

Graduate Trainee at the Environment Agency

Isaac's story

Hi, my name is Isaac and I'm a Graduate Trainee Water Resources Officer at the Environment Agency.

From an early age, I have been passionate about improving the environment, and the EA stood out to me as an organisation that could really help me to make a tangible difference.

While studying at the University of Exeter, I was lucky enough to have the opportunity to apply for a mentor from the EA through their mentor scheme.

Through regular meetings with my mentor, I learnt a lot about the work of the EA and was encouraged to apply for the Water Resources Graduate Training Scheme. My mentor was extremely helpful in guiding me through the application process and, after being successful, they were more than happy to help me prepare for my interview.



I have been encouraged to try many new things

I graduated from the University of Exeter in July 2024 with a degree in Environmental Science, joined the EA a couple of months later in September, and have not looked back.

Since joining the organisation, I have been encouraged to try many new things that I could never have expected, with the full support of my line manager, team leader, and technical coach, not to mention the rest of the colleagues in my team and the wider graduate scheme.



One of the things I value most about the scheme is the 20% development time that you are allowed, which has enabled me to explore my environmental interests and develop my skills through a wealth of training resources and opportunities. For example, I have recently completed my interview skills training, and am looking forward to getting involved with interviewing the next intake of graduates.

Working with experts in their field has also helped me to develop my technical skills. Recently, I had the opportunity to get involved in devising the Strategy for Thames Area Chalk Streams (STACS), which was great for me as I am passionate about the conservation of chalk streams and the unique biodiversity that they support. The graduate scheme has given me lots of freedom to explore these passions.

“ **I have really gained an appreciation for the importance of fresh water** ”

By getting involved in opportunities like this, I have really gained an appreciation for the importance of fresh water – for the environment, economy and to sustain ourselves. However, our water resources are under pressure, mainly due to climate change and growing demand. My team in Integrated Environmental Planning (IEP) works to make our water use sustainable for everyone by working alongside water companies and regulating abstractions to reduce environmental harm.

Since joining the EA in September, I have felt extremely welcomed and respected. I am already on my journey to becoming a chartered member of CIWEM, which I hope to achieve in the next 4 years with continued support and opportunities from those around me.

I also hope to be able to give back to the mentor scheme that started my journey into the EA by becoming a mentor myself. And, above everything, I hope I can continue contributing to the protection of our natural world.



**Written by Isaac, Graduate Trainee
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