



Finance



Laura Pincher

What led you to apply for the Civil Service Fast Stream programme?

I'd moved to Japan straight out of university, and having worked for the public sector out there, I knew I wanted to work in the public sector again when I returned to the UK. I didn't have many other technical skills outside of my Japanese language, so I was looking to learn something new in the next step of my career.

What attracted you to the programme and this particular stream?

My six years in Japan had been broadening in many ways, but with less development in my day-to-day job than I'd have liked – so the rapid development and growth offered by the Fast Stream was one of its biggest selling points to me. Plus I'd always enjoyed numbers, but had focused more on my language skills

abroad. When I saw the Finance Fast Stream would provide all the learning needed to work in finance and gain an accountancy qualification, that was really attractive to me.

How did you first hear about the Civil Service Fast Stream programme?

I don't quite remember, to be honest. My sister had applied a few years ago, and after she became a civil servant had many positive things to say, which encouraged me to look into it more. As a non-recent graduate, and having lived outside the UK for six years running at the time of application, there were some limitations, but the breadth of options was still a highly-rated positive for the programme.

Tell us about your Civil Service Fast Stream experience. What kind of projects have you been involved in?

I'm coming towards the end of my first year, working as a finance business partner in the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It's been a steep learning curve starting finance from scratch, but with all of the underpinning support I need, from other Fast Streamers, Fast Stream and Emerging Talent team, the Government Finance Function (GFF) and my DWP colleagues. I help Policy colleagues look after their budgets for the year for certain programmes and advise on submissions that go up to ministers to help them make the best decisions they can.

Which locations and departments have you been posted to so far?

I've been at DWP in Manchester and I'm moving closer to family in the West Midlands for my next posting at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ).

How have the connections and networks you have made via the Fast Stream benefited you?

I've gained a really supportive network of other Fast Streamers, both within Finance and across other streams. Being able to talk about problems, ask questions and learn from other people's vast and varied experiences has been a real positive.

The Fast Stream also provides several networks to get involved in – from LGBTQ+, qualification-specific, regional networks and more, which helps build up a huge support network to ask whenever you need something.