

# Govia Thameslink graduate scheme starts railway journey for new recruits

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Govia Thameslink (GTR), in partnership with the Go-Ahead Group, is helping the next generation of rail professionals find their feet with the start of its annual graduate scheme.

The tailored scheme runs until March 2024 and gives individuals the opportunity to gain valuable skills and knowledge that will give them a firm grounding to forge their way through a career in the industry.

Zoey Hudson, head of talent, diversity and inclusion at GTR said: “We’re really passionate about developing our people and already have a range of opportunities to enhance their skills. These include free online training modules covering wide-ranging topics, in-person training courses, and apprenticeships that can be studied alongside the job.

“This year, we expanded the graduate programme to current employees, giving them the chance to gain hands-on experience in operational management roles across the business. This will really prepare them to take their next steps and hopefully enjoy a lasting career in rail.”

Changing the format slightly for 2022, GTR opened the programme to its own employees for the first time,

giving junior members of the workforce an opportunity to upskill and get ahead in their careers.

Previous alumni of the annual graduate programme have worked their way up to senior roles in the railway, spanning project management, area station management, and one individual now working as the head of customer operations.

Individuals taking up the opportunity are being seconded from areas of the business including gateline assistance and on-board supervision. The roles will be backfilled whilst they complete the scheme. The three GTR employees and one university graduate will also work with Network Rail graduates for part of the programme, as they undertake the management inductions together.

Vikash Patel, 31, joined GTR in May 2017 on a trainee management scheme. After having no prior railway experience, once he completed the programme he was employed as a station manager at London Victoria.

He said: “The programme I enrolled onto was designed to help and train young individuals who want to be future leaders. We had the opportunity to spend time in many different areas of the company, which helped to provide a well-rounded experience of how a train company operates.

“I was completely new to the railway and the scheme was a fantastic way to get a deeper understanding about the industry. It helped to prepare me for my first station management role and, six years later, I’m still here and now looking after six stations in busy South London.”

The first three months of the graduate scheme sees individuals receive an intense introduction to GTR’s operations and the key departments that keep the railway running. Throughout the full 18-month programme, each graduate will learn about the ins and outs of station management, driver management and on-board management, as well as Network Rail operations, providing them with a robust experience that will set them up for the next stage of their careers.