Max & Tegan's Journeys

Level 7 Architecture Apprenticeship MIND MAP

MIND MAP KEY

- Reasons for doing the Apprenticeship & Added Value
- Challenges
- Advice for Future Apprentices
- Max
- Shared Experience
- Tegan

Start Here

Reasons for doing the Apprenticeship

The Apprenticeship Was

- ... The affordable way for me to qualify
- ... The quickest way for me to qualify
- Streamlined process to accreditation without having to hop in and out of education
- Day-to-day experience on the job is core to learn about processes, work flows, and realities of live projects

Value of Professional Experience

- Didn't want to break post-undergrad in-office experience to return to uni for a masters - instead I have now grown strong professional roots
- Large value to working in practice on live projects
- The experience of Gensler as a global firm broadened my understanding of architecture and practice

Gensler Expertise

- Tapping into a global network of knowledge and expertise from a huge variety of specialisms - at Gensler there really is something for everyone
- Allowed me to gain 5+ years of professional experience that also aided Part 3 process

Research Focus

- My research was based on a live Gensler project - I conducted a full site analysis and adapted it into my academic work
- The research-led design process simplifies the volume of work you have to produce

Mentorship

- Gensler's support:
  - additional (paid!) hours
  - mentoring and advice from senior staff
  - 1:1 mentoring sessions - empathetic and supportive leaders
- I have been fortunate enough to work in most sectors - Hospitality, Mixed Use, Retail, Museums and Culture, Residential, Commercial, Aviation, etc.
- Personal mentor within the practice helped navigate apprenticeship and practice commitments. I was fortunate to have 4 different mentors throughout the course

Moving Employers

- I moved employer after first year to better align with interests and goals - a surprisingly seamless transition

Disability

- Sought support from the Architects Benevolent Society, which enabled me to stay on track with my studies

Added Value & Positives

Challenges

Build Your Support Network

- Reach out to apprentices through LinkedIn/mutual contacts to ask about their experiences!
- - Advocate for yourself in your salary
  - take your allocated apprenticeship hours
  - grow your support network at your practice

Adaptation & Flexibility

- Make balancing work and university commitments a priority. Always take allocated time, and book it off in advance
- You'll have to be comfortable to push back and advocate for your needs at times
- You need to be flexible - deadlines on either side can change your timetable last minute
- All-nighter culture has no place in education, least of all an apprenticeship. You are legally entitled to 20% off-the-job training - use that time efficiently
- No time to complete everything to 100% perfection - always consider most valuable use of time
- Difficult at times to balance university and work commitment
- Apprenticeship routine often changed to fit around work deadlines, but I made sure to get that time back for apprenticeship work
- Apprenticeship is an 'optimised' route, but not necessarily 'accessible'
- Multiple chronic disabilities and two surgeries in my third year
- Don't assume it will be easier than the traditional route - it's challenging in very different ways

Advice for Future Apprentices

Work Balance

- Balancing professional and educational tasks is a key skill that you will pick up soon enough
- Don't be afraid to ask your employer for more time or support - they want to help
- Consider your available resources and the usefulness of your research in practice and try to connect the two
- You aren't tied to the same employer throughout the apprenticeship - explore your options!
- Consider all the different apprenticeship routes offered by the different universities and decide which would suit your learning style best

Vouch For Yourself

- When you complete Part 2 (at the end of Year 3) you would technically become a 'Part 2 Architectural Assistant'
- Align salary to that of a traditional Part 2 at this point! Remember you have gained 3 years of practical experience and are a valuable asset
- At the completion of Part 3, we became Qualified Architects

Gensler

UK National Apprenticeship Week 2023