

A Day in the life of an Apprentice:

Meet one of Microsoft's Office Support Team





One of Microsoft's Office apprentices, Harry Light, discusses how becoming an apprentice has given him career direction and invaluable skills and experiences...

What is your role, and how long have you been an apprentice?

I work in the Consumer and Device Sales division of Microsoft, which is responsible for supporting Microsoft partners such as Dixons and help them present Microsoft devices in the best possible way. My role in the team is as Office Category Support and I have been in the role for almost a year.

What are your day-to-day duties?

Overall, I am here to drive passion and knowledge for the products across the team and department, and therefore I have to know as much as possible about Microsoft Office so that I am able to deliver demos to customers and partners.

As part of this, I work with Partners and the internal Finance, Sales, Marketing & Product Management teams to deliver a successful category plan. This means I work closely with our channel marketing team, going out to meet companies such as Amazon to plan and execute marketing campaigns.

I am also responsible for building a clear view of business performance, which means reviewing how many Windows devices and Office licenses partners have sold and analysing which products have sold best and finding out why this is.

What does a normal day look like from getting out of bed to going to bed?

I only live a 10 minutes away from the office, which means I am able to have what some of my colleagues would call a lie-in every day. My alarm goes off at 8am and I am usually showered, dressed and ready to leave by 8:30am. This gives me enough time to grab a coffee and be at my desk for 9am.

Mondays and Tuesdays are always my busiest days in the office with regular meetings with partners and the rest of the team to ensure we are on track with our performance ratings. On these days there is little time to check emails, so I go through and note all the emails I need to respond to towards the end of the week. If I am not attending events or demonstrations of our products, I use Wednesday – Friday to catch up with my emails and do my apprenticeship coursework.

I usually leave the office at 5:30pm (except for Fridays when I leave a little bit earlier) and drive the short distance home so I'm back for dinner at 6pm. My evenings are usually spent chilling out and detaching myself from my work life and spending time with family and friends.

What made you decide to become an apprentice?

During my year of A Levels I had no idea what I wanted to do. With little direction, I was feeling uninspired and this showed up in my mock exam results. This made me realise that university was not the right path for me.

Had I gone to university, it would only have been for the lifestyle and I didn't think the stress and debt was worth it. Then I came across the Microsoft apprenticeship scheme and thought that this was probably the right route for me – I really liked the idea of getting paid to do a job whilst earning a qualification and, as I started going through the application stages, I realised it was definitely what I wanted.

After realising I was 1 of 14 successful applicants out of a total of 900, I saw the extent of my achievement and knew I had to make the most of it.

What are the perks of being an apprentice?

There are so many perks but my top three are:

1. You get paid to do a job, but you also achieve a qualification at the same time.
2. People understand that you are young, and this environment is alien to you, so everyone is very understanding and patient.
3. You have the opportunity to gain invaluable experience at a young age.

What was your first treat to yourself with your apprenticeship salary?

As soon as I found out I got a job at Microsoft I started looking for a new car. My first car wasn't the most reliable and had done its fair share of miles! I paid what I could at the time and then took a loan from the bank of Mum & Dad which I paid off with a few months' salary.

Are you saving up for anything?

The last thing I saved up for was a holiday to Mexico which I went on in July. I am saving up for another holiday to Tenerife in October.

What are your plans after your apprenticeship?

In an ideal world I would absolutely love to stay on here at Microsoft. Everything from the people to the facilities is just amazing and it's definitely somewhere I would like to remain.

However, I would be open to opportunities elsewhere to gain experience, but I would love to come back to Microsoft in the future.

