

Bristol is changing and so are we



**Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees'
experience of working at the council**



Introduction

The council is keen to attract a more diverse workforce that reflects the community we serve. We believe by being more diverse we'll unlock new talent and improve our services.

This brochure has been written using the experiences of current employees. It provides an insight into working life at the council, the range of opportunities available and with some tips about joining.



Thanh Quan-Nicholls
Research and Evaluation Manager

Working in research and policy

"I spend most of my week researching to produce information. This includes producing economic updates, exchanging information with key contacts and providing briefings for managers and councillors."

A part of making change happen

"I love working in the public sector and being a part of making change happen. I like that my work constantly changes and adapts to current issues. For an example I'm currently researching the key recession indicators. The ability to be both responsive to current issues and strategic is very important to my job satisfaction."

Training opportunities

“I’m involved in anything to do with resources. I complete all the finance processes, order equipment, deal with ICT, check the facilitates and arrange any maintenance. Being at the council, I’ve had the opportunity to undertake a coaching course and a diploma in leadership and management that was specifically for BME staff. I’ve also reached the highest level in the NVQ for admin and management.”

Tips about completing the application form

- ▮ In your application form clearly address every essential criteria on the personal specification using relevant experiences.
- ▮ Research the role by speaking to someone who works in the team to get a real sense of what’s currently going on and is needed.



Juliet Thomas
Assistant Resources Manager

Opportunities for career progression



Gaining new skills

“I started out working on the IT service desk and then became an IT technician. Following this I've progressed to become an IT project manager. Currently, I'm on a secondment managing an IT project for the new museum of Bristol. This has given me the opportunity to learn new skills, move into new areas of work and undertake a range of training opportunities. I work in a supportive environment where I feel my career can move forward.”

Learning in a variety of ways

“I'm always learning through talking to my colleagues and sharing knowledge. I find I'm constantly challenged to improve my performance by reading, questioning and looking into past examples of projects.”

Mohammad Al-Bayatti
IT Project Manager

Taking a secondment

“Working in the education client unit, I work closely with the schools to assist their procurement and capital projects. Recently, I’ve secured a three month secondment as an administration manager for the parks, estates and sports team that will help to widen my skill set.”

Tips for preparing for an interview

- ▮ Prepare lots of examples for the interview that show you can meet the essential criteria.
- ▮ Remember that the council is not looking for a specific type of person, so be confident about being yourself.



Niotia Ferguson
Contract Support Officer

A former modern apprentice

“I started as a modern apprentice, where I was partnered with a procurement officer to gain a range of procurement skills. Towards the end of my two year apprenticeship, a procurement technician post became available and I got it! My role involves advising projects, working on tenders, developing contract specifications, preparing contractual documentation and contract management.”

Multiple training opportunities

“I’ve undertaken a range of internal training courses, gained an NVQ level 2 and 3 in purchasing and supply and supply chain management. Also, I recently completed PRINCE2 (Projects in Controlled Environments) and I’m now currently undertaking my CIPS (Chartered Institute of Purchase and Supply) qualification.”

Carrie-Lewese Morris
Corporate Procurement Technician

Flexible working

“I really like the flexibility around my working hours. We have a flexi-time scheme that allows me to fit my work around my family life. Also, I can work from home for a couple days each week, as I have a PC and equipment all set-up for me.”

Tips about applying for jobs

- ▮ If you find the interviewers speaking in jargon and acronyms, politely ask the interviewer to explain the question in plain English.
- ▮ If you've an interview don't forget that it is a two way process, so make sure you ask questions.

Moira Dolling
NVQ Assessor

Making a positive difference

“I enjoyed working in the voluntary sector but felt that I could also make a positive difference to race equality and harassment by working in a local authority. The council is much larger and farther-reaching in terms of the impact that it has on communities.”

No one week is the same

“The work is really varied and no one week is the same as another. I’ve ongoing pieces of work like the monitoring of hate crime incidents or attending multi-agency meetings. However, I also combine this with working on projects to improve the service. For example by writing new policies, developing training and providing one-to-one support for staff.”

A portrait of Naina Gohil, a woman with long dark hair, wearing a teal top with a gold necklace. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and buildings.

Naina Gohil
Race and Housing Officer



A rewarding job

“I’m responsible for arranging the transport for children with special needs to attend their schools and colleges. This is a very rewarding job, as the children receive an education and this contributes to improving their independence.”

Tips for widening your skills

- ▮ Try not to limit yourself to one designated area of expertise as you may find your skills and experience could be applied to a role you’ve never considered.
- ▮ Consider applying for jobs that aren’t permanent as they can last longer than stated and lead to other opportunities.

Zhaohui (Ann) Wong
Passenger Services Co-ordinator



Supporting my team

“The main part of my role is to support my team of information system (IS) project managers and project support officers. This is through team meetings, one-to-ones and by helping to firefight issues on projects. The other part of my role is to ensure that department IS and IT projects are commissioned and managed correctly using the PRINCE2 project management methodology.”

Providing solutions

“The best part about my role is providing solutions that ultimately benefit the public. I also like supporting and coaching my team. I’ve a good relationship with my team based on a shared desire to continually improve how we work as a team and an organisation.”

Rishanne Shellard
Projects Team Leader

An interesting job

Responsibility to make your own decisions

“I originally joined the council as a customer service officer. I undertook two secondments within the training team, which helped me to become a project officer. This is a very varied role and includes organising consultation events for tenants, writing newsletters, updating the website, undertaking negotiations to acquire housing and producing our communication and consultation strategy.”

Tips for developing your career

- ▮ Be proactive about your own career.
- ▮ Be involved in voluntary and community work to learn a range of transferable skills.
- ▮ Make sure you develop your profile in your organisation

Kajal Parmer
Project Officer



Useful weblinks

www.bristol.gov.uk/jobs

www.randstad.co.uk/

<http://jobs.thisisbristol.co.uk/>

www.bbc.co.uk/dna/h2g2/A438536

www.askoxford.com/betterwriting/successfulcv/



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