

# Level 5 Management & Leadership Apprenticeship

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### **What Apprenticeship are you currently undertaking?**

Level 5 Operations/ Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard & CMI Level 5 Diploma in Management and Leadership.

### **What were your reasons for wanting to choose an Apprenticeship?**

The reason for me choosing an Apprenticeship was firstly down to my line manager. I had thought about applying but decided I was too busy. I have always been interested in technical leadership and my line manager recommended that I should go with this as it would really give me a good base of leadership and management knowledge. For my role, it's really important that I understand about team management and the Apprenticeship programme is diverse so it's not just about management. I've also been wanting to do something on line management learning tools and techniques.

### **How has the programme been delivered and has it met your expectations?**

The programme has been delivered completely online, all by video conferencing. For me there has been a massive improvement over the course period. I was slightly disappointed that there would be no face-to-face, but from the second webinar Pearson TQ did a lot of collaborative sessions which worked really well, and I got to know more members of Thales. That has

really helped meet my expectations and develop other relationships with people within Thales. Pearson TQ also gave us pre-workshop packs which changed things a lot for me. Essentially the packs asked a series of questions and you had to go away and research the questions so when you had the sessions, it was a great discussion rather than just listening. The pre-workshop packs also helped you learn for the assignments so I didn't feel so pressured.

### **What's it like being an apprentice with Thales and Pearson TQ?**

Support from the company has been the best thing. I have recognised that there are a lot of people who want to help and support you. Ginny from Pearson TQ is really helpful and supportive – she is quick to respond to any questions and that has been excellent. My line manager has also been really supportive throughout the whole thing. They have been monitoring my growth throughout and have taken an interest in my development.

### **While completing your apprenticeship have you felt safe and are you confident that your welfare is an important consideration for both Pearson TQ and your employer?**

Absolutely I have felt safe throughout the whole thing and Pearson TQ and Thales are always checking that you are ok and let you raise any concerns throughout the programme. ►

## **What have you most enjoyed about the programme?**

The assignments. Having dedicated time to think about how you would apply these tools and techniques and how I can apply these to my role.

## **What is the most interesting thing you've learned on the programme so far?**

I enjoyed the piece about leadership and different leadership types. I was aware of them but to proactively think about them during the course is a really fascinating subject area for me.

## **What challenges or issues did you encounter as part of your Apprenticeship and how are you overcoming them?**

Balancing work and this course has been a challenge. Although I am given the 20% off-the-job time, I have to personally balance that in my calendar on a week-to-week basis. I've found that if I am really up front about the work I have to do with those I am working with, then it has helped me to set boundaries and develop a key skill.

## **What support did you have from your employer whilst on programme?**

My line manager has been a huge support – he has been involved with all the sessions with Pearson TQ and he has understood and provided feedback to them. We have also had side discussions so he can understand any challenges I have had, and talk them through. Head of Engineering and Head of HR have provided support specifically around career development. I've had two sessions with them over the period – they talk through what I am learning and how I can develop that in the future. I have had quarterly session with Teresa and David from Pearson TQ and again they have both been very supportive.

## **What impact has the programme had on you both professionally and personally?**

Professionally – I recognise I have become more confident especially in my line management – this has been reflected back to me by my line manager. Also it has opened up my ability to use tools and skills – especially the Grow model. I have been much better at reflecting on what is important to me and where I want to grow in my career. I have changed roles during the course, which supports me better in terms of the skills I want to develop.

Personally - Covid has been a challenge and I have had to find mechanism to support myself throughout that. I try and make myself go for a walk every morning which has a big impact on my resilience and also helped me to reflect on what I need to do during the day so that I can be the best I can be.

## **Can you tell us a bit about your current role? How have the skills and knowledge that you gained from studying an Apprenticeship helped you in your current role?**

Firstly I am a line manager so the knowledge we gain during the Team Development part of the course has really played into that role especially around Covid. I took direct action from that, meeting with members on a regular basis and setting up group sessions. As a Systems Engineer I cover a lot of aspects within the role – technical, architecture, strategic or team development, resources – working closely with project managers and commercial teams so a lot of cross-collaboration with departments. This course has really given me appreciation of what they have to consider, so I'm better equipped to work with those cross-company areas and support them. ►

## **Does the practical side of your Apprenticeship help in your current role?**

Yes, learning sessions involve talking with other people across Thales about day-to-day challenges and how we can use the materials learnt on the course to address those challenges.

## **What are your future career aspirations? What do you plan to do once you have completed the qualification – how will you use it to support your future career?**

I'd like to enjoy my new role after the course finishes, reflect back and pick on some specific techniques to use in my new role. I don't know specifics but I definitely want to look at courses around strategic technical expertise, stakeholder management and engagement. My aspirations in technical leadership will really help support me in achieving this.

## **Would you recommend a Management Apprenticeship to others?**

Absolutely – I think anybody who is interested in any type of leadership role needs to have a really good understanding of the broad areas of management. All aspects of what we have covered on the course can really help broaden your thinking in a leadership role. It's not just about the technical problems you have in front of you, it's much wider than that. And it's great if you're interested in senior management roles.

## **What advice would you give to someone just starting the programme?**

Plan - think about how you're going to make time to do the assessments, make the time for yourself that the course requires. It catches up with you very quickly if you get behind. ■

## **A brief overview of the Level 5 Apprenticeship programme**

In 2019, Pearson TQ partnered with Thales UK to develop a leadership development programme for their aspiring middle managers. The programme aimed to build leadership capacity by identifying and growing existing talent to create a community of leaders. Thales UK wanted to enhance its existing management training, expand accreditations, and provide a more consistent approach to leadership across the Thales UK group. They wanted to achieve this by using Thales UK's business objectives, bringing the best of all the management training programmes together and offering an externally recognised qualification with access to innovative new learning and a wide network of stakeholders.

Thales UK wanted to develop a programme to:

- Provide a platform to develop their people's potential support leaders to embed a learning culture by encouraging the managers of participants to do things differently
- Develop leaders' confidence, which would increase team performance, resulting in more High Performing Teams (HPT) and improved levels of employee engagement
- Develop strong leaders to manage change and digital transformation.

Pearson TQ took a collaborative approach to the co-creation of learning content with Thales UK to ensure a truly bespoke, tailored learning experience, individualised for each learner.

All learners receive the same standard of training, regardless of geography, and are assigned a dedicated Skills Coach, who acts as a mentor throughout the programme. Pearson TQ delivers a blended learning solution that includes: 1-to-1 personalised coaching, regular progress reviews, group virtual classroom and workplace learning, online resources, employer-focused work-based projects, peer learning sets and discussion, remote distance learning, and holistic assessment and observations are conducted throughout the programme to ensure progression.

As part of our continuous improvement, we continue to work in partnership with Thales UK to gain feedback from them about programme delivery/content which allows us to tailor the service offered to meet their specific needs.