

Endless Possibilities

Walsall Council's
Apprenticeship Programme

DAY IN THE LIFE OF AN APPRENTICE

MARIANNA SOLODCAIA



Apprentice Name: Marianna Solodcaia

Service Area:

Community, Equality & Cohesion

Directorate:

Resources & Transformation

Type of Apprenticeship:

Business and Administration Level 3

Previous Qualifications:

Diploma in Economic Science

School:

High school in Republic of Moldova

Training Provider: Juniper

What is your Job Title? Can you explain what you do on a day to day basis?

I am a Community Cohesion and Engagement Officer working as part of the Communities, Equality and Cohesion Team and was successful in being offered the post after considering my

performance as an Apprentice and my voluntary work.

My role is very diverse in terms of activities and can mean spending 1 hour speaking to an individual regarding Mental Health Awareness and then the next working with our LGBT communities to develop a hate crime initiative. In that respect, no day is ever the same. I write grant agreements, carry out project and finance monitoring, facilitate meetings and am developing a borough wide initiative called the Walsall Smile Project, trying to encourage people to smile at one another more and make Walsall a happier place. All of the work is done with the community, faith, statutory and internal partners – recognising that community integration is everyone's business.

How did you find the Apprenticeship Programme?

I found out about the Apprenticeship programme after working with the Community, Cohesion and Equality Team for 12 weeks as a volunteer. The team informed me that an Apprentice position was being advertised and encouraged me to apply. I was successful in all stages and got the job!

How does the Apprenticeship work? How do you cover the off job training element?

As an Integrated Area Admin Apprentice, I was responsible for the Administration support to the Integrated Area Programme team, who lead on the National Integrated Area Programme in Walsall.

The team is very supportive of each other and as an Apprentice my development and support was prioritised which made me feel accepted and an equal team member. I negotiated with my line manager 20% of my time to undertake the Apprentice written qualification to ensure effective delivery of my portfolio. This required me to evidence my work activities and ensure that through the Apprentice qualification I get opportunities to do work that meets the requirements of the standard.

What is the best thing about the Apprenticeship?

The best thing about the Apprenticeship Programme for me was simply having the opportunity to learn and get real experience on the job. The theoretical learning is backed up by practical office working environment in a demanding, fast moving team. I have great support from the assessor and my team colleagues. We are all pulling in the same direction – to have a positive effective experience – that has ultimately helped me gain employment.

Would you recommend Apprenticeships to others?

I would definitely recommend Walsall Council's Apprenticeship Programme – I have done to several people. The whole ethos is one of support and making a great and real working experience. The whole Walsall Proud initiative of the Council fits with my experience – feeling proud to be a Walsall Council Apprentice.

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Walsall Council Apprenticeship Programme

Contact: Learning & Development Team

Telephone: **01922 655678**

Website: <https://go.walsall.gov.uk/jobshop>

Twitter: [@Walsall_Apps](https://twitter.com/Walsall_Apps)