



# Apprenticeships Case Study

## UK Power Networks

In September 2020, Pearson TQ partnered with UK Power Networks to support them in delivering the Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship programme as part of launching their new Leadership Academy.

The first cohort of apprentices are nearing the end of their programme, so we caught up with two of them to find out about their experience so far.

*“To meet the challenges of tomorrow, we need to equip our managers today.”*

**Basil Scarsella**

CEO, UK Power Networks

**To meet the workforce challenges of tomorrow, UK Power Networks launched their Leadership Academy to equip their managers with the personal and professional leadership skills they need to succeed in the changing world of work.**

Pearson TQ partnered with UK Power Networks to deliver a seamless route for progression for their operational managers, offering them the benefits of professional accreditation and the skills, knowledge and behaviors attributed to the Level 5 management apprenticeship.

All learners have benefited from Pearson TQ's blended learning solution, providing a bespoke tailored learning experience individualised for each learner such as online group training, webinars and digital learning. To ensure progression, holistic assessment and observations have also been conducted throughout the programme. A dedicated skills coach is assigned to each apprentice, acting as their facilitator and mentor throughout the programme. Successful apprentices receive a Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager Apprenticeship Standard and a CMI Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management. ▶

Firstly, we asked our learners what made them decide to take the programme?

**Andrei Ursache** is a Performance Manager and knew “it could give me the skills, knowledge and behaviours to move up the career ladder. It is something that I have always wanted to do so I can become a better me.”

Working as a Connection Services Team Leader, **Danielle Walters** was aware “previously there wasn't much of an opportunity as leaders to gain a qualification as normally the technical route for employees is the preferred route that they go down. So once I understood what would be involved, I knew it would be really beneficial for my own development, and to learn on the job was the best way to do it.”



**Andrei Ursache**



**Danielle Walters**

Next, we asked Andrei and Danielle how they managed to juggle the apprenticeship programme and their heavy workload?

“You have to prioritise” says **Andrei**. “We always had our sessions as half a day so I would then allocate the other half day to do the work. I have done two qualifications in one – Functional Skills and the apprenticeship – and all my classes were arranged around my schedule. The tutors were very involved, it was all very structured, so any time you needed support the tutors were there. I'm not saying it wasn't difficult. If you left it, the work would build up so if you didn't take your foot off the gas, it would be fine. I didn't leave it, I dealt with it straight away.”

**Danielle** found what has worked best for her is “utilising my time but getting the support from the people around me if I need it. Taking one day a week to do my apprenticeship adds additional pressure on my colleagues and it does, over time, affect how I communicate with my team. The management team that I work with have been forthcoming with their support as we work as a tight knit unit. They understand that I am doing this for a reason and so it's been a little bit of give and take and has worked well.” ▶



How have they found the course so far and what advantages has it brought to their current role?

For **Andrei**, "It's offered me something that I felt was missing. It's given me that extra boost that I needed. By doing the apprenticeship and all the things that I have learnt, it will put me in a better position for career progression. I believe that is a result of doing the apprenticeship as it's given me the skills and knowledge that I needed as well as an opportunity to progress to other roles. I've also learnt more about myself. It's made me more self-aware and more considerate of other people. It makes you more compassionate to those around you which has made me become a better me."

"I've been taken out of my comfort zone and I've learnt a lot about myself and about the way that I work" say **Danielle**. "I've led and managed people differently since starting the apprenticeship especially when it comes to managing remote teams and it's shown me how to communicate better with people. I've been in conversation with one of my directors who has been mentoring and supporting me, so the next step is to take a step up. It highlights that this course has provided me with the confidence to position myself in a way that I can deliver that next role successfully."



Finally, we asked our apprentices whether they would encourage their colleagues to choose an apprenticeship?

**Andrei** clearly sees the benefits of choosing an apprenticeship – "I would definitely encourage them to just go for it. Yes, you might find yourself not having enough time, it might look difficult, it might look like a lot of theory, but Pearson has been great as well as the CMI support through the membership which is always available. This apprenticeship shapes the managers of the future."

"I would absolutely encourage colleagues to do it", says **Danielle**. "I think there is never not a time to learn or do something that will take you out of your comfort zone. For me, it's been poignant for my own career and it would be for anybody else. The apprenticeship has been the best part for me because I can link it directly to something that I have actually done – it's not using scenario-based situations its real-life experience. I think apprenticeships are the best way to learn and I've really enjoyed it." ■

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