

Published on *Bournemouth and Poole College* (<https://www.thecollege.co.uk>)

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James Gulliver, age 20, Signature Catering

"I really enjoy my job and can see me being a chef for the rest of my life."



I had worked in catering before. I started at the bottom as a kitchen porter before working my way up to eventually becoming Sous Chef, however I wanted to get a formal qualification so applied for a role at Moors Valley Country Park.

The role is working as a line chef for Signature Catering and although I am starting at the bottom again, I feel getting the experience and the qualifications will help me in my future career.

The Apprenticeship gives me the ability to work and go to college one day a week. I never really had the time to go to college before, so being able to learn the theory behind the dishes I am creating is great.

Each day follows a similar format. In the morning we prep for breakfast, then prep for lunch. Moors Valley can get really busy in the summer so it can be non-stop from 8am until 4pm.

But my favourite part is getting involved in the event catering part of the business. This involves preparing meals for weddings, but also doing the tastings too. It's great to think that if my tasting goes well a couple could choose to use us for their wedding catering.

The Apprenticeship is giving me these broad range of skills. I'm not just coming in and being a line chef, I am coming in and doing lots of different things. I can write my own menus and even get to present them to clients. If they like what I've created then they will book their wedding with us, so it's a big responsibility.

You do really need to work hard not be worried about the mistakes you make. It's part of being an apprentice. Getting customer reviews whether they're good or bad really helps you to develop too.

I am hoping to progress on to the next Level - Chef de Partie next. I really enjoy my job and can see me being a chef for the rest of my life.

If you're thinking about an Apprenticeship I'd say do it! You get so many skills and really get used to the working environment. You won't look back.

