

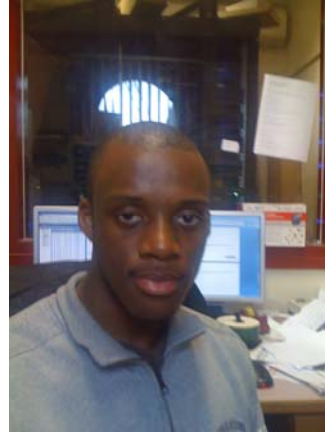
Apprenticeships

Case Study: My Journey, Aaron Roberts

Aaron Roberts joined the scheme in 2010 and describes how his hands-on experience as an apprentice put him on the path to becoming an ICT technician.

“ When I was growing up I always had a keen interest in computing and had my heart set on becoming a games designer, so I took a four-year ICT and Business course at City & Islington College in North London.

I soon realised that my skills were more suited to the technical aspects of the course as opposed to the mathematical elements of game design. After successfully completing the qualification, I looked for a course where I could qualify as an IT technician. I discovered that Zenos had an academy in Hammersmith which offered just what I was looking for. After qualifying as a Microsoft® Certified Professional and Microsoft Certification Desktop Support Technician, I was made aware of an incredible opportunity within RM Education's apprenticeship scheme. To apply for the scheme I completed an application form and was invited to attend an assessment day which consisted of a team-based task to build a tower of LEGO® followed by an interview with two representatives from RM. I found the whole process quite fun and refreshing and was successful in being offered a place on the programme.



As part of my placement I was based at St Thomas More School in Haringey which was really convenient as I had grown up in the borough and knew the area well.

Throughout the apprenticeship I was based onsite five days a week, working closely with the RM Education Technical Support Team Leader as well as the Network Manager who was my mentor. My role in the team was a Support Engineer, responding to a variety of technical support calls that were logged by the team, anything from projectors not working through to PCs crashing. The variety of problems really kept me on my toes and presented new challenges.

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Having my mentor close by was really beneficial. Jurrar Khan was always on hand to show me how things were done and provide technical assistance where and when I needed it. Myself, Jurrar and another apprentice from Zenos, all thrived on being part of a team by sharing ideas and helping each other to resolve a variety of issues. Jurrar would work with me to solve a problem instead of just telling me. This really built my confidence and helped me communicate with my team and other individuals more effectively.

As well as helping me to gain practical, day-to-day experience in the school, RM Education helped me get on a number of different training courses to broaden my knowledge of dealing with various workplace challenges. This included courses on customer care, manual handling and even a week's training on a new networking solution from RM Education called Community Connect 4.

After completing the apprenticeship RM Education gave me the opportunity to apply for a permanent position.

I'm now working for RM Education and doing a job that I love as a Support Engineer for two local schools in Haringey - Moselle School and John Loughborough School.

I'm also a Health and Safety Advisor for the borough. Both roles have really given me the opportunity to put all the skills that I've learnt to good use. Without the apprenticeship and the hands on experience I gained I very much doubt I would be here now.

Would I recommend this apprenticeship scheme?
Absolutely! If you're someone like me who is really interested in computing but isn't necessarily suited to classroom-based learning then a scheme like this is perfect as it suits my learning style. It helps you gain a wide variety of valuable skills, not just technical but also social skills that can help you be more confident in what you do and be a more effective communicator and team player."