

Life as an apprentice

Meet Hollie, a Technical Solutions Consultant apprentice at BT, studying a bachelor's degree in Digital & Technology Solutions at Ravensbourne University London.



The digital age

I have always been interested in the latest gadgets, IT solutions and the way technology evolves. I definitely think growing up in the digital age and being a Gen Z myself caused this. I studied Business, Geography, and ICT at Sixth Form. ICT was always my strongest subject.

My typical 9 to 5

Day-to-day my roles and responsibilities are really varied. Monday I could be at an exhibition exploring the new cutting-edge technology for the broadcast industry, working on a world-first trial, and by Friday, I'll be studying for my bachelor's degree. I love how fast-paced this industry is. My apprenticeship scheme allows me to rotate into a new team every six months, and how many others can say they've worked in 8 different teams across a business for 4 years? This really allows me to explore new skills.

I still wanted a professional bachelor's degree, but not the traditional way! Having had part-time jobs during my studies since I was 16, these roles helped me learn valuable soft skills, including

time management, communication, and basic customer service. Once I completed Sixth Form, I applied to UCAS as a back-up even though I knew the traditional university route just wasn't for me. I spent hours, if not weeks, researching apprenticeships. I came across what BT had to offer, considering BT are highly ranked in the top 100 employers for apprenticeships, I had to apply!

The recruitment process

The BT apprentice recruitment process has various stages, like any other early career recruitment. I completed an application form, a situational judgement test, a video interview, and finally, I attended an assessment centre for the day at the BT HQ in London. When my application was successful, I decided to decline all my university offers, including some unconditional offers! I went with the degree apprenticeship at BT. Best decision ever!

Finding the time to study

I attend lectures 10am-4pm at Ravensbourne University London on block release every month, or every other month, for one week - a very similar format to traditional University. Balancing university and working full-time isn't always easy, I need to be willing to put in the extra hours. Although, on my scheme I'm fortunate enough to dedicate every Friday to my University studies and am fully supported to take time out by my team and Line Manager.



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What are your future goals?

In the short-term, my immediate goal is to graduate from my apprenticeship scheme in June 2023 and continue to work at BT. Ultimately and further into the future... it's ambitious, but one day I would love to manage my own team, built on the foundations of a fantastic team spirit and one everyone is proud to be a part of. I'd also love to explore the world and work internationally.

Do you miss out socially?

I always get asked if I miss the social aspect of university. The truth is no. BT have hundreds of young people in graduate, apprentice, and industrial placement schemes across the UK. Specifically at BT Tower, myself and other apprentices often spend Fridays together studying, and socialise outside of work too! My apprenticeship means I have my weekends free to visit friends and family. I also have my yearly annual leave allowance, so taking a holiday abroad in November is something I'm fortunate enough to do!

What would your advice be to others?

Do not dismiss degree apprenticeships and their worth. They are a real degree. Take the time to explore career pathways carefully. Research employers, make sure their values fit in with yours! I also love seeing the rise of degree apprenticeships in new sectors like in-house law, fashion and construction! Lastly, it is so important to make the best career decisions for you personally and try to not follow the influence of friends or family.



More information

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