

A local's account of leaving school and entering the world of work

Name: Brandon Kershaw

Age: 20

Job Title: Skipper/Crew

Employer: Tresco Boat Services

Brandon is a born and bred Islander and anyone watching his progress over the last few years would have seen him blossom from an unsure, underconfident and lost young man into a self-possessed, successful and happy person who has found his stride in the workplace and who is excelling at life.

This change happened when Brandon entered the world of work when he finished education. As a skipper and crew working for Tresco Boat Services his job entails driving the jet boats, crewing, helping clients and their luggage on and off the boats and boat maintenance. As well as being extremely well paid, some of the other benefits Brandon enjoys in his job are a permanent contract, rent free accommodation, holiday entitlement and investment in training. Having shown his commitment and dedication to the job, Tresco Boat Services are training him for and will be putting him through his boat masters ticket. Working life suits Brandon where his skills and talents are acknowledged and where reciprocal respect and being in a team is valued.

Brandon wasn't always this happy. He found secondary school difficult and hated being there. He struggled with learning and needed SEN support. It would take him longer than his classmates to learn things and he felt he never really had the chance to learn at his pace in a way he understood. Not everyone could understand why he was struggling and the more he struggled, the harder it became. His behaviour deteriorated and he did not want to be in school. The prospect of carrying on further education and on the mainland filled Brandon with worry. He was dreading being away from home, was concerned about where he was going to live on the mainland, worried about being able to do any courses and just generally not feeling ready for it. In the end though he really enjoyed the year he spent on the mainland in further education. In part he feels it was because he was lucky with his host family, he ended up living and having fun with his Scillonian friends and he enjoyed his course. Brandon studied Level 2 Marine Engineering at Falmouth Marine School. Initially he thought this was going to be a difficult course for him, expecting a lot of mathematical work, but as he couldn't find another course he would be interested in and because his friends were going to the same college, he applied. If the opportunity to do an apprenticeship in Boating had been available on Scilly Brandon says he would have stayed and not have gone to the mainland but admits college wasn't that bad and being on the mainland for a year did him good:

"The idea of going away is horrible but once you do it it is fine. After the first couple of weeks you settle down and I'm glad I went. It does change you and you grow up really quickly".

So how did Brandon get into boating?

Well it all really started when he was about 13/14 years of age when he got his own little punt. He started hanging out round St Mary's quay and met a skipper who took the time to teach him how to navigate, taught him the knots and other boating knowledge; eventually teaching him how to drive a boat. For his year 10 work experience Brandon went to Freeman's Wharf Boatyard in Penryn getting experience in towing boats, basic maintenance and learning about tides. As soon as he was old enough he got a summer job working for St Mary's Boating Association as crew and gained valuable experience in the role. When a job opportunity came up with Tresco Boat Service Brandon applied and had gained enough experience to get the job.

