

Apprenticeship Success Story

Your name

Emma Thornton

Your apprenticeship programme

Level 3 Data Technician

About you

I'm Head of Social Value at Capita Pension Solutions, responsible for delivering complex social value commitments across national public sector contracts. Alongside leading strategy and delivery, I'm passionate about using data to drive meaningful change and communicate impact – which is why I chose to challenge myself with this apprenticeship.



Why did you choose an apprenticeship?

I wanted to build my confidence with data and learn practical tools that I could apply immediately in my role. An apprenticeship offered the perfect mix of learning and doing – and showed me that personal growth doesn't have to stop when you're in a senior role. I chose this path to stretch myself, futureproof my skills, and prove (to myself and others!) that it's never too late to learn something new.

How has the apprenticeship enhanced your career?

The apprenticeship has been a real game-changer. It's given me the technical skills and confidence to approach data in a structured, purposeful way – which has been invaluable in my role leading social value across complex contracts. I now use data more effectively to tell stories, drive strategic decisions, and demonstrate meaningful impact. It's opened new doors professionally and added depth to how I deliver and influence.

What did your apprenticeship mean to you?

It meant growth – not just in skills, but in mindset. I came into this thinking, "Can I really do this, alongside everything else?" But it's taught me that I can take on new challenges, push through imposter syndrome, and keep learning no matter where I am in my career. It's also reminded me how important it is to be a beginner sometimes – because that's where the magic of learning starts.

What was the biggest challenge you faced and how did you overcome it?

Juggling it all! Between a full-time leadership role, a busy family life, and the demands of the apprenticeship, it was a real balancing act. There were moments I genuinely thought I might not finish. What helped was planning time each week, being honest with my learning consultant, and remembering why I started. I also gave myself permission to not be perfect – just to keep showing up and learning.

What advice would you give to an existing apprentice?

Don't wait until you feel "ready" – you become ready by doing. Break things down into manageable chunks, ask loads of questions, and don't suffer in silence if you're struggling. Use every piece of feedback as fuel for growth. And finally, celebrate the small wins – they add up to something really powerful.