Welcome aboard

Whether you are a new professional or work for one of the world’s largest companies, CIEH membership can benefit your career

Jessica Tabois is one of those enthusiastic optimists who fills you with hope for the planet. She is currently in the sixth month of her first environmental health job as a technical officer with Westminster Council. She is also the student rep on CIEH London Region’s food study group.

Her challenging but interesting role is to help deliver the council’s healthier catering commitment. The programme aims to tackle obesity and heart disease by reducing the salt, fat and sugar in restaurant and takeaway food in deprived parts of the borough. Twenty-seven boroughs have signed up to the Greater London Authority scheme.

Jessica had previously been a manager for a well-known coffee chain, for which she had worked for 13 years. She says: ‘One day, there was an unannounced visit from an EHO. I was really scared, but he let me follow him around while he did the inspection and it was really interesting. I was hugely impressed by his knowledge, but I also thought, “I could do this.” When I was on a four-year career break having my children, I asked myself what I really wanted to do and I remembered that experience.’

Jessica studied environmental health as a full-time mature student, graduating in July last year from Middlesex University. Her work placement was with Haringey Council. She obtained a distinction in all the sectors.

Jessica signed up as a student member of CIEH at Middlesex and values her membership highly. She says: ‘My favourite member benefit is EHN. I have a collection from when I first started.’

The ability to access forums and technical resources helped her to complete her portfolio of professional practice: ‘Usually, if you ask a question, someone will know the answer. Without that, in some cases, I would have been completely stumped.’

Jessica says she hasn’t thought much about her future career. ‘I just want to be really good at what I do. For career progression, I might leave local government but I want to rise somehow.’

She concludes: ‘If I can play a part in CIEH at some point, that would be great. If you are serious about becoming a fully-equipped and qualified EHP, you have to be a member. The cost is not very much and you can pay in instalments. Membership is invaluable because, for career progression, you need CPD and continuing education is cheaper as member. CIEH also targets the subjects that you might need refreshing in. I don’t want my knowledge just to be in food. I want to keep up my knowledge in all the sectors.’

’S If you are serious about becoming a fully-equipped and qualified EHP, you have to be a member’

Jessica Tabois