

Ryan Barling, AECOM, Trainee Quantity Surveyor

- **Where did you go to school?** North Walsham High School and Paston College
- **What subjects did you study?** GCSE—BTEC Sport and French. A Levels—Biology, Psychology, Business Studies and PE
- **Why did you choose an Apprenticeship?** When starting at AECOM I was 21, so didn't want to go to University full-time, pay c. £9,000/year tuition fees, and then not earn a full-time wage for 3 years. However, in order to gain membership to the RICS you need to have completed a degree. AECOM offered me a trainee position which allowed me to complete a Quantity Surveying Degree Apprenticeship at Anglia Ruskin University alongside working in the office. By taking the apprentice route it means I will get a degree without paying any tuition fees, along with taking home a full-time wage and the experience gained by working in the office alongside my studies.
- **What path did you take to get to your current position?** I had completed 5 years in retail when I decided I wanted to change careers from my previous management position to the construction industry. I undertook some research on jobs which matched my strengths and what I enjoyed and found Quantity Surveying. In order to improve my CV, I completed an RICS Quantity Surveying Foundation course in my own time whilst waiting for a vacancy for a trainee QS to come up. I applied at AECOM a few months later, was offered a trainee position and am now in my penultimate year of my degree.
- **What does a typical day in your role look like?** One day a week I travel to Anglia Ruskin University to study and attend lectures, the remainder of the week I am working alongside the rest of the team. Most days I spend at least some of the day in the office, either helping more senior surveyors on tasks or working on my own deliverables for projects which I help lead with a more senior member of staff. I then also attend several meetings during the week, along with the occasional site visit to value the works that have been completed by the Contractor.
- **What do you think are the most valuable skills have you learnt on your apprenticeship?** By working alongside studying I am not only learning a lot of technical information, I am also developing a number of general 'soft skills'. These include building relationships with clients / contractors, improving my professionalism in the workplace and gaining confidence when questioning others.

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- **What is the job prospect/progression when you complete your apprenticeship?** My apprenticeship not only includes achieving a degree, but also allows me to gain chartership by becoming a member to the RICS. Once completed, I will be classed as a Project Surveyor. I will then work at becoming a Senior Project Surveyor, with the next step then becoming an Associate.
- Once chartered, I could also then explore opportunities with AECOM abroad, widening my knowledge of how the industry works in other cultures.
- **Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** I would hope to have been chartered for c. 2 – 3 years and would hopefully on my way to being promoted to a Senior Project Surveyor. I hope that I would have had the opportunity to work abroad, in either Australia or the middle east.
- **What do you like best about being an apprentice?** The best bit about being an Apprentice is being part of the working environment whilst completing my degree. The technical knowledge that I learn in the workplace allows me to apply this to my degree, often meaning that I already have a good idea of what we are being taught at University.

Why do you love your apprenticeship?

I get a full-time wage at the same time as completing a degree, funded by the Government, all whilst working as part of a team day-to-day. By the time I've completed my apprenticeship I will have achieved chartership with the RICS, all within 5 years of starting at AECOM.