



“Climbing the learning ladder”

Name: Cameron Maxwell | **Job title:** Level 2 Water Network Operative Graduate

My brother works for South Staffordshire Plc and I had heard good things. I saw the advert for the water network operative apprenticeship on the Gov website and decided to apply. I had never done anything like this before. I did a year at Walsall College studying a sports course and went straight into the apprenticeship from there. It was totally different, but I just wanted a change. I expected the apprenticeship to be mainly classroom-based but it was more hands-on, which I preferred.

I started the apprenticeship in 2021 and completed it in 2023. In the classroom, I learnt about topics such as customer service and health and safety and what could go wrong on-site. I also picked up communication skills to help with chatting to customers when they might not be happy.

I have progressed my learning further since the apprenticeship and am currently doing my Level 3 in civil engineering. The role involves working on-site, treating and cleaning sewage water. I'm currently working on a 6-7 month project so it's not a quick process. **The 'learning on the job' element is true.** There's always a different scenario that could pop up. I have picked up leadership skills as there's only two of us who are doing this job so if my colleague isn't around the responsibilities are on me, which means I need to be confident.

My biggest achievement so far is passing my level 2 apprenticeship and going on to my level 3, which I will finish in June. I will then go on to my level 4 Higher National Certificate in June, hopefully. In the future, I hope to continue building my knowledge and confidence in the job.

One piece of advice I would give to new apprentices is to be organised and stay on top of the academic work. Once you've done it, you don't have to think about it.