

We call it *Jacksonesque*

Just the job

Vanessa McMinn – Trainee Quantity Surveyor

“It has allowed me to gain a greater knowledge of civil engineering, assisting me with my college course.”

I have a head for figures and wanted to be an accountant but work experience with a building surveyor stimulated an interest in pricing building projects.

After GCSEs I completed A-Levels in maths, physics and design technology. On joining Jackson Civil Engineering I was enrolled on a day-release civil engineering course at Suffolk College.

I gained site experience at RAF Woodbridge, a large two year scheme to demolish a former RAF base and create a new mini town. I helped with measurements and pricing and even counting lamp posts. The project won the Physical Achievement Award at the Institution of Civil Engineers, 2006 East of England Merit Awards.

At the moment I work in the pre-contracts section where drawings submitted by clients are assessed. From these I produce a Bill of Quantities ie how many materials will be needed to complete the project and the likely cost. This information is incorporated into the tender document. Before the company can win a project it has to submit a tender explaining how the work will be done, time scales and of course costs.

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I meet so many people especially when I'm on site, for instance I could be meeting with the client, sub contractor or site agent so good communication is important. We often have to meet tight deadlines which means the pressure is on but you get that in any job. I find the work challenging and satisfying and I enjoy learning about other people and their roles. I also gain satisfaction seeing a project completed knowing I have played my part.

In the future I would like to progress to Chief Quantity Surveyor. To achieve this I will need to work towards membership of the Institution of Civil Engineering Surveyors and perhaps the Institution of Civil Engineers.

My job has given me a greater knowledge of civil engineering and helped with my college course. It has also given me an appreciation of how much effort and hard work, both the office and the people on site put into the completion of a project.

1

Next steps: Still at School

It will help if you take post 16 subjects to prepare for higher education. Useful subjects would be mathematics and physics. Some colleges and universities will require these subjects while others may offer entry from a wider choice including geography and economics.

2

After School

After school you are likely to progress your academic qualifications by part time study at a college or university on day release from your employer.

Choosing what, where and how to study is a big decision. It is important that you choose a course or programme recognised by the Institution of Civil Engineering and Surveyors who will help you gain the professional qualification you seek.

3

Gaining Professional Qualifications

Once you have completed your academic education you are well on your way to achieving a professional qualification as a Commercial Manager. A professional qualification is recognised as a mark of quality and establishes your credentials in your profession.

The process of qualifying can involve work assessments, written work and interviews. Jackson Civil Engineering will support and encourage you to achieve these goals.

For more advice and information visit the
Institution of Civil Engineering and Surveyors website:
www.ices.org.uk



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