

Life as an apprentice

Meet Christa, a Digital and Technology Solutions (DTS) degree apprentice at PebblePad

I decided to do an apprenticeship as I really liked the idea of mixing study with work. It means that I can get the qualifications that I need in the industry whilst being able to apply up-to-date technical and soft skills alongside professionals who have years of experience in the industry.

I was so nervous starting my apprenticeship. In 2020, mid-way through a pandemic, I started working at PebblePad – an EdTech SaaS provider for Higher Education – and studying at the University of Wolverhampton. I have been learning lots about the back-end parts of our business and in particular NUnit! I was hoping that we would be back to face-to-face delivery but, alas, that was not to be.

Nonetheless, my first month was amazing and I found myself being kept busy across a variety of projects, including independent projects! Even though we were based online, I was still allocated a buddy to help me settle in, this was so important for me. My buddy has been supportive – we still catch up now even though I am fully settled!



Alt text: PebblePad logo

I never thought that being a degree apprentice would offer so many 'extracurricular' activities! I have been lucky enough to partake in Hacktoberfest, attend Code Mesh, which is a tech conference, and I have gone back to my old college to talk about my apprenticeship experiences. I also experienced my first work, Secret Santa and Christmas party (albeit online).



Alt text: A headshot of Christa

I am so proud of the overall growth that I, and others I have worked with, have made during the apprenticeship so far. There were three other apprentices starting with me, and we have two groups of more senior apprentices, all working under the guidance of our dedicated Apprentice Team Leader. I'm proud to see us all grow as people as we have gained confidence, taken on things that we originally found scary, learnt from mistakes, and (most importantly) have had fun! The most significant area of growth for me personally has been confidence in my online presence and presentation skills because these give me the opportunity to share what I have learnt and hopefully help other people too – whether that be technical skills or being an apprentice in general!

My advice to you is to not compare yourself to other people. Compare yourself to yourself. See how you have grown and changed, and reflect on your own journey, not the journey of anybody else. Also, talk to other apprentices and listen to their stories and experiences, as this helped me to get an idea of what to expect and confirm that an apprenticeship was what I was looking for.