

T Level destination case study:

Digital



NAME: *RACHEL APPIAH-KUBI*

T Level:

Digital Production, Design and Development

College attended:

La Retraite Roman Catholic Girls' School

Destination:

Degree Apprenticeship with Santander

Why did you choose a T Level?

I knew I wanted to do ICT – I really want to be a Software Engineer. Picking a T Level meant I could specialise in the subject that I loved at GCSE, and get the industry experience as well as the classroom learning.

Did your T Level influence your next career steps?

I am now doing a 4-year Digital and Technology Solutions degree apprenticeship at Santander bank, studying with Cranfield University. The T Level had a really big influence on getting me here.

What topics did you learn on your T Level?

In my first year we did a lot of Python coding and learning about different aspects of the digital world, the business, the ethics, the laws. In my second year, I made websites using HTML and RCS and that's really helped me because now I'm using those skills daily at work and university.

How did your teachers support you with your course?

I got a lot of support from my teachers and I'm really grateful. The teachers helped us all so much with detailed notes and example papers, so we had a good understanding of the type of questions we might be asked.

How did you prepare for your industry placement?

We had business people come into class and talk to us about their industry and what they would expect of us if we were to do a placement with them. Our school Business Manager also helped with the career aspects, posting jobs and helping us prepare our CVs and cover letters

How did you get your industry placement?

I sent my CV like an actual job application, along with a cover letter and then the employer held interviews. They asked why I wanted to work there, what skills I already had, what I knew about the industry and software and what I wanted to gain from the experience.

Where did you do your industry placement?

I did two. My first one was with a digital marketing company, and my second placement was with the Department of International Trade. I was training as a junior for a stack developer, so I was doing a lot of coding for websites, which got me interested in web development.

What did you learn on your industry placement?

I learned several coding languages like Django and Java. I also learned how to use various kinds of new software like GitHub. This gave me so much confidence going back to school, knowing I could learn new skills and software in the workplace.

What were the highlights from your industry placement?

The biggest highlight was being able to be more independent. Both jobs were quite a distance away so travelling to work and being based in an adult office environment was great. Also working as part of a team on projects was fun, as well as the coding experience and web development.

Why did you decide to do an apprenticeship?

I just really liked how the T Levels was a mix, being able to learn and work at the same time. It felt like an apprenticeship was an extension of that, and I knew I would enjoy it better if I could work while still earning a degree.

Do you think the T Level prepared you well for your apprenticeship?

Yes, it prepared me really well. I have learned skills that I wouldn't have learned on a course that was just classroom based because I experienced what it's like in the real world of work - and now I use those skills in my apprenticeship.

What are you learning in your apprenticeship?

I am currently focusing on software, which is very technical, which I enjoy, so I'm learning a lot. I am shadowing other team members and learning from them. Like the T Level, I am getting the chance to try different digital routes, like data and cyber security, and then I can decide which one is for me.

How would you sum up the experience of taking your T Level?

I have really enjoyed it. It is a really great opportunity because a lot can come out from it. You will be able to work and study at the same time. You will gain a lot of skills and experience from it and you will have a lot of support along the way.

What did your parents think about your T Level qualification?

My parents always knew that I was just really interested in computing and the digital world. When they knew the course was dedicated to that kind of work, they were really happy for me to do it.

Would you recommend a T Level to other students?

Yes- if you are good at practical things you should go for it because T Levels are very hands on. Plus, the skills you learn in the workplace give you a great advantage going into work.

What advice would you give to other T Level students?

I would also suggest choosing your industry placement as soon as you can. If you have been in the workplace that can only give you confidence.