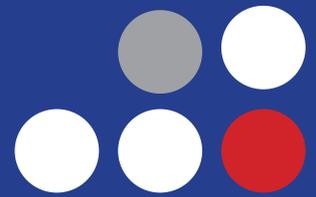


CASE STUDY

The Kickstart Scheme



The Kickstart Scheme provides funding to employers to create jobs for 16 to 24 year olds on Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment.

Samraj Bahi: Junior Surveyor

My job centre coach made me aware of the Kickstart Scheme and directed me to the Junior Surveyor placement that Bell Group had made available under the scheme.

I applied for the position at Bell Group around March 2021 and after one interview via teams and one in person interview at the office my first day was at the start of April 2021. During both interviews it was made clear of what would be expected of me and what I could expect from working at Bell Group. With this being my first professional role since I had finished studying and joining a sector that I had no previous experience in there was a lot of stuff I wasn't sure of at the start, but I was reassured that it would come with time.



During my first couple of weeks, I spent my time with the Leeds offices surveyor, going with him to sites, sitting in his meetings and helping him to input measures. This gave me the perfect insight into what I could expect my day to day to look like in the future. A lot of this first couple of weeks was spent measuring for internal decorations at schools in Bradford which was a good as a lot of the things that needed measuring in the schools were similar, meaning I could practice measuring a lot of things quickly and accurately whilst having the comfort of an experienced surveyor being with me and providing me with feedback and encouraging me to develop which increased my confidence. This also meant there was a lot of inputting to do which allowed me to understand the different rates that were used for different clients and how to navigate and use large spreadsheets correctly.

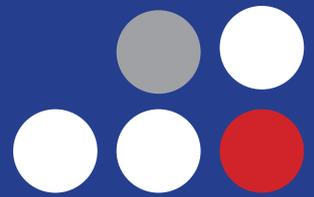
The learning curve was quite steep and after this first couple of weeks I was trusted to go out and measure independently. I felt that the hands-on training was invaluable and allowed me to progress with being trusted to measure on my own. I felt proud of my achievements so early on.

The additional responsibility meant managing my own time and organising to meet clients myself and carrying out the surveys efficiently and accurately. This also meant calculating quotes using minutes and setting targets for the painters myself.

During this first couple of months, I took on a lot of information on what was completely new to me and I often had to go back and ask for support on certain things, which all of the guys at the office were happy to help me with. Things like how to build up a cost from scratch or the most efficient way of measuring a room that seem simple now but were completely new to me were the type of things that I learnt initially which allowed me to feel more confident when more difficult scenarios were put in front of me.

KICKSTART
SCHEME





Having spent my first few months focusing on the painting side of things I have now been moved on to more of the planned works part of the business. This involves full refurbishments such as fitting new kitchens, bathrooms or floorings. This was like starting from scratch again albeit I had honed the key skills and now being a month in I feel like I am beginning to get my bearings a bit more. I was however able to carry certain things from the painting side over which will allow me to continue building on my experience and skillset.

I am now much more confident at using excel and able to develop efficient formulas and workbooks quickly which is a big part of the planned works. There is now a lot more emphasis on project management and seeing a project through over a few weeks/months. This again is new to me but is something that I am really enjoying. I enjoy the new challenges knowing that I am being fully supported by the team who I feel are always happy to help and support me. Having never been accountable for where people are and what they are doing before, it was strange to have this responsibility, but I feel I am becoming more comfortable and confident doing this day by day. Currently a typical day for me would be heading into the office first thing and touching base with all the different trades we have working on projects. Once we know where we are at for the day and everyone is where they should be the focus shifts to planning the next day/week. It is also important to keep track of all the costs and making sure projects are meeting their targets. As with anything not everything can be planned for which means we often have to be proactive, whether this is not being able to gain access to a site or a sub-contractor letting us down there is an emphasis on problem solving. Often this means visiting the site and making sure things run smoothly.

I am really looking forward to becoming more and more proficient at the planned works sector as I feel like there is so much to learn that will be beneficial to me in the future.