

Grace Bowles

Applied Industrial Science - Life Science Level 5 Foundation Degree Higher Level Apprenticeship

Radox Laboratories

Grace is currently completing her HLA in Applied Industrial Sciences (Life Sciences) and is employed with Radox Laboratories. She would describe her apprenticeship journey as 'insightful, educational and useful.'

Being a visual learner, Grace chose this route for the practical learning and also being able to gain experience and a qualification while earning and without student debt. The experience has made learning much easier and will help her with career progression.

Grace is working in the Clinical Chemistry Quality Control department, where she tests products to ensure they are ready for customers. This includes testing products in their final packed kit, testing in-process and some value assignment work. Grace is also able to complete maintenance on specific analysers which includes completing weekly precisions. These show whether the results produced by the analyser are precise, accurate and reliable.

During her course Grace has particularly enjoyed cell physiology, biochemistry and Immunology. She has enjoyed learning and researching about ELISAs and how they are applied in detecting specific diseases. This helped her gain insight and understanding into how ELISAs work which will help as she prepares to move into a department where they are used.

Grace has found that the content she has learned in College has reinforced the things she does in work and vice versa. For example, in biochemistry, Grace has studied enzymes and their role in the body, the medical application of enzymes and specific enzymes that are useful in a clinical setting such as ALT, ALP, Amylase, Lipase, AST, Creatine Kinase, GGT and Lactate dehydrogenase. She works with these daily which helped her understand the theory, and by learning the theory of what the enzymes are used to specifically assess and detect, she was able to gain more understanding of how they worked and apply that to test samples in work.

Grace would advise anyone considering this route to get prior experience in the industry to ensure it is something they will enjoy. She reminds applicants of the importance of telling employers exactly why they want to do the course to show them their dedication, and to mention a variety of skills that will apply to their working environment. For anyone starting out on their apprenticeship journey Grace emphasises the importance of being organised to say on top of your workload. This has allowed Grace time for church activities and social events outside of work and College. She adds that her tutors are always willing to help and to not be afraid to ask questions or take notes as this helps in understanding the content.