

Wates Pre-Employment Case Study – Danusha Gunawardena

Date: 14th February 2023

Project Manager: Aretha Kelly

Background

Danusha is a graduate civil engineer. She had always wanted to work in the construction industry, however, as a recently trained engineer with family commitments, she was unable to gain experience in the industry, and as a result has spent several years working in the education sector.

Barriers

Danusha qualified in engineering 13 years ago. She felt that her skills had become outdated over the years, and coupled with her lack of experience, she found it very difficult to proceed.



Intervention

Danusha attended the WIC/Wates information session in September 2022, where she received information about the different routes into the industry. Danusha took part in the 5-weeks programme where she renewed her CSCS card through CONEL College and received the academically qualified persons card, then took part in a 2-weeks placement with Wates. She really enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to understand the world of construction work. To her delight, she was offered an apprenticeship as a Construction Site Supervisor with Wates Drylining Service after completing her 2-weeks work placement. She accepted and started the role in November 2022 and is delighted to have this opportunity to refresh and update her knowledge while working and attending college.

Personal impact and testimony

Danusha said: *I got to know about WIC through social media and got registered with the programme, where I was met by PM Aretha Kelly. The first day was exciting and the group of women I met was superb. I felt like we knew each other already and it was a brilliant group to work with. Aretha and the ladies never let any of us give up, and made sure all personal issues were solved and dealt with for each of us.*

I was introduced to Smart Works where we received bespoke clothing before I started my new role, which was helpful.

My mentor Sally Kinchin was such an awesome understanding lady, always making sure I was happy at my workplace. Thanks to my project managers Sam Bushill and Jack Clifford, who have been helping and guiding me until now. I am grateful to the Wates team for giving me an opportunity to chase my dream. The amount of support I received from the team is exceptional.