



Property



Mahir Choudhury

Tell us a bit about yourself. Are you a recent graduate? Or were you seeking a career change?

I am a recent master's graduate in International Real Estate Investment and Finance from Nottingham Trent University. My master's has come in handy, as I currently work at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) where I engage with international real estate. Before completing my master's, I was an optometrist.

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

I enjoyed working with the public as an optometrist but I wanted some variation in my work. I've always been interested in property, so I upskilled with my master's. Combining these passions, I applied for a role in the Civil Service Fast Stream.

What attracted you to the programme and this particular stream?

I am passionate about the public sector. The Property Fast Stream provides a varied experience with different roles and departments and allows me to work with a range of properties that I would not experience elsewhere.

Is a STEM degree beneficial to working in the Civil Service?

The unique skillset from a STEM degree will assist you in the Fast Stream. I believe my ability to digest large amounts of information and simplify this when corresponding with the public is an ability I developed from my undergraduate degree in Optometry.

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

My first posting was at the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), where I inspected a range of properties from high-rise offices to nurseries. My second-year posting was at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), dealing with a range of properties from embassies to ambassador residences. I have travelled internationally, to Malaga and Saudi Arabia, and broadened my experience in the world of property.

How have the projects you have worked on helped deliver better services for the people of the UK? What was your contribution?

In the VOA I made sure members of the public were paying the correct amount of business rates and in particular cases reduced their rating liability. In the FCDO, I helped to secure lease renewals and took part in international development projects so that civil servants in the FCDO have suitable accommodation to live in whilst working internationally.

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

Fast Stream has broadened my horizons and I appreciate the different work people are involved in. Additionally, it has allowed me to get advice and tips from others when settling into a new role. It has also allowed me to observe the different skills required to succeed.