

Modern Apprentice Case Study:

Marion Cunningham – Senior Child Development Officer, Education

Marion's career journey so far:

When I left school in 2003, I wasn't really sure what to do with my life. I applied to an advert for Modern Apprenticeships and have been working for the council ever since. Since completing my apprenticeship, I have progressed from gaining a temporary post as a child development officer (CDO), to my current post as senior CDO. I am currently studying for a BA Childhood Practice at the University of Glasgow on a day release programme.

What made you choose a Modern Apprenticeship?

I chose the Modern Apprentice (MA) programme as I knew I didn't want to go to college but would need a qualification to start a career. I wanted the feeling of working and learning, with hands on experience. Being a MA gave me the first step into the working world. I had the feeling of working along with gaining a recognisable qualification that could start a career for me, not just a job. I gained some of the best experiences of my whole career when I was a MA; I still to this day refer to good practice that I witnessed. The relationships I built with colleagues in various establishments are still there, and I will often use contacts that I made in my post at present if I need advice or to share good practice.

What do you feel are the key benefits of the Modern Apprenticeship programme?

You gain a recognisable qualification while having a wage. This allowed me freedom and independence compared to attending a college course and having a part time job along with study.

You learn and gain invaluable first hand real experiences from experienced professionals who are there to lead and support you. You build relationships with the workforce, you are part of the team. Your knowledge and experience of the workplace start before you have the qualification.

What would you say to employers thinking about recruiting Modern Apprentices?

I would say it can produce an invaluable member of staff. They start in your business as a blank slate and learn from the minute they begin. By the time they have their qualification they are working to the high standards that you set.