rise in retention. This represents a cost saving for the department for the term of the apprenticeship, and experienced and trained staff able to work immediately and progress onto higher-level qualifications as part of a career development pathway.

The example below shows the cost saving for Theatre Support Worker apprentices who are recruited on a 24-month fixed term contract and completing a level 3 in Perioperative Care before moving into band 3 roles.

Theatre Support Worker Apprentices	Year 1 - NLW	Year 2 - NLW	Year 3 - A4C Band 3
Hourly Rate	£9.50	£10.40	£11.85
Annual salary	£18,525.00	£20,280.00	£23,107.50
On costs (28.68%)	£984.00	£1,139.00	£1,959.00
Total Apprentice Anticipated Cost (pa)	£19,509.00	£21,419.00	£25,066.50
Cost Saving per year	£5,557.50	£3,647.50	
Total Cost Saving per apprentice over 2 years	£9,205.00		

The national living wage and current apprentice rate is increasing to £10.42 per hour from April 2023, this is only just below the current entry point on the A4C band 2 scale, which is £10.62. It is unclear how this will affect the band 2 scale if the Welsh Government and NHS Wales organisations are to consider being 'living wage employers'. A potential cost saving would be for eligible posts that are currently band 2 to be changed to apprenticeships paid at the national living wage and moving into band 3 posts on completion as in the Theatre example above.

Frameworks

Current recruitment is positive and we are working with departments to meet their needs and offer apprenticeships into a number of teams; we have 33 apprentices recruited into posts completing a wide variety of frameworks including:

- AAT (Accountancy) L2
- Business Admin L2 + L3
- Clinical Health Care Support L2 + L3
- Data Analytics L4
- Digital Application Support L3
- ICT L2 + L3
- Pathology L3
- Perioperative Care L3
- Social Media and Marketing L3

The Data Analytics level 4 programme came about because the Transformation Team were struggling to recruit qualified data analysts in the competitive labour market. The Apprentice Academy, training provider and the department worked together to develop a job description that met the needs of the role and fitted in with the qualification requirements. This example of role redesign could work in other areas with recruitment issues in specific roles. Please refer to Kevin's story as an example (page 8).

The Apprentice Academy team are closely involved in working with Health Education Improvement Wales (HEIW) work-based learning team who have the remit of authorising and issuing the clinical based apprenticeship frameworks within Wales. Part of this work is to develop and review apprenticeship qualifications to meet the

organisational and recruitment needs. These offer alternative routes into the organisation in newly designed roles at different levels and allow staff to upskill and to recruit into new posts in the following areas:

- Allied Health Professionals – *Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Dietetics, Podiatry*
- Facilities and Support Services
- Health Care Science – *Pathology; Clinical Imaging;*
- Health Informatics
- Maternity and Paediatrics
- Perioperative Care

Future Workforce

The Welsh Government’s Chief Nursing Officer’s 2022-24 priorities include “supporting new workforce models of care, for example consideration of policy direction for band 4 registered roles in support of ‘team around the patient’” ([Chief Nursing Officer for Wales: priorities 2022 to 2024 | GOV.WALES](#)). This includes the role of the Higher Level Health Care Support Worker and Nurse Associate which apprenticeship frameworks could help support.

Currently there is no level 4 work-based learning clinical health care support framework that would allow current band 2 and 3 Health Care Support Workers to upskill to that level rather than move into the academic route of nurse training.

The Welsh Government programme for government 2021 – 2026 states that they will “create 125,000 all-age apprenticeships” ([Welsh Government Programme for government: update \[HTML\] | GOV.WALES](#)). There is also the focus on offering more level 3 apprenticeships in line with the Apprenticeship Commissioning programme “developing higher level skills: focusing on apprenticeships at level 3 and above, where returns tend to be higher and at the level most successful European countries deliver” ([ACP Programme Specification \(gov.wales\)](#)).

This focus on higher level apprenticeships lends itself to offering level 3 frameworks as part of our recruitment strategy to develop new roles with development opportunities continuing once in post, as opposed to like for like vacancies. An example from current recruitment advertisements within SBUHB:

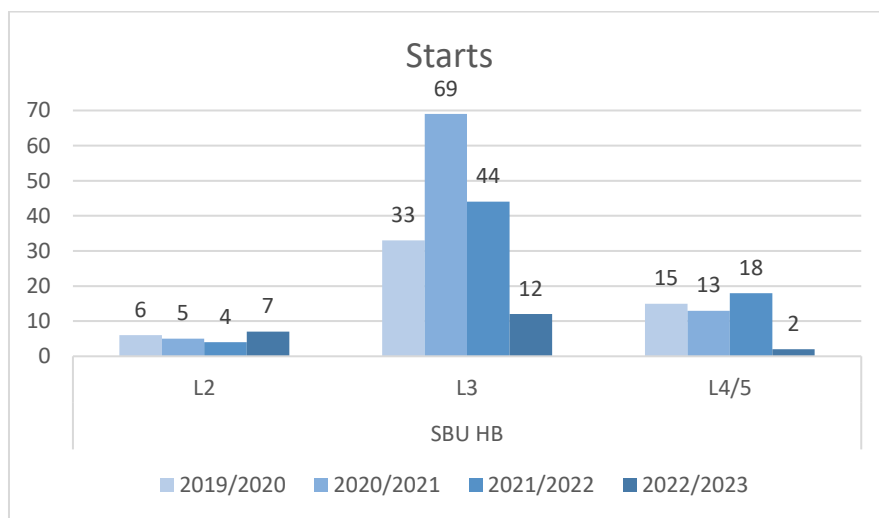
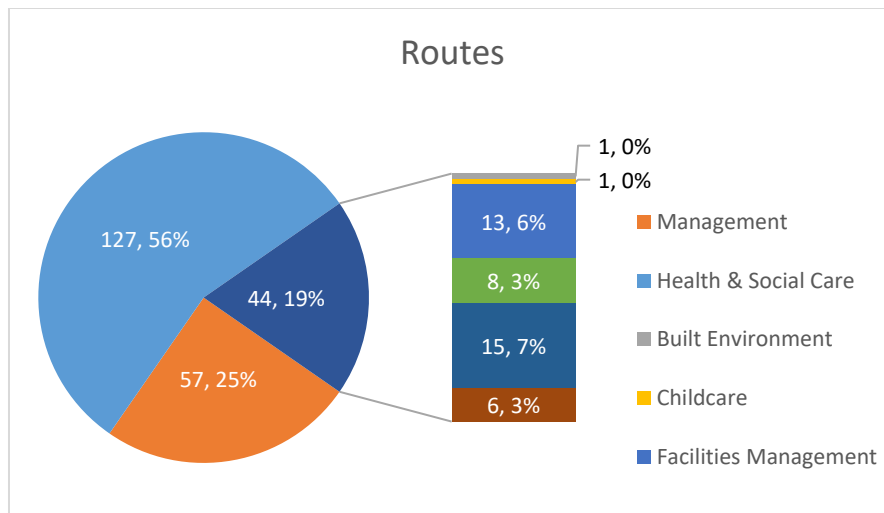
Job role	Current starting salary	Apprentice rate	Qualification	Cost saving
Ward Admin band 3	£21,730 pa/ £11.14 per hour	£18,525pa / £9.50 per hour	Digital Application Support L3	£3,205 pa
Pharmacy Assistant band 3	£21,730 pa/ £11.14 per hour	£18,525pa / £9.50 per hour	Pharmacy Tech L3	£3,205 pa

Existing Staff

As mentioned in the introduction, the purpose of the Apprentice Academy is to identify training needs for existing staff and offer apprenticeships to help with career development and staff and skill retention. This can help with upskilling and talent management and allow staff to gain qualifications to progress through the organisation or move into other careers. Members of the Apprentice Academy have attended the AMSR workforce meetings to advise on apprenticeship opportunities to meet the challenges of recruitment and upskilling staff, and liaise regularly with colleagues in workforce planning.

We work closely with Gower College Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges to identify staff training needs and offer appropriate qualifications. There are currently 244 staff enrolled on programmes from our main training providers:

Gower College – 164



Neath Port Talbot Group of Colleges – 78 (stats not available at time of writing)
 Talk Training – 5 (stats not available at time of writing)

The Learning and Development team are also linking with training providers to establish the levels of existing internal management development programmes and offering candidates the opportunity to work with the colleges to complete extra work and gain an accredited qualification.

Success Stories

The Apprentice Academy has had a number of successes since its inception and continues to adapt and respond to the organisational needs and work with the communities that we serve to offer a wide range of entry points into the organisation and career development opportunities for existing staff.

In February 2020, the Apprentice Academy won Macro Employer of the Year in the National Training Federation Wales Apprentice Awards and a number of apprentices have won awards including:

- Alice Slennett – Work Based Learner of the Year, Bridge FM (2017)
- Amber Rogers – Neath Port Talbot College Apprentice of the year (2019)
- Nia Isaac – shortlisted for UK Apprentice of the Year in Unsung Heroes Awards (2020)
- Carl Dunning – Gower College Swansea Apprentice of the Year (2020)
- Abigail Norris – Foundation Apprentice of the Year (2021)

Staff and former apprentices have also gone on to career success after completing their qualifications and progressed within the organisation to high levels.

The promotion of apprenticeships available within the organisation continues, including regular 'Well Done Wednesdays' through our Twitter account. We work regularly with our Career Development partners within the team to attend careers fairs, school events and jobs fairs to raise the profile of the Apprentice Academy; this leads to continuous enquiries from outside the organisation asking about vacancies.

Please refer to the section on success stories of profiles of some apprentices.

Future plans

SBUHB can use apprenticeships as a valuable recruitment and staff development / retention tool, and they should be considered as part of the Recruitment and Retention Strategy in line with workforce planning needs.

The Apprentice Academy is celebrating Apprenticeship Week from 6th – 12th February 2023 ([Home - National Apprenticeship Week](#)) with a number of information events and working together with our training provider partners to help support their Open Days for potential apprentices by offering an insight into the opportunities available within SBUHB.

The Apprentice Academy is also preparing to host a stakeholder engagement event “Apprenticeships the Swansea Bay Way” within the next few months where Service Groups, HR Business Partners and staffing leads will celebrate, learn and discuss how to better promote the variety of apprenticeships available. We will use the information to support future recruitment of apprentices and upskilling of staff in hard to recruit groups including:

- Admin based roles
- Health Care Support Workers
- Support Services

This engagement event will show the content of the qualifications and work with attendees to identify any posts that can be advertised as apprenticeships or programmes that existing staff can enrol on to enable them to develop and progress in their roles.

The Apprentice Academy team will continue to meet with the Workforce Planning leads to better understand the needs of the workforce in different areas and advise on the development of new roles at higher levels to help support the registered recruitment issues.

The Apprentice Academy will also work with Service Groups to identify staffing establishment savings by recruiting apprentices in posts using vacancy funding; resulting in well-trained, experienced and supported staff completing apprenticeships and moving into permanent roles helping with retention.

Some apprentices success stories

Data Analyst Apprentice - Kevin Delgado

Course
Level 4 Data Analyst
Apprenticeship

Provider
Gower College
Swansea

Department
Transformation Team

“ How do you feel starting as an apprentice has benefited you and your development? ”

I feel that it has helped me understand and gain knowledge within the Data Analytics role through preparing myself for progression in this chosen field and gaining experience. Also, to build up the foundation knowledge through focused training and putting my skills into practice.

“ Do you feel well supported while undertaking your qualification? ”

Indeed! My line manager has provided me with a lot of support and help while undertaking my qualification; he is very polite and understanding, and he is always keen to provide me with all the necessary tools and training needed throughout my modules.

“ Would you recommend an apprenticeship? ”



Yes, I consider an apprenticeship a fantastic opportunity to gain knowledge and experience. Definitely recommended for anyone interested to learn new skills. Personally, this has been a fantastic way to learn and gain experience as an employee in the UK.



Eve Andrews

Apprentice Health Care Support Worker



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Tell us about yourself!

My name is Eve Andrews, I'm 20 years old and currently undertaking a HCSW Apprenticeship at Morriston Hospital. After leaving Gowerton School in June 2019 with 10 GCSE's grade A-C and 2 A levels I applied for the Childrens Nursing Degree at Swansea University. Unfortunately I was unsuccessful with my University application however felt I had gained further knowledge of the Health Care Sector from the interview experience. My heart was still in Childrens Nursing and I remained positive, enthusiastic and was able to motivate myself to research all the options available including the apprenticeship route. I decided to apply for the apprenticeship position within SBUHB and was due to start in April 2020 which was unfortunately delayed due to the pandemic. I eventually started my placement in December in the Cardiac Short Stay Unit where I have remained.

What made you want to sign up for/do the course?

Nursing is a very challenging and demanding career however making a difference to patients lives will be rewarding. I was keen to learn how to provide nursing care and develop clinical, management and leadership skills and therefore felt that starting this journey through a Health Care Support Worker Apprenticeship would allow me to progress to a career in specialist child health within NHS Wales.

I felt that the Apprenticeship route would better suit my learning style as I prefer to learn on the job. It would strengthen my understanding of the quality of care that I would like to be part of delivering. It would also allow me to witness first hand Health Care Professionals dealing with patients and give me the opportunity to engage with a team of people rather than sitting in a classroom every day. In addition I would be practically learning the core values of NHS Wales which would reinforced my understanding of the patient centred care and multidisciplinary teams that are involved.

Would you recommend others to do this course?

I would 100% recommend this course to anyone that wants to pursue a career as a Health Care professional. This route gives you the opportunity to progress to Level 3, 4 and beyond within the Health Board opening doors to many other areas within NHS Wales. The Apprenticeship route has given me the opportunity to be part of a team and chat to different patient's everyday which has boosted my confidence and confirmed to me that this is my chosen career path.



Update: Eve has gone on to secure a permanent position in the Cardiac Short Stay Unit, congratulations Eve!



Contact SBU.apprenticeships@wales.nhs.uk for more information.



Jamie Cameron

Medical Electronics Engineering Apprentice



Bwrdd Technol Ffisiocel
Rheol Aderdwyl
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Jamie is a 22 year old apprentice nearing the end of his four year scheme within Medical Equipment Management Services (MEMS) at Swansea Bay University Health Board.

Tell us about yourself!

I joined the MEMS team in October 2017 with a day's release in college once a week. I have achieved my BTEC in electrical and electronic engineering during the first two years (2017-2019) and currently working towards finishing my HNC in the same subject this summer (2019-2021).

What is your role within the Health Board?

My role consists of shadowing my colleagues perform maintenance and repair tasks on devices throughout the hospital such as vital signs monitors, infusion pumps and defibrillators. Now that I have been in the job a few years I have been trained up on multiple devices either in house or by the manufacturer and am able to carry out many of these tasks myself.

We also make sure each ward has the correct allocation of equipment and communicate with staff to resolve any problems they have regarding the medical devices to ensure optimal patient care.

Success story!



Jamie has been very successful within his role, and even got to meet virtually with the First Minister at the beginning of this year, to tell him about his apprenticeship journey.

Jamie has now gone on to secure a permanent position in the NHS as a 'Clinical Technologist'.



Very well deserved and we wish him every success in his new role!

Charlotte Edwards

Business Administration Apprentice



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALLES

Healthcare Profound
B&A
Swansea Bay University
Health Board



Charlotte is a 20 year old apprentice who was recruited into the **Audiology Team** at Neath Port Talbot Hospital in 2020.

How was your experience of the scheme?

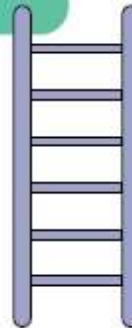
I really enjoyed having the opportunity to work within the NHS in a difficult time as I feel it has massively increased my confidence and independence.

Working as an apprentice in the NHS has made me excited to progress in my career within the health service. I was provided with a lot of support from the apprenticeship team and my college tutor, which made the experience a lot smoother.

I would definitely recommend this apprentice scheme to friends as it can lead to multiple opportunities in future.

What are you doing now?

I have just started a new role within the Health Board as a clerical officer on a new project for Rheumatology in NPT. I am very excited to start the project and looking forward to see where it will take me.



The Audiology Department

The Audiology Department in Swansea Bay University Health Board consistently recruit apprentices to assist within their Administration Team, and enjoy seeing them grow into confident and valued SBUHB employees. The department have apprentices in both NPT and Singleton Hospital. Their latest addition to the team is a local 18 year old who is excited to start her journey in the Health Board.





Seren Jenkins



Seren joined SBUHB as a Welsh Translation apprentice in HQ in December 2018.



"I translate documents from English into welsh and sometimes welsh into English. Anything from job titles to annual reports. I've also started to work on advertising the welsh language, I've made many posters, coasters and mouse mats etc"

“

I hope to continue working with the Welsh language, maybe as a language officer, I hope ill be able to speak to younger people and show them how important the language is and how it can help them with their future.

”

“

I am able to take my time and learn more about the job as I go along. I enjoy knowing that I am keeping the welsh language alive and that I am an important role. I also feel honoured as I am the first person in Wales to do this apprenticeship.

”

Job Opportunity: Office Admin Apprentice





Nia Isaac



Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Bae Abertawe
Swansea Bay University
Health Board

Nia joined SBUHB as a Health Care Support apprentice for SALT in October 2017.

“As a Higher Level SALT/ Dietetic Assistant Apprentice, I’m lucky enough to have a role which consists of two parts, Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) and Dietetics. I have been in this post for almost 2 years now and I am loving every bit of it. With dietetics, I go out to shadow my line manager on initial assessments and then go out to the patients homes on my own to review a period of time after. I take weights or MUAC measurements, food histories and prescribe any nutritional supplements which they may require. The other half of my role is SALT, and this can include assisting my other line manager doing swallow assessments, or I go out on my own to see patients with communication difficulties such as MND patients, after effects of a stroke or Parkinson’s patients, In each session I follow a therapy plan set by my line manager. Therapy can vary from drawing, writing, vocal exercises, using computer programmes, reading and functional tasks, for example, or using a bank card over the phone or using a shop check out. I also go out to care homes or patients to train or give further advice on how to prepare thickened drinks. These tasks come with a mountain of admin tasks to follow, or to do prior visits. I book visits, complete and send prescription requests, create communication aids, communication books/ boards, refer to further health teams that the person may require, attend various trainings, and complete the notes following a visit and feedback to my line managers to make a plan on how to progress”



“ I hope that I am kept on as a Band 3 assistant in both Dietetics and SALT at the end of my apprenticeship, and then eventually go to university to become fully qualified in the field which I decide to choose. (It’s a very hard decision which I am putting off for as long as I can). ”

“ I love that my job allows me to meet so many inspirational people, and being able to make a difference to their day. Whether it be through our health services or just simply visiting someone and having a chat, and giving that person the company they have waited all week for. ”



Apprenticeship Case Studies

How have the schemes benefited others?



Patricia Jones - Senior Project Manager

Patricia undertook **ILM Level 5 In Leadership and Management**



The apprentice academy is a great opportunity to enable staff to undertake courses which brings benefits to both the organisation and individuals. This course has enhanced my skills base and given me confidence to tackle my work programme & commence different ways of working. The course gave me new tools/techniques and how to use these within my daily work..

Bethany Jones - Undergraduate Admin Assistant

Bethany completed a **Level 2 Business Admin Qualification** and is now currently working towards **Leadership and Management Level 3**.

'Doing this qualification helped me to gain an understanding in how businesses run, and helped me to develop the skills required to work in a public sector organisation like the NHS.'



Pathology Department

The Pathology Department are currently enrolling their **8th** apprentice!



For them, apprenticeship schemes mean:



- Growing their department workforce in a way which suits them
- Flexible, supported scheme
- Cost effective recruitment