



## The University of Salford and Peel L&P: creating a skilled local workforce



University of  
**Salford**  
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When it comes to skills development and creating local employment opportunities, The University of Salford and Peel L&P have a long-standing relationship and a track record of success. However, by working even closer together, both organisations realise that even more can be achieved to secure true economic prosperity for current and future generations.

Ten years ago, the construction of a world class media hub in the form of MediaCityUK gave rise to numerous training opportunities for young

people in Salford. Salford University Technical College, focussing on digital and creative media, was established to assist 14-18 year olds to achieve their aspirations in the rapidly expanding creative world. During the construction phase of MediaCityUK, Peel L&P worked with its main contractor to ensure that 50% of the jobs created were taken up by Greater Manchester residents, with over 12,000 people receiving training as part of the construction process.

Fast forward ten years, and MediaCityUK is a thriving digital hub employing over 7,000 people, is a hot-bed of creative start-up companies and home to BBC North. The next £1 billion phase of development has been approved and local, skilled people will be in high demand. Meanwhile, Peel's portfolio of development projects across the North West is flourishing, with opportunities to create direct and indirect job opportunities aplenty.

Peel L&P met with Professor Sheila Pankhurst, Dean of the School of Environment and Life Sciences, initially to discuss opportunities for sustainability students but this soon expanded to involve Peel's HR department and Paul Ward, Director of International and Regional Development at the University.

Geography graduate, Laura Atkinson, has been the first to benefit from the partnership. After graduating with a first-class honours degree, she landed a three-month paid internship which led to a full-time role as a Sustainability Assistant for Peel L&P. Laura impressed the sustainability team with her work ethic and knowledge and has since taken on a range of tasks to match the skills she developed at university.

Peel L&P's Human Resources Director, Carrie Westwell envisages the appointment of Laura as the start of a positive collaboration with the University: "Laura is hopefully the first of many under and post graduates from The University of Salford who will be successfully matched to job opportunities and paid placements at Peel L&P. It's crucial graduates can bring practical and strong interpersonal skills into the

workplace as well as their specialist knowledge. It gives them the edge in a competitive world and if we can help support students' learning through work placements it helps us to secure future talent as well as bolster their employment prospects."

**"It is excellent news that, after a successful internship, the first Salford graduate has been offered a full-time position with Peel L&P. We now look forward to developing this partnership over the coming years."**

Professor Sheila Pankhurst

Peel L&P and The University of Salford are now meeting on a regular basis to explore partnership opportunities and Professor Pankhurst recently presented to Peel's senior management, which has stimulated interest in apprenticeship opportunities from other parts of the business, such as the IT department.



University of Salford at MediaCityUK



## The University of Salford and Peel L&P: creating a skilled local workforce continued...

### Laura Atkinson:

After graduating with a first class honours degree in Human Geography, Laura Atkinson was nominated by her lecturers for the Peel L&P sustainability internship due to her work ethic, knowledge and potential 'fit' with the company.

Laura was also awarded the University's Kerry Worthington prize for 'Best Performance in Geography' and is hoping to publish her dissertation on city parks as a research paper in the Journal of Sustainability. Although Laura's CV shone with her worthy academic achievements and real-life work experience, it was her people skills and ability to take the initiative that made her stand-out as a candidate for permanent employment with Peel L&P.



**"I would highly recommend doing an internship as it's a great way of making contacts with people who share your career interests. Working at Peel L&P, every day is different and I'm constantly learning. I'm involved with energy management, data analysis, reporting and supporting projects in exciting places such as MediaCityUK and EventCity.**

**I'd definitely recommend The University of Salford, as the course gives you the chance to get out and see the real-world application of what is learnt in the classroom."**