

Life as an apprentice

Meet Bradley, a degree apprentice at Henry Boot Construction Limited

How it began

Growing up, I didn't really have any big career ambitions. When I was in Year 8, I took part in Sheffield's 'Big Challenge'. The enterprise competition allowed me to experience what it is like to work in the business world. I had a lot of fun working as a team, trying to sell products, speaking to customers, starting a website, and gaining real-life business skills. It was this initiative that led me to do Business Studies at GCSE, where my passion began to grow. I achieved GCSEs at Level 4, 5 and 6 in all my subjects except English.



Alt text: Bradley at his desk

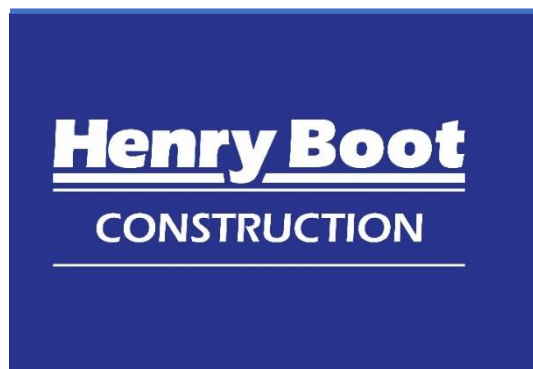
Despite going on to complete a university degree, I never saw myself as academic, so I didn't consider doing A Levels. Instead, I chose to continue to study a subject I enjoyed by going to college and completing a CIM Marketing qualification. It was while I was at college I was diagnosed as dyslexic. This helped to explain why I didn't pass English in school. However, I did pass English on my 4th attempt and achieved a Distinction Star for the marketing qualification. After college, I felt I had done a lot of classroom-based learning, and I wanted to be more practical. I have always had a strong work ethic, doing a paper round while at school and taking a part-time job while at college. I knew I wanted to do an apprenticeship working in an office as this just felt like it would be the right fit for me.

The apprenticeship search

Applying for an apprenticeship was tough, admittedly more challenging than I had anticipated. As an 18-year-old, I had initially set my heart on staying local, however I struggled to find opportunities nearby which interested me. After a couple of months of searching, it was clear I needed to widen my search area to find a suitable business apprenticeship. I applied for vacancies miles away from my home in Sheffield, applying for roles in Reading, London, and Nottingham, all for larger organisations with more available opportunities. I reached the interview stage for most applications, just not quite getting over the final hurdle. Through these experiences I gained valuable insight into different interview processes and built much more resilience and confidence in myself. I saw each unsuccessful application as a chance to learn and develop, making me even more determined to find the right career for me.

The importance of preparation

My mum found an opportunity at Henry Boot Construction (via Indeed) for a Trainee Business Marketing Assistant and encouraged me to apply. After a month, I was called for an interview. Afterwards, I felt this went badly so was both surprised and pleased when a few weeks later, I was offered the position. It turns out all the research into the organisation I had done and the questions I prepared for the interview really helped me to succeed.



Alt text: Henry Boot Construction logo