



# Apprenticeship Stories

## NAW2020



# Apprentice Story

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1

**“It was also uplifting knowing that Cantium had the faith to invest in me.”**

*Hear from one of our finance apprentices as they continue their professional development through apprenticeships.*

When I was at school I was certain that I wanted to go to university to continue my studies, however as time went on I started to realise that my desire to go to university was less my desire, but what was the expected outcome at my school.

I was hesitant to apply for an apprenticeship, however I decided to have a browse to see if it would suit me and if I would enjoy taking that route rather than university. I then found the Business Admin apprenticeship in the finance department which stood out to me as something that I wanted to do; therefore, I applied and was then offered the role.

This role was extremely nerve racking as it was my first job, however I settled in well and everyone made me feel at ease. I developed skills and knowledge, not only about the role itself, but also about general working life which has helped me to this day and has enabled me to progress.

Upon completion, I was extremely grateful to find out that I had passed my apprenticeship, and on top of that, was made a full-time member of staff.

After moving around the finance department and expanding my skills, I was offered the chance to step up to a more senior role on a temporary basis. Upon assessment by my line manager, it was offered to me on a full-time basis. Along with being offered the role, I was also offered the chance to take on a new apprenticeship, Team Leader/Supervisor Apprenticeship Standard and CMI Diploma, which I was extremely happy to accept. Not only will the course help me to develop and teach me new skills I can use on a day-to-day basis, but it was uplifting knowing that Cantium had the faith to invest in me.

# Apprentice Story

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**"It allowed me to start a career..."**

*Hear from one of our ICT apprentices on how starting as an apprentice proved a helpful stepping stone to a career in ICT.*

I was 17 when I finished 6th form and knew that university was just not for me. As I had no previous experience in any field of work, I decided to look at an apprenticeship. I'm so glad I did, because my apprenticeship was the perfect starting step in my working life and career. I started a customer service apprenticeship, working in the call centre, answering a variety of phone queries from people in Kent.

The beauty of an apprenticeship is the ability to learn and earn. I was working with experienced colleagues who had so much advice and guidance to offer. I had support from my Apprenticeship scheme, and I was able to start earning my own money and paving my own way. It allowed me to start a career without having to spend any more time in a classroom. It was daunting leaving education, but my apprenticeship enabled me to adapt to working life with all the support that was provided.

Six months after my apprenticeship started, I was successful in an application for a full-time position. I was able to continue my apprenticeship whilst working full-time and am pleased to say I had completed my level 1 qualification in just under a year. Since then, I have gone on to work with a number of teams across ICT and am currently working as a Database Administrator within the DBA and Hosting Services team.

Without my apprenticeship I would never have had the confidence to apply for any of these roles or gained my customer service skills - which I still use to this day! An apprenticeship is a stepping stone for the rest of your career.



# Apprentice Story

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*"I've now been promoted..."*

*Hear from one of our ICT apprentices on how their apprenticeship has aided their progression.*

I joined Cantium as a Business Support Apprentice and have now been promoted to a Service Request Analyst. I would recommend an apprenticeship as you receive some valuable skills to help you in the workplace which would in turn, help you to build your confidence in communicating with customers. Being a Service Request Analyst means that I deal with a number of requests customers raise through our ServiceNow platform, in relation to new items they require. Requests include remote working subscriptions, the ordering of hardware items such as HDMI cables and monitors, and software packages ranging from Adobe Acrobat professional to those that assist with reading and writing. I also deal with updating the assets that people use in the organisation, dealing with 3rd party incidents and communicating with Lenovo about laptop and desktop repairs.

In my job role I have learnt that I should never assume that a call is going to be easy, as normally these are the calls that would take the longest to complete due to what is required. I have also learnt that with practice and perseverance, calls that I never thought I would be able to understand, I can now complete to the best possible standard.

I found the application process for the job very straightforward. I was contacted via email to arrange a slot to come in for a five minute interview/ 'getting-to-know-you' session where I could have any questions answered. Throughout my apprenticeship I have been supported by my manager, team senior and work colleagues, whether that is by answering questions in relation to an apprenticeship task or by assisting me with a duty or task.

A typical day in my role would begin with me looking through my calls to make sure I have given an update to each call I currently have in my work queue. This is so that anyone who looks at the call can easily understand the status of the request; whether the item the customer requested has been ordered and what we are awaiting before the call can either be passed on to a different team or closed. After I have completed this I would assign myself some new calls to start dealing with. I would have a look over these to see what the customer is requesting and see if my team can deal with them or if they need to be passed to another team. An example of a call that I deal with is a remote working subscription. The first thing I would need to do is check to see if the budget code that has been provided is correct. If so, I would add the customer to the relevant groups on the system, setting up an asset number and sending them the required information to keep hold of. I would then make sure the charges have been added to the call before closing it. Due to the nature of my role keeping on top of my emails is essential as the customer's situation could change and the requested item could be more urgent than first stated. If this was to happen, I would need to be able to get the customer's item to them as easily as possible.

# Apprentice Story

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**"I was taught the skills and knowledge I needed..."**

*Hear from one of our finance apprentices as they work towards their apprenticeship.*

I chose the apprenticeship route to gain work experience in a customer service-based role whilst also gaining experience in the financial department of a business.

Settling in was made easy by the staff and management, I was taught the skills and knowledge I needed for the role in quick succession and am continuing my learning within the role to this day. The process of learning was comfortable, and I was encouraged to learn at my own pace which aided me in gaining the skills and becoming more and more confident in the role.

By the end of this apprenticeship, I hope to have achieved the customer service qualification as well as skills and knowledge of the finance department which can help me in my future endeavours.

# Apprentice Story

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**“The best decision I could have made to begin my career.”**

*Hear from one of our finance apprentices on how applying for an apprenticeship was one of the best decisions they have made.*

I never really knew exactly what I wanted to do when I left school, but my plan was to go straight into work. When searching for jobs, I found that experience was a requirement for a lot of workplaces. Coming straight from school, I did not have much experience and struggled to find anything that I wanted to go into.

Apprenticeships were not the most common route to take after finishing school a few years ago when I left education, and my school rarely promoted them, as university was the preferred option. I didn't enjoy school that much and knew that continuing my education at uni would not be the best route for me. I heard about an apprenticeship through a friend who was completing one at the time.

I had a look and decided to apply for the Business Admin role as it included on-the-job training and allowed me to work independently and at my own pace. Shortly after, I was offered the job and began my apprenticeship within an extremely welcoming team who were there to help and support me throughout.

Completing my apprenticeship after a year was a great achievement and I was overjoyed to find out I had been offered a full-time role. After a year and a half of working in the Accounts Payable team, another opportunity arose for me to widen my knowledge within another team in finance. I thought it would be a great opportunity therefore I applied and was grateful to be offered the job. I feel that completing my apprenticeship developed my confidence for me to take opportunities and go for new roles, whereas beforehand I would have talked myself out of it. Applying for the apprenticeship was one of the best decisions I could have made to begin my career.