



Route Services offers a “one stop solution” for the entire network, facilitating the effective procurement and supply of plant, materials and logistics. They also strive to ensure that these activities are supported through the effective management of a fleet of over 3,500 rail vehicles.

LUKE HARRIS - Fleet & Engineering, Traction & Rolling Stock Level 3 Apprentice

What were the main challenges?

When I joined Network Rail, I had previously finished my university degree in Sports education and psychology and started working on the railway infrastructure. When I started this apprenticeship, I needed to get my head around completing the academic subjects during my first year of the apprenticeship. Despite this I would encourage future apprentices to enjoy this challenge if like me this will be something they may find difficult and use the opportunity to learn from the different subject units as I am applying many of these theories in my practical work in the latter years of my apprenticeship.



What you learned the most?

Before starting with Network Rail despite me having previous railway experience, I had very little background knowledge on Traction and Rolling Stock. I have a greater understanding now on the High Output trains and the different functions on how they all operate. I have been given the chance to work on all the different systems such as Tamper train, Ballast cleaner train, Track renewal system train and the Wiring train. Each train has a unique way of functioning, and it is very interesting how they work. As an Apprentice you will learn and have training on the hydraulic systems of the train, mechanical systems, electrical systems, and pneumatic systems. I have learned a great amount on the job, from working alongside competent and experienced members of staff, as well as completing high quality courses and competencies. I have gained enough knowledge to complete: daily maintenance and inspections, planned servicing, brake testing, major component changes (i.e. wheelset changes), major overhaul tasks (i.e. replacing conveyor belts), and more.

Most importantly, I have learned to do all the above to a high and safe standard.

Why work at NR?

Network Rail is one of the UK's biggest employers across the engineering sector, which has many large Infrastructure projects, such as track maintenance, signalling and electrification. Network Rail has a high standard for safety, and genuinely care about your safety and well-being and aim for everyone home safe every day. This gives employees confidence in the company and confidence that they can speak up if safety is being compromised. Network Rail has a large scale of opportunities available for staff and invest into their talent to push and develop these individuals. Finally, there are numerous progression paths in Network Rail, and plenty of opportunities to progress.

Where you are now?

I am now a month away from completing my three-year apprenticeship, I am currently completing written reports of reflective accounts onto OneFile. When this is completed, I will complete my end point assessment. I am currently working with the Tamper team helping my colleague's complete maintenance on the trains based at various locations around the country.