

# MODERN APPRENTICES IN NHSSCOTLAND



## CASE STUDY

OWEN BREWER

Modern Apprenticeship (MA) in  
Engineering Maintenance (Level 3)  
NHS Lothian

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**Q: BEFORE THE MODERN APPRENTICESHIP (MA) PROGRAMME**

I left school after doing Standard Grades as I wanted to get an apprenticeship with Babcock Shipbuilding. After a year at college working towards this apprenticeship, I wasn't able to get on to their scheme. At this point, I started to look for apprenticeships elsewhere and found the NHS were offering them.

**Q: TELL US ABOUT WHY YOU APPLIED TO BE A MODERN APPRENTICE IN NHSSCOTLAND**

I really like doing practical work, and discovered that NHS was taking on apprentices for the first time in many years. I thought that this could mean that there would be jobs available at the end of the MA programme. It seemed like a really good opportunity.

**Q: WHAT DID YOU DO IN YOUR MA PROGRAMME?**

The first year was very much college based, and I learned a lot of practical skills, including using tools and machines. After that, the remaining time was very much work-based learning, developing my practical skills – from working on boilers to working on steam heating systems. Because many of the buildings are quite old, they can be very challenging environments to work in – but you learn very interesting things.

**Q: WHEN DID YOU FINISH – AND WHAT HAVE YOU DONE SINCE THEN?**

I'm in the final stages of the MA programme, and will finish completely in July 2014. I've already secured a permanent post as a Maintenance Engineer and will start that as soon as my apprenticeship finishes.

### Q: WHAT WAS THE BEST THING ABOUT THE MA PROGRAMME?

As well as learning all the skills I need, the MA programme has allowed me to progress more quickly than if I had simply joined the maintenance team. I get to take responsibility for tasks, and get a great deal of job satisfaction from what I do.

### Q: WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE?

For engineering, it would be useful to learn some more complementary skills such as electrical skills. As an apprentice, you tend to work in your trade area but the NHS needs multi-skilled tradespeople. I know that I'll learn these skills when I move into my permanent post but having the opportunity to be multi-skilled earlier would have been useful.

### Q: AND THE FUTURE?

I'm aiming to complete my HND and would like to progress on to a degree course. Having a degree would let me have a greater understanding of engineering systems and help me be a better problem solver. It would also help me move up the career ladder. At this stage, I have no idea where I will end up. However, working in the NHS has given me a really valuable skillset and the MA programme has allowed me to really learn about working in the service.

Thanks to Owen and all his colleagues for enabling this study to be written up and shared.

Owen has almost completed his 4-year Modern Apprenticeship Programme.

#### DETAILS:

#### MA Engineering Level 3 (Engineering Maintenance)

Owen's programme included:

##### YEAR 1:

Full time in college to complete NC Manufacturing Engineering and SVQ3 Engineering Maintenance

##### YEARS 2 & 3:

Working plus day release at college to complete HNC Engineering Systems

##### YEAR 4:

Working plus day release at college to complete HND Engineering Systems

##### PLACEMENTS:

Western General, Victoria Hospital, Sick Children's, Lauriston Buildings, Royal Edinburgh

## MORE INFORMATION ON MODERN APPRENTICESHIPS

NES has published two guides to help staff in NHSScotland make best use of MAs

- 'Working to Learn and Learning to Work: An introduction to MAs'
- 'Moving Forward With Modern Apprenticeships: a step-by-step guide to setting up MA programmes in NHS Scotland'.

Pdfs of both guides can be downloaded from:- <http://www.vqfinder.nes.scot.nhs.uk/news/moving-forward-with-modern-apprenticeships.aspx>

Hard copies can be ordered by emailing [educational.services@nes.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:educational.services@nes.scot.nhs.uk)

## MORE ABOUT THIS PROGRAMME

This case study illustrates some of the work undertaken by NHS Lothian to support young people to take the first steps in a career in NHSScotland. For more information about NHS Lothian's MA Programme contact [Norman.Lee@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:Norman.Lee@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

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Published Spring 2014