

Nick Bowden

Bill McGrath Maserati, Hertfordshire

Imagine a cat that's not only got the cream but happens to have landed on its feet in a yard full of mice just in time for breakfast. That'll give you an idea of just how pleased former East Devon College apprentice Nick Bowden is with the way his career's turned out.

Nick, 27, is surrounded all day by Maseratis, the legendary Italian sports cars, and has worked on vehicles that most mere mortals can only dream about.

For any car enthusiast it's paradise, but for Nick it's an everyday reality.

"I'm loving every minute of it," says Nick. "It's what I've always wanted to do – and without the training I had from East Devon College I might not have been able to get to the position I'm in."

Nick works as a mechanic at Bill McGrath Maserati in Hertfordshire, a company acknowledged around the world as the UK's leading specialist in the preparation and restoration of classic and modern Maseratis. Its clients have even included two reigning monarchs.

Nick's always been interested in Maseratis because his father has one, but he first thought of working with them as a career when he had the chance to do a motor vehicle course at Tiverton High School.

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That led Nick to enrol for a motor vehicle apprenticeship at East Devon College, spending one day a week there and four days at a Citroën garage in Tiverton.

"I did a three-year course at college and got my Level 2 and 3 NVQs and a Modern Apprenticeship. I stayed at the garage for four years after that. Then I came across an ad in Auto Italia magazine for a position at Bill McGrath Maserati. That's what I got into the trade to do – to work with exotic cars – so I just had to go for it!

"I've been up here for four years now and the perks of the job outweigh everything. You get to drive some awesome cars. The Italians' design concepts are wonderful. Most of our work is on classic Maseratis but we also work on Ferraris and Lamborghinis. We've had some pretty exclusive customers including the Sultan of Brunei and the King of Morocco."

He's come a long way since he first set foot in East Devon College, but it holds nothing but happy memories for him.

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"I already knew the tutors there," says Nick. "It was a very good college to learn at. I found out a lot about the way things worked. It was a great experience. The college had great facilities and really friendly tutors. I looked forward to going in every day – and it got me where I am today."

