

James Ford

Design Management Apprentice

I'm James Ford, a 22-year-old apprentice working within design management at Tilbury Douglas.

As an apprentice design manager, my responsibilities are to help manage the design team, usually from RIBA stage 3 through to handover. More specifically, this could be setting up and chairing meetings between some or all of the design team to co-ordinate drawings, designs and so on. We also have to liaise with the client to ensure all of their requirements are being met and so that we know they are happy with how things are progressing. This role is responsible for setting dates for the designers to issue their drawings by; we generate these dates by looking at the programme and working back to come up with a date which allows our quantity surveyors enough time to market test. Most of the time there will only be one senior design manager on a project if one is required, because of my position as an apprentice I have been working closely with a senior design manager and learning first hand from them. Another aspect of the job is communicating and working with our internal team, so the planner, quantity surveyors, site team and project manager.

At the moment I am doing a one-year rotation throughout the business, so the projects I work on vary from week to week. Currently, whilst working in the planning department, I am working on Caedmon Hall, which is a refurbishment project, Knowl Park which is a new build dementia centre, University of York nursery which is also a new build and I have been involved in some tender submissions for jobs we are hoping to win.



8.30 (start time)

I arrive at work any time before 8.30 to avoid being late. The first thing I do once I've logged in is check my emails to see if anything has come in early or arrived late the day before. I will then check my calendar to see how my day looks, what meetings I have scheduled etc.

9:00

Depending on what I find when I first arrive I could either be returning emails / following up on previous unanswered emails or I could be in meetings. Also, around this time I will usually have a quick conversation with my mentor to discuss what we need to do for certain projects, and this gives him a chance to delegate some of the workload to me which I can then get stuck into.

11:00

I like to have my inbox cleared by this time so I can work on my different responsibilities relating to the projects I am working on. I could also be in a meeting that has been scheduled in before lunch.

12:30

I will mostly have lunch in the office canteen with fellow colleagues. If it's not raining, and someone is walking to get lunch, I like to go along to stretch my legs and get some fresh air which I think is beneficial when you're at a desk all day. Occasionally, we will go out for lunch somewhere; this only tends to happen for an occasion like someone's birthday etc.

14.00

Coming back from lunch I will usually check my inbox again to see if anything has come in whilst I was away from my laptop. If there is something that needs replying or sorting I will do that straight away, if not I will continue working on the lists of tasks I already have set out.

17:00 (finish time)

Towards the end of the day, I will try to close out any tasks I am working on, or at least get them to a good point where I can easily pick up from the next day. The final thing I do is check my calendar for the next day to see if I have any meetings and when / where they are.

**DAY
IN THE
LIFE**