

Audio transcription

Apprenticeship Podcast: Episode 2 - Are you a school leaver?

Host

Hi, this is Skills for Life, a podcast series where we hear from current and past apprentices at Scottish Power to find out why an apprenticeship is such a great career choice. In this episode I'm joined by Hannah Wiley who's a project management apprentice at Scottish Power Energy Networks. Hello.

Hannah Wiley

Hi, thanks for having me.

Host

Did I get that right?

Host

Yeah, you did. So Hannah, tell us then a bit about how you got to where you are.

Hannah Wiley

Of course, yes, so I came into the apprenticeship straight from school. I had finished up my sixth year of high school and in my final year I'd applied to university. I had a bit of a feeling at the back of my head that I just didn't really know what my desired pathway was.

I wasn't really 100% sure on what I wanted to do with my life, which kind of prompted me to sort of do some research online, look at what other pathways were out there, and with that I did find the Scottish Power online careers page and I had to look at a lot of the apprenticeships that were on offer. The project management one, it stuck out to me in some ways. I thought it would be a good way to sort of expand my confidence.

It was something completely different to any of the subjects I'd really done in school. Obviously there's the sort of transferable skills that you would pick up along the way, so I decided to sort of take that pathway as opposed to going to university straight out of school.

Host

So you chose to do that rather than go to uni because you were thinking, not really sure of what course to do maybe, or what you wanted to do, and that's such a common thing isn't it? You get to sort of fifth, sixth year at school and all of a sudden people are asking you what you want to do with your life and you think, I've got no idea.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, absolutely.

Host



So how did you find, you said you did a bit of research, was that, were you searching for things that you were, areas that you were interested in and then you happened upon the Scottish Power careers website or tell us where that went.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, so originally I'd sort of looked at just apprenticeships as a whole across different industries, different organisations. The Scottish Power one sort of stood out to me, sort of when I looked more online there seemed to be sort of good feedback and people that had done the programme previously in previous years. It obviously provided that blend of workplace learning, so in an office learning those kind of skills alongside more academic classroom-based learning, so the likes of college work, exams, so the blend of that stuck out to me as well.

So I was, even though I wasn't going to university or college full-time upon leaving school, I was still getting that sort of mix of workplace experience and the skills I pick up from that, and then obviously there was a sort of academic qualification alongside of it.

Host

So when you were applying then, in terms of the application process, if you'd already applied to uni, everybody knows who's done that, about the UCAS form and the personal statement, there's quite a lot of admin, isn't there?

Hannah Wiley

Absolutely, yeah.

Host

It's a huge undertaking. What was the application process like to this programme?

Hannah Wiley

Yes, so the application process, it began as a sort of online answer questions about yourself, why you thought you would be a good fit for the programme, questions like that, a little bit about previous experience that you had, whether that was from school, previous jobs, even like a weekend job, skills that you picked up from that that you thought could then translate into, you know, how you would approach the sort of PM role. I was successful with that part and they invited me to take part in a sort of online assessment, which was a mix of video recordings that were asked you sort of situational questions.

So an example of that would have been, tell me a time when you approached the challenge, tell me a time when you worked as part of a team. So part of it was that, those videos, and then there was some sort of like arithmetic based questions, things like that, just to sort of see how you approached those questions as well.

Host

Okay, obviously I would have failed that part. In terms of the subjects that you had taken when you were at school, were they science focused? Did you have sort of scientific modules



in there? Or tell us about that, your academic experience, the choices that you had taken at school.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, so as I sort of mentioned earlier, when I was at school, I wasn't really 100% sure of what pathway I wanted to go down. So because of that, I did quite a variety of subjects. I didn't really have my heart set on one area.

I did a few sciences, I did sort of biology, chemistry and maths whilst at school. But I also had more sort of English literacy, literacy based subjects. So the likes of English, I really enjoyed modern studies when I was at school as well.

So I did that as well. And I think having that sort of wide background of subjects, it meant that I wasn't sort of closing, you know, closing myself off to other, other opportunities. So I'm glad that I did that, had that variety, picked up skills from each and knowledge from each that again, you know, you can use in our job role further down the line.

Host

Yeah, absolutely. And that's actually something that has come up in another episode, when we were talking to someone who works at Scottish Power in the HR function, managing all these different programmes, the fact that it's not just when you think about an apprenticeship at Scottish Power, it isn't just sort of science based, or, you know, it's anything to do with engineering, necessarily, there's that whole range of things from you mentioned about doing English literature and stuff. And all of these things are all skills for life that are transferable, that Scottish Power are looking for within their applicants as well. So it's things like communication skills, and project management skills and team working and all that, as well as or in lieu of sort of engineering qualifications or a background in science.

So that's really interesting, because I think there are so many different aspects of the business. What does yours in terms of the project management apprenticeship, what areas do they focus on?

Hannah Wiley

So obviously, we look at sort of managing projects in the business, how do how do projects work within, I mean, my particular area is energy networks. So we look at how we how we deliver projects, how we liaise with third parties to deliver, how we engage with stakeholders, how we communicate with our customers, the apprenticeship programme sort of teaches around that. And again, you know, you're picking up bits of knowledge, knowledge each day, to sort of focus on, I suppose, those, those key aspects of the business, how do we, you know, maintain positive customer service scores, how do we work alongside other areas of the business to sort of deliver that common goal.

So it's a lot of things that, you know, they may seem, you know, not particular to one particular to one area, it's sort of that mix of skills that we're picking up day by day. So it's really great for that.



Host

Really wide ranging and transferable as well. So you're in the Scottish Power Energy Networks business area. Tell us a bit about that. What does your job involve day to day?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, of course. So I'm within the sort of distribution licence I work within.

So on a day to day basis, my role in the department I'm in currently, we sort of focus on delivering asset modernisation to our customers on our low voltage network. So all about how we look at the customer, how we can improve sort of how we can improve service that we have for customers, how we modernise our assets, how we can sort of facilitate the likes of low carbon technology, heat pumps, etc. There's a really big uptake of that.

And there's sort of a greater need now more than ever for us to really have the resources in place to deliver that so that we can allow customers to sort of connect low carbon technologies and instal smart metres to really help them on that journey to net zero.

Host

I think you sound like you're totally across everything, all this jargon and high level talk. It sounds like you've totally got it all covered. Tell people, I mean, obviously I know.

What do we mean when we're talking about low voltage assets and, you know, low carbon technologies? What does that mean to people who might not be familiar with that?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah. So it's essentially our network. It's the service cables that are sort of running underneath the ground.

The cables are coming into people's houses. It's how we can, you know, allow them to put their televisions on at night, how you can charge your phone, how you can put the kettle on. It's things like that.

And obviously, alongside that and the sort of ever changing model that we've got, where more people are buying electric vehicles, more people are installing heat pumps and looking to be sort of more smart with how they use the energy in their homes. With that comes a need for us to upgrade our equipment so that it's a bit more fit for purpose so that we can better serve our customers. And again, there's that net zero element of it that we're really working towards that goal for our organisation, but also for, you know, you know, our country or sort of local communities and things like that.

Host

When you started this apprenticeship, how much did you know about the energy industry?

Hannah Wiley



Not a whole lot. It was very, you know, coming into Scottish Power, there was a lot more that I learned as soon as I started the role. I didn't do sort of physics or anything like that while I was at school.

So it was sort of a complete new world, to be honest, sort of stepping into that role. I didn't know, I didn't have a whole lot of background knowledge about it.

Host

But that was okay though, yeah? You didn't need to have a background or any sort of knowledge of the energy industry to come into this role?

Hannah Wiley

Absolutely, yeah. So I've obviously picked up a lot since I've started the role, but there wasn't really, again, that need to have that background knowledge. It didn't do me any sort of disservice during the interview process upon actually starting my role in the sort of workplace environment.

I think it's, you know, coming from school, there was transferable skills there that I could use in the role. So even though I maybe didn't have a lot of knowledge about the industry as a whole, I've definitely picked up stuff along the way.

Host

And what was day one like then though? So you've finished school, you've successfully completed all the application process for the scheme that you're on. What did you do on your first day?

Can you remember?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, so I started with sort of quite a large group of people, a lot of other trainees. So we were all sort of in the same boat, which was good that we started at a similar time. It was on a training centre sort of that we had.

So it was really an induction in terms of what do we do as a business? What is your role going to look like within the organisation and how are we going to help you along the way? So it was a really great introduction to, I suppose, Scottish Power as a whole.

And then sort of my first day in the office, it was very much this is what we do as a particular department and this is what, you know, this is what your role will look like in there. I think it's quite a scary thing coming straight from school into that workplace environment. Everyone has been really supportive and it's a really sort of great, and there's a lot of encouragement within, I mean, I think there's more encouragement across the business that really support trainees to learn whether that's someone in a more operational role or whether that's someone in a more office-based role as well.



Host

And I think that's something when you were saying there about it's quite a scary prospect or a bit of scary experience, that's so understandable because if you're coming straight from school into a huge global company and that's quite daunting. But then it must be quite nice to know that you're part of that, you know, of a wider group of other trainees and apprentices and there's almost like a sort of natural support network from them as much as from the company, I would guess.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, absolutely. And I think it's great that in terms of the kind of volume of trainees that are in the business, there's a lot of people that are in a similar situation to yourself. So, again, you do have them to sort of go through that apprenticeship with.

You can hear a bit about what they're doing in their roles, things that are working for them that, again, you can pick up on. And I suppose, again, there is that really encouraging sort of community across the business that do sort of support you in your journey to learn, develop in your role and, again, see, you know, how your career will progress, whether that's, you know, within the organisation and, you know, the different sort of functions that are there.

Host

And what does a, we kind of touched on this earlier, but what a day looks like for you, I'm guessing they can be very varied.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah.

Host

Do you do some work outside and some work in the office or are you office based or are you out on the road or?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, so my role is primarily office based and we do have, you know, on some occasions we do sort of site visits and things like that to see the actual work that is being undertaken, whether that's from, you know, internal operational resources or third party sort of service partners that we use. So while my role is predominantly office based, there are opportunities to get out in sight and really see work being undertaken on the network as it happens.

Host

That sounds good. In terms of like, so you're in that role, you're working with a huge team, is it?

Hannah Wiley



We do have quite a large team. So within, it was sort of, I suppose my smaller team, there's about eight of us and then we feed into a wider team of just over 20, I would say. So what kind of things are you doing?

Host

Because I don't know what a project manager does. I know that they manage projects, but how do you go about doing that? Give us a sense of the sort of the work that you're involved in.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, of course. So I suppose a lot of aspects that feed into it for my role in particular, a lot of the work that we do is issued out to service partners who obviously work on our behalf. So we look to liaise with them to ensure that, you know, we have that shared sort of common understanding of what we need to deliver, when we need to deliver it by.

So there's a communication aspect there. Also sort of managing the financial health of our projects, ensuring that we are delivering the outputs that we have to deliver, liaising with other members of the team. There might be sort of shared or similar activities that were undertaken.

So again, communicating with them. And I think as well, there's just sort of overall piece of, I'm also here to learn. So every day, every day as a school day, throughout the apprenticeship, it's sort of taking up an opportunity to learn, speaking with, you know, anyone that you sort of come in contact with to learn about what their roles are like.

So you really are sort of learning every day.

Host

How do you feel you are viewed in the company or treated with, you know, amongst other people, because you're obviously getting this exposure to some very experienced people, and that must be a great way to learn as well. But how do you, how do you feel in that role? And how are you treated there?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, I think there's a lot of support and encouragement from people who do have a bit more experience. I think the across, I mean, I can speak for the project management apprenticeship in particular, but I know that from speaking to others, there's a lot of support for all trainees, no matter what programme that they're doing. People that have more experience and have been here for a longer period of time, they're always there to ask questions, go to for support, for help.

And, you know, even if it's a question that you might think in your mind is a bit silly, you feel apprehensive to ask it. Everyone that I've sort of encountered along the way have been more than happy to, you know, sit down and explain things, give a wee bit more context and offer their expertise. So it's a really great environment to be a part of.



Host

Do you get paid?

Hannah Wiley

I do. Yeah, which is nice. Definitely a benefit. Yeah.

Host

So you're earning while you're learning.

Hannah Wiley

Exactly.

Host

And then that's a huge benefit as well, because previously we've discussed that aspect of people when they go to university and then they end up coming out, still maybe not clear on what they want to do as a job, but then saddled with, you know, university debt. And that's obviously a great thing that programmes like these, it cuts all that out, doesn't it?

So you kind of, you've got the responsibility of a job, you've got the wages and you're learning. Where does it go from there? Do you go on to any further qualifications within the business?

Hannah Wiley

Yes. So upon completion of the project management apprenticeship programme in particular, if we're successful, we're offered a project coordinator role. And within that, there is the option to go down sort of further education pathways.

So whether that is doing a degree alongside work, whether that's doing a college course, so potentially in electrical engineering, if the role is more operational based, there's a lot of opportunities there. So again, I think the business really supports people in terms of development and career progression. So definitely the opportunities are there to look to do further education and really develop your, not only I suppose your workplace self, but the personal development is there as well.

Host

Yeah. And what was it about Scottish Power in particular that made you choose to go there when you were looking, you know, sort of as you were leaving school, considering university or thinking about apprenticeships? Why Scottish Power?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah. So I think in this sort of energy industry as a whole, it's a very busy time with the likes of, again, we did sort of allude to it earlier, but with the amount of sort of net zero goals that we have from a sort of government level, looking at more sort of renewable energy sources, it's a very busy time. There's a lot going on.



And obviously the business does have very clear goals and aims in terms of how they're going to help customers on that journey. And I think for me, that stuck out to me as sort of a shared goal, having that sort of, you know, that person, I suppose that personal aim that you're making a difference, you're bringing something positive. So, you know, every day you're sort of helping to facilitate that journey to net zero, which I think is quite, it's a good feeling to have.

Host

Yeah. It must be great to think that you're working at a place that is making a difference, has goals like you say, or objectives in order to make the world a better place, essentially, because through renewable energy and through the grids and everything, and there's a lot of work going on with that at the moment. So there's obviously a lot to keep you busy. What are your favourite parts of the job that you're doing at the moment?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah. So I think for me, every day is different, which has been a really good way for me to sort of get out of my comfort zone, encounter new challenges every day. Again, working with new people every day is, it's quite exciting.

While it might be daunting, and I was quite apprehensive at first, just being new to the role, new to the organisation, but really, I think just getting stuck into that role and taking up on those opportunities to learn every day, pick up on new parts of information. And I think that's what my favourite part is, is that every day is quite different. There is always something new to learn, which keeps you going.

Host

Do you think that you would have, looking back from where you are now, how long you've been in the programme, do you think you've missed out by not going to university?

Hannah Wiley

I don't think so personally. I think looking back, the decision to choose the apprenticeship as opposed to going down the university pathway was the right one for me to make. I've gotten out of my comfort zone a lot in sort of the past year and a half that I've been here, that I don't think I would have had, had I had gone to uni.

So it's definitely been the right decision for me. I've learned a lot. I feel more confident to be able to come and do things like this, just speak to new people, meet new people.

It's been really great and just helping me to do that on that sort of confidence journey. So it's definitely been the right decision for me. And again, as you sort of progress in your role, the option to do university or sort of further education is there, you know, as you progress and the business does sort of support you in doing that.



So I don't feel like I've missed out at all. I definitely think it's been the right, right pathway for me.

Host

Yeah, absolutely. In terms of sort of myths, when we think about apprenticeship schemes, we've mentioned before that people often think, we even said at the beginning, that people think of high viz and hard hats. So what's the, what would you say is the greatest myth about, you know, being an apprentice or what do they think when you say I'm an apprentice?

Do they, do they have any sort of like preconceived notions of what that might involve?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, I suppose people will have preconceptions as to what the role would look like, what you would actually be doing. I know it's maybe sort of an outdated mindset, but people might assume it's someone coming straight from school and going into a trade or, you know, something along those lines. And those apprenticeships, they do exist and will be a viable option for some people.

But I think now more than ever, there's such a wide range of apprenticeships that exist and a variety of different industries, different sort of topics as well. So whether that's, you know, more sort of business focused, whether it's project management focused or engineering focused, there is so many opportunities out there. So it's, I think definitely that sort of preconceived notion, as you said, it might be there, but really there's so many more apprenticeship sort of pathways out there than ever before.

Host

And when you think about your, your time so far, is there anything that surprised you about the role that you're doing, or even surprised you, or you're surprised yourself about the things that you're doing when you think I've only been here, you know, for not that long in the grand scheme of things, look what I've learned. Is there, is there something that sticks out?

Hannah Wiley

I think, to be honest, it's, I'm quite a naturally shy person, which is partly why I chose the apprenticeship to sort of just get stuck into a role, something that scared me quite a bit. Getting to obviously have the opportunity to talk in this sort of context, as well as even just sort of communicating with a wider group of people on meetings and things like that, that was a really big step for me personally, just getting that sort of confidence to be able to talk to new people, getting comfortable with being uncomfortable, because it truly is the only way that you will learn. So it's something that if I was to sort of go back and tell myself a year and a half ago, that I feel comfortable talking to wider groups of people.

And again, I would, I'd be very surprised. So I think that's one thing that the apprenticeships really changed for me personally, is just that, that confidence, that comfort zone.



Host

Well, you've smashed that because here you are, Hannah, sitting before me is a very confident and comfortable and accomplished young person who's thrilled to be at Scottish Power. And it sounds like they're thrilled to have you there as well. What would you advise yourself, you know, if you're thinking back, or either whether it's people who are about to leave school, or even your younger self, just sort of touched on that there.

What would you say? What advice would you give?

Hannah Wiley

Oh, I think advice I would give to my younger self would be school and exams and your sort of performance and exams. It's not sort of be all and end all. There's, and it's okay to not know what you want to do upon leaving school.

There can be so much pressure on young people nowadays to have a really clear defined pathway in their heads. And truthfully, it's okay if you don't want to do that. And there's nothing wrong with it.

There's nothing wrong with, you know, beginning, beginning a role, beginning university, and then leaving to do sort of an alternative pathway. There really is no wrong path to, you know, what, there's no wrong path to a career, there's no wrong path to a job. As long as you're sort of making the right decisions for yourself.

Yeah, I think that's the most important thing, really.

Host

What would you say, are there any sort of key strengths or attributes that have either stood you in good stead for this, or that you think people would benefit from having going into a role like this?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, so I think having, I suppose, the sort of soft skills, things like that, you would pick up along the way. So time management is a big one, how you work as part of a team, how do you communicate with other people, how do you, skills like that, that you pick up along the way. And, you know, you may pick them up from school, you may pick them up from a job that you've had part time whilst at school, you may pick them up from a sports club outside of school, skills like that, I think they're transferable, not only to my role, my role specifically, but just in the workplace as a whole.

Host

So how long have you got left on your programme now?

Hannah Wiley

I have about a year and a half left of the programme.



Host

Okay, and then have you thought further beyond that? Have you had any ideas as to what you'll do when you finish?

Hannah Wiley

I think I've had quite a positive experience within my role and within Scottish Power. So definitely sticking with the company, beginning a role within there, sort of following on from the apprenticeship, a project coordinator role in my department is probably something I would be looking at. And again, developing in that role so I get more comfortable and confident with what we're doing, and then also sort of looking at what sort of further education pathways might be out there for me.

Host

That sounds great. In terms of the confidence aspects, and I just want to come back to that because you mentioned it, and I think it looks like it's been a hugely positive experience for you. If you're saying that you were somebody who before you joined the programme was quite shy, maybe, and also you said that you didn't know what you wanted to do when you left school, I think it seems amazing that you're sitting in here doing this, something that's way out your comfort zone, way out of most people's comfort zones as well.

It's not the most natural setting. But it sounds like, I just can see from you that you seem enthused by your experience, and it's obviously been a positive one because you've given us your time to talk about it. So what would you say to that?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, definitely. It's been a really great journey. I think it's obviously not over yet.

There's still quite far to go into the apprenticeship, but I have had a really positive experience. It's been really great for me to grow as a person as well. Obviously, the workplace skills I have picked up, and I'm getting more confident, I suppose, being in that working environment, being in an office environment, working with people who are that bit older than you, that bit more experienced.

But with that, there's also the personal confidence growth journey, how I've gotten more out of my comfort zone and more comfortable with saying yes to things and being up for more challenges. So definitely, it's been a really positive experience overall. Oh, great to hear.

Host

That's great to hear. In terms of where you are now, it's a big difference from being at school. It's something that's a lot more commitment.

It's a more professional environment, I suppose. What do you do to keep yourself motivated?

Hannah Wiley



Yeah, so I think you've got the part where other people are counting on you to show up, to do the work that you have to do, to a high standard. You have a team around you. We're all responsible for our own part, which feeds into that wider how we all work together.

So I think that's what keeps me going, is really that you've got people counting on you. You don't want to let people down, but you also don't want to let yourself down. You want to show up and bring your best self and do the best you can be.

So that's really what keeps me going personally.

Host

And do you have a sort of dream job, like a point when you think about, right, that is where I want to be, that's where I'm going, that's what I want to do? Have you got that in mind?

Hannah Wiley

So truthfully, I don't have my heart set on anything in particular. I think coming from not knowing what I wanted to do and how, obviously I sort of took maybe not a risk with the apprenticeship, but I saw a pathway that I didn't think I would take.

Following from that, you know, it served me really well. I've learned a lot from it and I really want to sort of keep that mindset going forward throughout my career as I get older. I don't want to sort of close myself off to just sort of the one pathway solely.

I just want to sort of keep my options open and learn as much as I can and really just see sort of what the time brings, how I can progress in the company and yeah, just see how it goes really.

Host

And I think that's great in terms of, you know, that aspect or that idea of actually not, if not quite not knowing, but just not pigeonholing yourself into someone because it's weird how that turns into a positive once you leave school because you get to the end of your school life and it's ever so daunting because of the number of options that might be available or areas where you could, you know, where you can go and it might seem a bit overwhelming because you don't quite know, but actually when you're in a situation like you're in now, that's a positive thing because there are so many different areas and you're learning such a wide skill set that really, it's all open to you, isn't it?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, absolutely. It's a gift in a way that you have that, you know, you've got so many pathways to go down. There's so many options and I think, you know, closing yourself off to just one, sort of doing, you know, yourself a disservice and that if you know what you want to do and you have that desired pathway, that's great.



But there's so many options out there in terms of what you might want to do. You know, you can change your mind, you can go into a sort of different area of the business perhaps, so definitely there's so many options out there, which is quite exciting to think about.

Host

Yeah, absolutely. Thank you so much. So Hannah, International Women's Day, the main theme is inspiring inclusion and, you know, you get to thinking that here you are as a young person who's just left school not that long ago.

Working in what has traditionally been viewed as a male-dominated environment, the energy industry, particularly the networks aspect of it, how do you feel you're getting on in this environment and do you feel included and do you feel empowered to work in this environment?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, absolutely. So I think it does come with challenges and there's a bit of apprehension in terms of women sort of stepping foot into an environment that traditionally, you know, you would assume is more male-dominated. I think as time goes on and more opportunities are made available within these industries, more and more women are going to be sort of beginning, not beginning those jobs, but you know, there'll be more women present, there is more inclusion, there's more diversity in terms of the people that do work in the organisation.

I definitely feel included, I do feel sort of motivated. It's important that sort of doing these things, you know, we communicate to people that are interested in the programme and just to say that, you know, that diversity and inclusion aspect is very important to not only myself, but I suppose the organisation as a whole. It's, you know, it is an important aspect and I definitely think it's of value, you know, moving forward in that sort of ever-changing world.

So I don't think it should let people should be sort of put off by that.

Host

So if there are any other young women who are perhaps at the stage that you were a year and a half ago considering their options and looking for potential places to go and places to flourish, would you recommend Scottish Power as one of those places?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, I absolutely would, yeah, definitely. I know we've sort of spoken about it throughout this session, but there's just been so many opportunities for me to grow as a person, really grow my confidence throughout the role and do things that I didn't really expect that I would. And I think the organisation really does support trainees in particular on that journey and how they can sort of progress on their role.

So I would definitely recommend it to, you know, anyone who is interested, definitely.



Host

And I think even with SP Energy Networks having a woman at the helm, Vicky Kelsall is the CEO of SP Energy Networks. There are a lot more women coming through now in these sort of traditionally male-dominated industries.

Hannah Wiley

Yeah.

Host

That can only be a good thing.

Hannah Wiley

Absolutely, definitely. There's, you know, having sort of more people from diverse backgrounds, it brings a wider range of skills, it brings a wider range of knowledge, a wider range of, you know, that knowledge, that experience, diversity, you know, it's always a good thing and something that is important to the organisation.

Host

We talked a wee bit earlier as well about just the day-to-day stuff that you're involved in, which is, again, pretty wide-ranging, particularly in the project management area. Have you had any opportunities to develop yourself outwith those day-to-day skills?

Hannah Wiley

Yeah, definitely. So within my programme, we do an HND in project management alongside working. So that's something that's allowed me to develop that more sort of theoretical knowledge of it.

You know, we do that through an external organisation, so really developing those skills, building that knowledge and being successful in it and really implementing it into your day-to-day role. That's something that I've had the opportunity to do in the programme. There's also been sort of the opportunity to carry out more operational training courses, so things like authorisations to look at health and safety, working in sort of substations and access that way.

So there's been training courses there as well. It's been really insightful getting to do something like that. You sort of get a bit of an appreciation for people that are in those operational-based roles who do work out in the network.

So getting to undertake those training courses has been really great as well.

Host

That's great. I don't think I quite appreciated that you were doing studying alongside your role as well. So you get an HND at the end, whilst also combining that with your day-to-day work and then not only sort of learning the skills associated with that work, but also all those softer skills that we talked about, those transferable skills that come with being in a huge company.



Hannah Wiley

Yeah, definitely. It's one of the really great things about the apprenticeship is it combines that blend of both the workplace environment, as you said, you're picking up those soft skills, you're learning how to communicate, but you're also getting that academic learning as well. So it's a good alternative to uni or college in that sense, because you're getting, you know, the best of both worlds really.

And it's also been really great for sort of picking up, really developing time management skills. How do you balance the time to work? How do you balance the time to study as well?

So that you're getting the most out of both. I was going to ask that then, if you've got your, so what's your, what are your working hours? So my working hours standard are eight to four each day.

Host

Monday to Friday?

Hannah Wiley

Monday to Friday.

Host

So when do you fit the studying in?

Hannah Wiley

So we're very fortunate that we're sort of given time by sort of placement manager and our sort of workforce development team as well. We're allowed usually half a day each week as a minimum to focus on studying for exams, working on our sort of project management portfolio. And there's a lot of support from, you know, everyone in your team to give you that time to allow you to complete that alongside.

So definitely I was able to fit it in. It has been really great for building those, that time management skills and how you sort of balance quite a large workload.

Host

Yeah, absolutely. Do you have time to do anything else out with this?

Hannah Wiley

I do. Yeah. I think it's important you have that sort of work life balance. It can be, I think, difficult at first. When you're in that role, you do obviously want to dedicate yourself and, you know, really be present in the role, but it's important that you do sort of take that time away from work as well and, you know, log off at the end of the day and again, do the things that are of value to you, whether that's spending time with family, a sport, things like that.

It's really important as well.



Host

Sounds like you've cracked it. Hannah Wiley, thank you so much for talking to us and the very best of luck with the rest of your project management apprenticeship.

Hannah Wiley

Thank you very much. Thank you for having me.

Host

A big thank you to all of our apprentices who took the time to talk to us. It's been an amazing insight into life on an apprenticeship programme at Scottish Power.

If you would like to find out more about any of the programmes that we've discussed, just visit our website, [scottishpower.com forward slash careers](https://scottishpower.com/forward/slash/careers).

