

# ASDA

## Feeding the leadership pipeline through the Apprenticeship Levy

Asda selected Corndel to deliver their Leadership and Management apprenticeship training programmes in March 2018. They highly valued the one-to-one professional coaching model, alongside the ability to tailor the programmes to align with their organisational L&D strategy.

Asda's approach to Learning and Development centres around succession planning, giving all Asda colleagues the ability to advance themselves. They have a long-established culture of investing in development. They offer colleagues a range of learning opportunities, and in doing so ensure that when a learner is enrolled onto a Corndel programme, they are committed to completing it and it will help to advance their career prospects within Asda.

Corndel's Level 3 Diploma in Management supports Asda colleagues at C8 level to prepare for leadership and management roles. Some learners have been promoted to C10, upon course completion, where they can put their new-found skills into practice managing larger teams. C10 Managers can then go onto the Corndel Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management. From there, they can be promoted into Senior Management roles.

The first cohorts of learners embarked on Corndel programmes in March 2018. 54 learners enrolled on Level 5 and another 54 on Level 3. Since then nearly 200 learners have enrolled onto these programmes. In 2020, Asda selected Corndel to help them fill their future identified digital skills gap, by providing the Corndel Level 4 Diploma in Data Analytics. Seven learners embarked on this programme in June 2020. They additionally asked Corndel to deliver the Level 4 programme in Project Management, which commenced in June 2020.

## Expert coaching by experienced retailers

Corndel offers Asda a dedicated and consistent team of Professional Development Experts, with a background in retail, to support learners. Neil Thorpe, Corndel's Delivery Director who supports the ongoing management of the account has extensive retail management experience, progressing through a Sainsbury's retail management training programme to hold several departmental managerial roles across Customer Services, Fresh Foods, Produce and Administration, before he became a Duty Manager.

Neil developed a passion for training and development during his time in retail and moved into the work-based learning sector, now fulfilling both passions – retail and learning and development. Neil's unique blend of retail and apprenticeship management enables him to fully understand Asda's business objectives and support them appropriately.

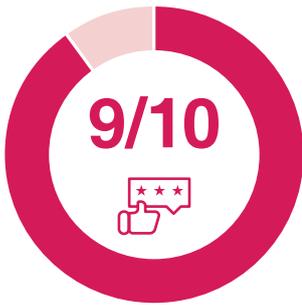
BB

Our partnership with Corndel is one grounded in flexibility, adaptability and proactivity. We find Corndel a highly professional organisation to work with.

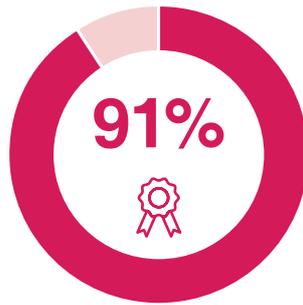
**Lynsey Taylor**, Apprenticeship Manager



Nicola Durkin, Lead PDE has worked with three cohorts of Asda learners now: “Our relationship with Asda benefits from consistency and openness” explains Nicola. “As PDEs we understand how Asda is structured and what learners need to do to progress from a C8 (prospective manager) to a C10 (manager) or above. The continuity that we are able to offer, helps us to increase our understanding of their organisational aims too.”



In the most recent Asda colleague-wide learner survey, Corndel was rated the top provider for Level 4/5 course delivery, with a score of 9/10 (the average being 7.5/10).



91% of Asda learners felt that their Corndel apprenticeship was adding value.

## Learner story

Learner, Emma Atkinson, Senior Manager for Retail Innovation at Asda, was on the most recently completed Level 5 cohort. Emma gained a Level 5 Distinction and was promoted towards the end of her course, now managing a large team. She shares her experience on the programme:



“Whilst on the programme, I moved laterally into a new team, within a completely different area. Some of the modules I completed as part of the Diploma, including managing stakeholders, setting a project and strategic development, really helped with this transition.

Overall the format of the programme and the clear structure made it very manageable.

I never felt overwhelmed. I enjoyed the blended nature of the materials, and the bite-sized chunks of learning, but my favourite element was undoubtedly the coaching. My coach Nicola, had a vast amount of Leadership and Management knowledge and it was very useful to have someone outside my organisation to bring a different perspective. She clearly had a vested interest in developing and supporting me.

The nature of this type of apprenticeship training is very comprehensive. At the start of the programme I had a skills gap, having never managed a large team. By the end of the programme I was sufficiently confident to run the large team that I now manage. I believe the course gave me the ability to fast-track into that role and embarking on this programme helped me to achieve this promotion. I recommend the Corndel Diploma to all other managers at Asda who want to develop their leadership skills.”

Emma has encouraged one of her team to enrol on the Corndel Level 3 Diploma in Management and will be a valuable support, having experienced the programme herself.

## Making an impact

During Covid-19, Asda colleagues were designated key workers. Nicola explained the impact this had on them from a learning perspective: “Learners needed flexibility from Corndel because they were having to be flexible themselves, working in different roles and different shifts to support the changing needs of the organisation.

We were already running some remote workshops, so we shifted everything to the remote model. Some of the sessions we rescheduled for evenings and weekends to suit different working patterns. Occasionally we had a child or two as an honoree attendee!

We shortened the sessions to deliver more bite-sized learning and in general our delivery model has become a little more informal. Learners will call occasionally around scheduled meetings, especially as they approached EPA. As PDEs we understood that our learners needed extra support and the results speak for themselves.”

In the most recent survey, the results of the Level 5 cohort of completed learners was presented. All learners agreed or strongly agreed that:

- ✓ The programme helped them achieve what they hoped it would
- ✓ They have developed and improved their management and leadership skills
- ✓ The programme was well structured and organised
- ✓ They would recommend the programme to colleagues
- ✓ They all strongly agreed that they received the correct level of support from their Professional Development Expert, which is at the heart of the Corndel offering

## In the words of the learners

I use the various tools provided as part of the course, e.g. Covey Matrix, on a daily/weekly basis and have shared with the rest of the team. The programme material was a good reminder to think about the bigger picture as a manager and not focus on the day to day tasks. Another big impact was how the programme focused on building trust within your team, this was supported by the continual 360 feedback received during the programme.

Programme learner

Understanding other types of leadership has helped me to identify how others in the team operate. I have learnt that I need to be better organised and improve my time management to help others in the team cope with incoming demand and pressures. There are many transferable skills which I hope to use throughout my career.

Programme learner

The course has really helped with my confidence as a leader. It reassured me that I am doing the right things and has given me the confidence to challenge back correctly, when needed.

Programme learner

## Contact us

To find out more about optimising your Apprenticeship Levy to develop your leaders and drive digital transformation, contact:

[info@corndel.com](mailto:info@corndel.com) [www.corndel.com](http://www.corndel.com) 020 8102 9040



Lynsey Taylor, Apprenticeship Manager

BB

Corndel fully understands our strategic and organisational aims. Our learning and development strategy is based upon organisational need and a desire to offer all our colleagues a succession plan. Corndel's programmes support this.

From the learning materials and programme modules being tailored to the requirements that we have from our managers, to the individualised one-to-one coaching that all learners benefit from when they enrol on a Corndel programme, Corndel's programmes deliver tangible, measurable benefits. In addition, the team are highly professional, flexible and a pleasure to deal with.

We have already extended our Corndel offering, adding Project Management and Data Analytics this year, and we look forward to working with Corndel in the future.