I am currently in my second year of University at Harper Adams studying BSc Agriculture with Farm Business Management. Growing up on my family National Trust tenanted dairy, beef and arable farm in Devon alongside my active involvement in Whimple and Broadclyst Young Farmers developed my interests in Agriculture. In July I am starting my placement year which is based in Kent at Hinxden Farm Dairy and hence my interest in carrying out my work-based qualifications. Receiving the award allowed me to undertake my PA1 and PA2 spraying qualifications, my animal transport certificate and a Tractor Driving and Related Operations Course.

The first course I completed was my Tractor Driving and Related Operations course. The course involved two days of training which involved general tractor maintenance and operations, the use of different attachments including a front loader and bucket and the manoeuvre of a tractor and trailer around different obstacles and into different spaces. The course was really interesting, and not only did I improve my practical tractor experience, but it allowed me to learn about different tyre pressures dependent on ground conditions and pre and post use checks of using the machine.

Completing my PA1 course allowed me to expand my knowledge in multiple topics relating to spraying including COSHH and risk assessments, interpretation of product labels, storage and handling of chemicals, different spraying conditions and record keeping. Completing my PA1 theory assessment then allowed me to complete my PA2 certificate. The PA2 course was more practical and involved two days of training and half a day of assessment. Multiple topics were covered including spray applications, filling the sprayer and calibration, decontamination and tank washings and field work including Environmental Risk Assessment. The tractor I used for the assessment can be seen opposite. Both the PA1 and PA2 courses were very interesting and I am looking forward to carrying out spray operations in my future agricultural career.

The final course I completed was my Animal Transport certificate. Completing the animal transport exam allows me to transport animals by road on short journeys over 65km and up to 8 hours in duration. The course involved self-teaching with a two-hour session where we were provided with appropriate materials. I decided to carry out the exam on cattle, sheep and pigs. The course was really interesting and involved learning about different load restrictions, journey breaks and how to correctly load animals.

Overall, carrying out this training has allowed me to learn a lot and I am looking forward to applying these skills in the future. I would like to thank The Worshipful Company of Farmers and the National Federation of Young Farmers for providing me with the opportunity to complete these courses and I look forward to seeing how the Agricultural industry progresses in the future.