

# Summer Development Internship Programme

## Rion's story

Hi! I'm Rion and I'm currently an intern on the **Summer Development Internship Programme** (SDIP). I'm a keen climber, hiker, and a general outdoors enjoyer; I have known for a while that I'd like to engage in work that would let me protect these spaces I love. I completed a degree in Geography at the University of Bristol, choosing mostly physical modules along the way.

However, upon graduation, I had a distinct feeling of being lost and not knowing where to go despite knowing where my interests lie. I had knowledge of climate change and the environment, but little experience of applying them in the real world. This is when I came across the SDIP.



## What I did during the internship...

I was placed on the Security of Supply team in **Water Resources** Planning. From the very beginning it was clear to me that I had the support of not just everyone on the immediate team, but from those in neighbouring teams as well. On top of this, I had a line manager, a mentor, office buddies, and another intern that all **made me feel welcomed and comfortable**. This was hugely valuable in settling me in to work without letting any nerves get in the way.



Over the summer I also spent weeks on the National Framework (for Water Resources) team, the drought team, and the drought tech cell, getting a taste for the breadth of this corner of the agency.

I was **assigned various projects throughout the internship that allowed me to develop a wide range of skills** whilst teaching me the ins and outs of Water Resources Planning. These skills have been highly transferrable, and I look forward to making use of them in my future career. So far, I've completed projects based around research, GIS, reviews of water company plans, and many more. I also have had the privilege of partaking in several site visits as well as joining different teams to experience a day in their unique roles. Highlights include operating a remote-controlled boat (that costs nearly as much as my student debt!) with an acoustic sensor to measure river flow and joining an ecology team to take kick samples and conducting invertebrate identification. In September I also had the opportunity to meet my team for an away day in the Lake District, with most of my interaction with them being via video call, it was enjoyable to meet them in person.

**“ I maintain the desire to make positive contributions towards environmental protection ”**

I am currently aiming to secure permanent employment with the Environment Agency following the conclusion of my internship.

My time in Water Resources has taught me that I should be open to trying work that might be outside of my traditional interests. However, I maintain the desire to make positive contributions towards environmental protection which I believe I can do here!



***Written by Rion, Water Resources Planner SDIP intern in the Environment Agency***