

## Enhancing knowledge and skills at work

### UK Border Agency

Formed in April 2008, the UK Border Agency is a shadow agency of the Home Office. It is responsible for securing UK borders and controlling migration.

**Sector:** Public

**Number of employees:** 25,000+

**Region:** London

#### The challenge

Over the past few years, the senior management team at the UK Border Agency (UKBA) has recognised that many of its younger employees would benefit from working towards job-relevant, nationally accredited qualifications. The organisation was particularly keen to develop those individuals who joined straight from school, and to provide them with a structured career path.

Sue Piggott-Forster, UKBA Strategic Projects Manager (Skills for Life), said: "We wanted to give our younger members of staff the opportunity to broaden their understanding of the administrative tasks they perform on a daily basis. And we felt it was important for them to appreciate how their work feeds into their team goals and the wider objectives of UKBA as a whole.

"Gaining a recognised qualification is important for those employees participating in vocational learning activity. As well as giving them a better understanding of their job role and enhancing their skills, we hope it will motivate and inspire them to pursue further learning and career opportunities within our organisation."

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Nicole Marriott,  
Apprentice



### The solution

An Apprenticeship in Business Administration provided the ideal solution to meet the training needs identified by the UKBA.

Nabeela Rasul, Executive Officer, Managed Migration, said: “A member of my team, Administrative Assistant Nicole Marriott, was keen to develop new skills that would help her gain confidence and progress to the next grade of administrative officer. The Business and Administration Apprenticeship programme suited her perfectly and I restructured her workload to enable her to complete the course requirements alongside her day-to-day duties.”

Hawk Training delivered the Apprenticeship programme, which was funded by LSC London Region. Edyta Mazurkiewicz visited Nicole twice a month to deliver site-based training, advice and support. She said: “Learning sessions lasted around two hours each visit. I used various methods to assess Nicole’s competence within the Business Administration skills framework, including observations, discussions and written work she had prepared.

“Nicole was a very progressive learner. She had a very good base knowledge and picked things up extremely quickly. She simply flew through the programme!”

### The results

Nicole completed her Apprenticeship in just six months, including an NVQ Level 2 qualification and EDI certificate in Business and Administration, together with a module on Employment Rights and Responsibilities. She said: “What I really liked about the Apprenticeship was that it could all be done in the office. It’s given me a much better understanding of my job and has taught me about things like health and safety, and employment legislation.”

Nabeela said: “Nicole has flourished in her role and is now a very influential and efficient member of my team. She’s far more proactive and can analyse team targets very effectively; if she identifies a potential problem, she refers it to me, along with a suggested solution, then rectifies it.”

Team Leader Chris Kates has also noticed a big difference. He said: “I don’t think Nicole ever realised what a good worker she is. Before the programme, she would often seek reassurance from her line manager that she was doing the right thing; now, armed with her new-found self-confidence, she’s much more independent. The quality of her work has definitely improved.”

Nicole has now taken on an increased workload and is acting as a mentor for a new recruit to the team. Keen to continue learning, she has already embarked on a Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship programme.

Chris is delighted. He said: “Nicole’s performance has improved noticeably as a result of her Apprenticeship programme. It’s a win:win situation.”



Nicole discusses her work with Nabeela Rasul, Executive Officer, Managed Migration

### What do Apprenticeships offer employers?

An Apprenticeship programme can help you get the right skills to do the best job. It’s part of the Train to Gain service, which:

- provides a free and independent look at what skills your business needs – now and in the future. An unbiased skills broker who knows your region and industry works with you to find out how an Apprenticeship programme could make a real difference to your business.
- helps you pick the right people to do the training delivered as part of your Apprenticeship programme. Once you and the skills broker find out what your business needs are, they then work with you to find the right training provider. It’s important that the training is done in a way that meets your business’s needs.
- helps you get the most from your training investment. The skills broker can also help find out the best ways to pay for the training, since they know what financial support might be available to you.

### Further information

Visit: [www.apprenticeships.gov.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.gov.uk)  
or call: 0800 0150 400