

# Live Q&A transcript

## January 2017



This transcript has been edited to be more concise. If your question is not answered here or in the FAQs, please feel free to contact us.

If you're reading this, chances are you're looking for an exciting and challenging career. Perhaps you're from a theatre background, or maybe you're a business management specialist, or perhaps something else entirely! Whatever your degree subject, we're here to help you decide if our scheme is the next step you are looking for.

This is your chance to speak to us in more detail and find out more about what the ATG Graduate Scheme is really like. You'll have the chance to speak to previous trainees as well as the scheme co-ordinator, and make sure you're fully informed before you get started on the application form.

Today we have the following people ready to answer your questions:

Cate Gordon, who organises the scheme  
Thalia Caddy, second year trainee  
Adele Robinson, second year trainee  
Dan Lewis, first year trainee  
Jamie Budgett, past trainee and ATG employee

## Application process

**My first question would be if it would be possible for someone outside the UK (for example, a Dutch girl like me) to apply?**

Yes – as long as you have the right to work in the UK unsponsored you can apply.

**I graduate in 2013/14/15 - can I still apply?**

Unfortunately not this year. You must have graduated in 2016 or be about to graduate in 2017 to be eligible.

**I'll be out of the country between now and September. Can I still apply, even though I won't be in the country for an interview?**

You do need to be able to attend the assessment day and final panel interview in person so unfortunately no. So much of what we're looking for is about how to work with and interact with others that we can't assess that remotely. We are able to host the telephone interview via Skype if you will be abroad for that part.

**Do the potential graduates need to have or achieve a specific degree grade to be considered for the scheme? For example 2:1**

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We do ask for a 2:1 yes. This year we will consider applicants who do not get a 2:1 but you must have exceptional, outstanding equivalent experience from outside your course and be able to articulate why you didn't get that 2:1 mark. I must be clear when I say outstanding - I do mean outstanding! You'd need to be able to show you are capable of achieving work of that standard even though you didn't get that grade.

**I am graduating this coming July so would the position be conditional as I haven't received my final grade yet?** Yes, we signed our contracts in July once we had our degree results.

**If I decide to study a postgraduate course, will I still be able to apply the year after that? Or is it just undergraduate?** Yes, you can apply after either undergraduate or postgraduate courses.

**Is it possible to apply next year if I apply this year and am unsuccessful? (I graduate in 2017).** Yes, you can apply again next year. We don't stop people applying twice.

**If I am successful with the graduate scheme - and the time comes and I am unsure, could I transfer my place till next year or re-apply?** No, you cannot defer. There are only two places and we're looking for someone able to start this September. You are able to reapply if you don't get offered a place, as long as you will still be within a year of graduating.

**What is the interview process like?**

The Interview process consists of a written application form, telephone interview, assessment centre, and a panel interview. The phone interview is up to 30 minutes with me and one other member of our recruitment team. The team is made up of managers from across the business - some general managers who run our theatres, some department managers from our 'shared services' departments like customer experience, programming or accounts. The panel interview is with our HR Director and another senior exec, and myself and we ask you to make a presentation as well as answer some questions and have a conversation with us. We're very friendly!

It is hard work but so rewarding. I've kept in touch with a few people from the recruitment day, and they really feel like they gained a lot from the whole experience.

**Is there anything you can recommend really getting to grips with? Like focusing on audience interaction/ATG's marketing strategies etc?**

We don't test you on your knowledge of the company before you start working here, particularly. We'd expect you to have done your research - so anything that is publicly available we'd expect you to have read, and of course bring your ideas! If you have an idea about our marketing strategies and you want to bring those to your interview, please do, but we won't be testing you on something you couldn't have learnt before working here, that would be mean! We're looking for potential.

**What does the assessment centre entail? And are you expected to bring a portfolio of work?**

The assessment centre is fun actually! I learn a lot from doing these days. It will involve some activities you'll undertake in small groups that relate to the kind of work you'd be doing as a trainee. It's not so much about testing your knowledge as giving us a chance to see how you work with other people. So no, you don't need to bring a portfolio although after the assessment day, a small group will go on to a panel interview with our HR Director Susan and other senior staff, and you could bring it then if you wanted to.

**Given the nature of the scheme I'm sure many applicants (including myself!) will be applying from a theatre degree background, what helps you to narrow these applications down?**

We use the person specification, which is essentially an agreed list of what we are looking for. In the first instance, we will read everyone's application forms carefully - each form will have been read by at least two different people at some stage in the process. We look carefully for examples of each of those things in the person spec, and score them (for example, a form that doesn't mention something might get 0 points, whereas a form that mentions it and gives an excellent example that demonstrates how your skills and qualities match the job might get 10 points).

The degree subject you have done doesn't matter though. It is about making sure you read that person specification carefully and give us examples that demonstrate that is the kind of person you are. The person spec is a good guide for you too as it tells you something about us as a company and what we think is important.

**Hi Thalia, Dan, Adele and Jamie, you have all been through the process and were successful in being placed on the graduate scheme, are there any tops tips of how to succeed? Or is there anything in particular Cate that ATG are looking for in a potential graduates?**

I would say the most important thing is to come across passionate about wanting to work in this company

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and to be open minded and interested in every aspect of ATG as a company and the industry as a whole. As well as that, for this scheme you definitely need to be proactive about developing yourself! I believe there is also a person spec on the Grad Scheme webpage that tells you a bit more about what type of person the company are looking for.

We're looking for people who could one day lead our theatres, departments, maybe the company or even be the next influencers of the theatre industry. You don't have to be that right now - we're looking for potential. If you have a look at the person spec, we've distilled there what we think that person needs to be like. This spec does change as the needs of the business change.

When we interview for this and other trainee roles in the company though, what makes people stand out for me is the real insight they have into themselves - what makes them tick, and why they are applying. The strongest applicants are always the ones who can tell us who they are and why they are applying - which must sound really silly but perhaps you'd be surprised how many people don't do that.

### ***We sent this response to a question emailed in:***

I think the applications that really stand out are the ones that demonstrate some real insight into both yourself, and the company. I don't mean you need to have special inside knowledge of ATG, but outstanding applications often show through the examples they have chosen or answers given that they recognise what the company values and aims to achieve, and perhaps areas where the company could develop or grow. You might do this consciously – generally good applications from people that have read up on the company using what is publicly available – or unconsciously, by which I mean you might use an example in one of your answers where you don't know it, but we can see you have a real ability in a skill the company needs, for example. On a really basic level, the best applications are the ones where people have read the person specification and clearly told us why they think they are the right person for the job and for ATG as a company.

There's not another graduate scheme in theatre like this, and so we know the scheme gets a lot of attention simply because it is a salaried graduate role in theatre which I appreciate might feel like gold dust! The scheme is genuinely a fantastic opportunity, but the other piece of the puzzle is whether or not ATG is the right company for you too. Find out about the company online and see what you think of what we do, as not all companies are the same of course. When applying for jobs particularly early in your working life it is easy to spend all your time focussing on selling yourself to the recruiter and not think about whether it actually sounds like somewhere you would like to work so I'd encourage you to do your research.

### **Do you have had to have a large amount of previous management experience/experience in a variety of roles prior to the scheme to be successful?**

I had absolutely no management experience whatsoever! The company are looking for potential rather than the finished article so that is all you will need to demonstrate.

It's worth having a think about how you work with others - if you read the person spec, you can see a lot of what we are looking for is someone that is good with people. That doesn't mean you have to have been their formal line manager before though. Think 'transferable skills'

## **Location & logistics**

### **Will the scheme be based in London?**

Good question - partly yes, partly no! ATG has 38 theatres/venues in the UK and three office bases ('shared services' and IT offices in London and head office, accounts and HR in Woking). For the first 6 months trainees will be working full time in one of our regional venues (everything outside London plus Richmond and Wimbledon) so it's safe to say that first 6 months will probably not be in London. You'll then do 6

months in London in our offices and a West End Theatre. The second year we don't know as we create the placements depending on what is happening in the business at the time, but we can't guarantee that would be in London. It's important to note we can't guarantee you'd be working in any particular theatre or area of the country. If you're thinking 'I want to work in my local ATG theatre, and only that theatre' then this scheme isn't what you're looking for. You can see the jobs that might be coming up in your local theatre on our [ATGTickets.com](http://ATGTickets.com) jobs page.

**With the different placements taking place across the country, do ATG help with finding accommodation as it is not for a long period of time, or do the graduates find their own accommodation? Are you able to provide support regarding living arrangements and moving from place to place?**

Sometimes if we are asking you to go somewhere for just a short time we'll book somewhere for you. For instance, we sent Rosie and Dan to work at the Edinburgh Playhouse for just a week to help open Mamma Mia, so we booked somewhere for them to stay. Whereas if it is somewhere you're moving for 6 months, then it is up to you to find accommodation although we do contribute to rent/moving costs.

There is some assistance with finding accommodation - all of our venues have what's called a "digs list" which we have access to - this is basically a list of local accommodation providers approved by the venue, which generally host touring actors during their stay. This is a really useful tool for finding what's out there, there are also various theatre digs websites which are great too. Equally useful are the sites like Spare Room, AirBnB etc which have plenty of options on them.

ATG also offers a relocation package which we'd discuss at the telephone interview stage. When we ask you to move as part of your job, ATG will contribute towards rent and moving costs as we ask trainees to move so often!

**Hi Thalia, Dan, Adele and Jamie, I know you haven't all completed the scheme yet but I was just interested to know how you personally found moving to and from the different placements and living in parts of the country you are or were possibly unfamiliar with?**

I've moved three times, and am about to move again. Firstly I moved to Liverpool, which is a fantastic city! I lived on my own in a studio flat, which was actually quite easy to find. I didn't know anyone at all in the city, so I think in retrospect I should have found somewhere to live with other people, but it depends what your preferences are. Since then I've lived in two places in London and I know lots of people here, and there is always so much to do, so that has been easier, but moving around can be pretty hard work. I'm going to be moving for my final project again, which I'm really excited about. I think I've learnt so much about myself because of all of this moving. There have been hard times, it is pretty taxing, but ATG are really good at supporting you through those. I'd recommend it though - the experiences you get from living and working in different parts of the country is incredible, and you'll become connected to ATG and its employees that lots of other people in the company are jealous of!

Anyone who gets onto the scheme will be given advice throughout on this, I'm definitely happy to talk more about these experiences to our new graduates.

Another point to consider is moving when you're so busy as a grad trainee - it can be quite stressful to organise somewhere new to live, moving your things etc. You'll probably find out if you're moving a couple of months before a new placement starts, but this is also the time when another placement is coming to end so things are getting very busy and you're trying to make the most out of your remaining time. It is a pretty full on time.

It is definitely worth thinking about this, as moving around isn't for everyone

It is great to hear how you found it as 4 times in a year is a lot. I moved quite far for university and again for a placement year so I have some experience with it but both times I knew people fairly close by.

It's worth reflecting on how you found moving for university or moving home, but just remember you would only have 6 months in that place before we ask you to do it again, rather than 3 years!

**Would the working hours be dependent on where you are placed if you were offered a position on the graduate scheme?**

The working hours do depend on what placement you are on yes. For example, if you are in a venue you will be working towards duty managing and working a lot of events which may be in the evening and weekends. however, you might then do an office based placement which is predominantly during office hours.

In terms of working hours, when venue based, you're likely to work 10-6 on your day shifts, and if you're working the show in the evening then this could be 2-10/11 depending on the length of the show. You will also work some weekends too, on a shift pattern shared with the rest of the team.

***We sent this response to a question emailed in:***

**To what extent will the successful candidates have a choice in where they undertake their regional and West End placements?**

It is a negotiation, but let me explain. For the first six months in a regional venue we do take the trainee's ideas into consideration, but there are some factors which are frankly more important; we look at where the best learning opportunity will be first and foremost. Our Business Managers (senior staff who manage groups of venues) advise me as to where there's both a good opportunity to learn loads and a business need the trainee can help fulfil, and then I match the trainees (as I know quite a bit about you by this point!) to the most appropriate role. We take into consideration things like personalities, previous skills and experience, your areas of interest and what I think will be a challenge for you too. There is a lot to learn from every single one of our venues as they all have different strengths and unique business challenges and therefore if you're applying to this scheme, you should be not just prepared for, but excited about the prospect of working in a company with venues all over the country – and world!

We're hoping that trainees will go on to become senior staff in the company, so perhaps it's worth thinking about their travel too. Many staff at ATG, particularly those in senior roles as well as some staff in 'shared services' roles (such as our Property team for example, who are, put very simply, responsible for the physical buildings) travel very frequently, and by that I mean every week, including overnight stays away from home. Our most senior staff in the executive team are required to travel internationally. We do a lot of telephone and video conferencing too, but in a business that is based around live entertainment, well, sometimes you just have to be there in person! Of course there are roles in the company that don't involve travel, but if you're thinking travelling around this much sounds awful this may not be the right opportunity for you.

After your first six months, you're more involved in the decision making process. For example, I'm working with our first year trainees now to think about which London theatre might be a good contrast to the experiences they have had in their different regional venues, and with our second year trainees to craft their final six months to ensure they have the opportunity to experience the areas of the business they either haven't worked in yet, or would like to get more out of. You can see this has to be more of a discussion as it's so unique to each individual's experience and what they want to develop. I should be clear that I make the final decision however, and senior staff at the company right up to executive level will have input into the decision making process – it is a job after all, and you are an employee fulfilling the needs of the business, just like any other employee.

That's a long answer! In short, the trainee doesn't choose – you're joining the whole company, not just one

venue.

If you're thinking you have a particular local theatre you want to work in, I'd encourage you to think about whether you might prefer to look out for roles coming up in that particular theatre instead. This scheme isn't the only way into ATG – it's only for two people a year and we employ over 3500 people in the UK alone. There are plenty of examples of brilliant people at ATG who have worked their way through a wide variety of roles in the company and externally, starting with part time jobs in their local theatre and that is equally valuable to us. We are a stronger business by having a diverse team including people from a wide variety of backgrounds with different types of experience; I want to be really clear that doing a graduate scheme is not 'better' than any other route. The question is whether it is the right thing for you. You need to think about whether you want to fast-track, or if you'd rather work your way through some different jobs. There's plenty of advice out there if you search online and lots of blogs have covered the pros and cons of these different approaches so it's worth reading some of those and considering this further.

## Scheme content & trainee experience

### Could any trainees tell us a bit about Rising Stars?

Rising Stars is our leadership development programme that graduate trainees are automatically enrolled on, alongside a group of other talented people from the company that have been spotted as potential future leaders.

Working with 12 people from across the business, we get together about every 6 weeks to have full days of workshops with our Training Director and an external trainer. We have done lots of presentations in these sessions, honing our skills in a safe environment.

We've also covered topics like time management, negotiations, management styles and the list could go on. These sessions are fantastic, with a really good mix of mini lectures, group exercises and discussions. We also work on a big group project across two years. My group has been working on company engagement, and we've all learnt a lot about project management and working in a big group, with an incredibly chance to make a big impact across the company.

As part of rising stars, we're also given a coach who is a senior member of the company. You will work out with your coach how often you meet, but this is such a valuable tool. You can talk about yourself and your experiences and they will help you work out answers to your questions and doubts and help you grow professionally and personally.

**I am passionate about accessibility and diversity within audiences/institutions/companies. Would ATG help me in developing my specific interests within a venue/management orientated perspective, for example discussing how relaxed performance can be practically implemented and accessible performances, as well as developing new skills? I.e.: bring my experiences into ATG?**

I think yes - there's always room in any job to make it your own and ATG is looking for proactive people who will make things happen. Access is a huge priority for ATG and Karen Townsend who is our Head of Learning and Access is a real expert – we're very proud of our Access work. However, it's also important to remember ATG is a commercial business and although access is important, it's one of a whole range of competing priorities - so you need to be sure that, as well as access, you're interested in the rest of the job too.

The rest of the venue management job involves: risk management, health and safety, financial management and budgets, marketing and forging community links and relationships, welcoming customers, dealing with complaints, welfare and managing your team of staff including people who know a lot more about their specialist area than you, recruitment, managing the physical building, duty management of live events, business development, possibly even overseeing a restaurant...and more! All our general managers are different, and they all have a different take on running their venues - which comes from their own skills and

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interests like you are saying. Some of them come from HR, marketing, cruise ships, front of house, and completely non-theatre backgrounds too - lots of different influences.

In short, yes there is of course room for your specific interests and each person will make the scheme their own, but the training we are offering is about venue management, not access (or marketing, technical, any other specialist subject). It is very much a 'generalist' scheme. We're looking for someone who will be happy being a generalist at the end of it.

### **How would you describe the working environment at ATG?**

The environment is slightly different depending on which department or venue you are in. For example, in our Property team everyone works across a large chunk of the country and so they are in and out of the office all the time and do a lot of work remotely, whereas staff based in a particular theatre are in one place which makes the culture/way of working a bit different. Generally though I'd say it is a really friendly company - that is what everyone always comments on when they leave ATG - 'I'll miss the people the most! There's a lot of real experts who work in the company too - every day I learn something new from working with people who have incredible experience in a particular area.

I absolutely love working for ATG. I feel as a business there is the right balance of hard work and fun. Everybody that I have come across has such a passion for what they do and that really comes across. From the point of view of a Trainee, everybody is so supporting, from the Front of House staff right up to our CEO. We work hard, learn lots, and have a great time in the process!

I think something important to know about ATG is that it really rewards people who are proactive. I don't know if the rest of you would agree with me on that, but it's something I have noticed working here. We give you the starting point in the scheme/training programme/job or whatever it is, but ATG is always looking for people who will be proactive about stepping up for opportunities or making things happen.

100% agree!

It's an exciting time to be a part of this company, having had lots of recent changes to our Senior Leadership team. There is a real feeling of 'great things are coming' for this company, and I feel like I'm always surrounded by people with a great drive and big ambitions. For me, this is incredibly motivating. I love positive change and progress and there is a lot of this across the business.

Having spent time in so many ATG venues, each team has its own identity too, which makes working across the business so exciting!

### **For those that came from a degree background not in theatre, how did you find the step up from doing theatre as a hobby to as a job?**

It was great - very intense, but I was working very hard at producing and managing our university theatre company before I started. The work I was doing when I first started at the Liverpool Empire was very different to what I did before I joined ATG, but working full time, some evenings and weekends, in a new city was a big change from working hard at uni but completely managing my own time.

My degree was nothing to do with theatre (Business & French) and I found it a really natural step. Admittedly I had had experience of working in the industry part time, but I think if something is your passion, the step up from hobby to full-time career is exciting, challenging and something to absolutely relish. At least that's how I found it.

### **I just wondered what types of roles and responsibilities all of the graduates have had on the different**

### areas of the scheme?

I'm in my first year on the scheme, just over 4 months in. So currently I'm on my Regional placement, down at the lovely New Wimbledon Theatre. This part of the placement is designed to give an overview of how our Regional venues operate, so over the course of the 6 months here I'm working with every single department under this roof! So far I've spent time with Front of House, Duty Managing shows in our two auditoriums, I'm currently with the Marketing team and I've also been leading on an Archive project! Still to come I have time with our Technical, Box Office and Creative Learning teams.

I can tell you a bit about what I did. For the first 6 months I was at the Milton Keynes Theatre learning about regional venue operations, this was everything from FOH and Box office to marketing and Business Development. After that I went into one of our West End venues to learn about the West End Venue operation and that involved working closely with the management team there (Theatre Manager, Dep Theatre manager and FOH Manager). In my second year I spent 6 months in our central retail team working on a project which involved rolling our restaurant brand 'bistro' into a number of our regional venues and then I spent my final 6 months in the Ticketing Department developing a new ticketing scheme for students...so a huge variety of roles/responsibilities.

Could you all explain a bit about how some jobs you know in advance, and some come up during the placement?

Definitely. So I knew that I was going to be working in Marketing in my 3rd and 4th week in Liverpool, Box Office the week after, then Access and Groups. That was set out as my schedule.

Then, whilst in Marketing, I was on a Bistro call - our restaurant concept which was launched in Liverpool. The marketing manager asked me to take minutes, then gave me a couple of jobs following this to focus on whilst I was with the team. Having done this, he then asked if I'd like to carry on leading on Bistro marketing for the rest of my placement (5 months or so). A fab opportunity, which came up due to a business and venue need, which couldn't have been planned. Definitely taking opportunities as they come up is something we've all done many times. There may also be last minute meetings you'll be pulled into, and it will be important to be flexible and accept these. That's what working in venues is like - lots going on and sometimes you have to drop what you're doing to deal with something that is happening.

### **I know you get to work in every department, but do you have an option to focus on certain ones, such as marketing or FOH, later in the scheme or is it varied throughout the whole two years?**

In the second year you undertake some specific projects, and so yes, you can focus a bit - i say 'a bit' because we keep it as broad as possible as we're aiming for venue management roles which are very broad (General Managers!) The next projects Thalia and Adele are going to be doing involve quite a few elements. If you are looking to develop as a specialist however, this isn't the right scheme. If for example you know you want to be a marketing specialist and work in marketing manager / director roles, this isn't for you as you don't develop the same in depth marketing knowledge and experience you would from getting an entry level marketing job. I would recommend having a look at the ATG Tickets jobs page and look at some job descriptions for other roles too - if you think some of them sound better for you than venue management then you know which route to take!

Your comment 'varied throughout the whole 2 years' is a good way to describe it. We're looking for people who might go on to those senior roles in our venues, which are very varied roles, and so the training reflects that.

### **How easy was it to tailor what you were doing to your main areas of interest in the second year?**

I work closely with everyone to choose the placements. I make the final decision, but we work closely on it - Adele and Thalia have just been working with me on where they are going to go next and that was a negotiation - maybe Adele and Thalia would disagree! It is all within a framework leading to venue

management though and it is important to remember that - you can't make the scheme into absolutely anything, so for example if you were interested in being a technical manager this isn't for you.

## **Achievements & the future**

**Hi everyone! I was just wondering if there is the possibility to stay and progress with ATG after the graduate scheme?**

Definitely. Although no job is guaranteed at the end of the graduate scheme, the hope is that there will be appropriate jobs which come up which we can apply for. Both Rachel and Jamie, last year's grads, have stayed within the company.

As a Graduate who has now finished the Scheme and has a full time role in ATG I'm hopefully a good person to answer this. In it's shortest form, yes most definitely! Although the scheme does not guarantee a job at the end of it, the company are hugely supportive and keen to find the right fit for both you and the business. I finished the scheme in Sep 2016 and have joined the Business Development team as Commercial Development Assistant. I'm really enjoying the role and hope to stay in ATG for many more years!

The company doesn't guarantee a role as we don't know what the jobs will be – we're too big and fast changing to limit you to one exact role, and of course we don't know what or where the vacancies will be, but we're also too small to have, as some schemes do, thousands of exactly the same role for you to progress to. However, we go through this rigorous selection process and train people for two years so that they will work with us in the future – we're investing in you now so that we know we have talented people ready to go when future roles come up. We know we need to ensure we have a good pool of people ready for venue management and senior leadership – so we created a scheme that will deliver that for the business. I should point out just for clarity that the scheme has changed slightly since Jamie and Rachel were trainees – we are very specific now that we are training for venue leadership as that is what we think the business will need next.

**How do previous successful applicants feel they have progressed individually over the scheme?**

It's incredible how much I feel I've progressed! I have learnt a lot about how the commercial theatre industry works, venue and central operations and ticketing, but in terms of myself, I feel I have grown as a leader. We are given fantastic opportunities to push ourselves, be proactive and lead on exciting projects, which have given me confidence in my abilities and the chance to be creative in a world of operations.

The graduates are a part of an internal leadership development scheme, Rising Stars. This is made up of 12 people across the business, and we meet every other month to do workshops on really useful skills like presentation skills, time management, negotiation and networking. We're also coached by someone in the company as part of this, which has helped me to understand who I am and what kind of leader I want to be.

I'm only 4 months into the scheme but already I feel like I've progressed massively in that short time. The great thing about this programme is that you have the opportunity to take a step outside of your comfort zone and do lots of things that are new and challenging! As well as the obvious benefit of this in terms of skills, I found that it was great for my confidence too

I think the scheme has done a huge amount for my development both as a professional and as a person. Throughout the scheme you will always be encouraged to take time to reflect on your placements and identify areas for personal and professional development. You have the opportunity to go on various courses to help develop you as a manager and a future leader of the company and I left the scheme feeling like it had given me a huge number of transferrable skills that could translate across the theatre industry and beyond!

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The scheme has enabled me to gain insight and experience into many areas of the company from venue management, marketing, front of house to head office. Everybody in the company is so supportive of the scheme and this allows for opportunities to meet and chat with people from all over the company with a wealth of experience. The two years are intense and fast pace, I'm nearly 18 months into the scheme. I feel well equipped to progress into a management role within venue operations come the end of my scheme, in September.

I think this scheme is really hot on self-reflection and understanding of people - what motivates people, what encourages them, how you can get the best out of yourself and others. That's what I think this scheme really brings out of trainees - they are great managers of people. That might sound quite vague. A different scheme might make you a great project manager or financial manager for example. There's loads of schemes out there that make you a 'consultant'. This scheme is heavily loaded on the people management side!

Trainees also get such a broad understanding of the whole business. That is really special and gives them a unique insight into how the company works which then means when they start a project or role, they can pull on this great knowledge, contacts and understanding that they've gained over the past two years. I'd say the same thing about our internship, although that is focussed on just the shared services/office based bits of the business. That's what we try to achieve with all of our training schemes as it makes us a stronger business.