



Lancashire Apprenticeship  
Ambassador Network

# Newsletter

Issue 13 | July 2019

## !! DATE FOR THE DIARY!!

National Apprenticeship Week 2020 – dates announced!!  
The National Apprenticeship Week 2020 will run from Monday 3rd – Friday 7th February

## Sub 36 Award



The winners of these awards will be announced at the annual prize-giving ceremony on 17th October 2019 at Winter Gardens, Blackpool. Winners will also receive access to a bespoke mentoring programme provided by Northern Mentoring Programme and a 12-month pass to high level coaching from Sales Geek via their academy.

Anybody interested in competing for an award has until midnight on 2nd September 2019 to submit a nomination. And if you know of anybody deserving, you can also nominate a colleague, employee or peer.

For more details on the awards and to enter or submit a nomination, visit [www.sub36.co.uk](http://www.sub36.co.uk)

## Meet our new Apprenticeship Ambassadors:

### Nicola Mason – Director of HR – Naphthens Solicitors



At Naphthens we offer Higher Level Apprenticeships. We have decided to empower and upskill our existing employees, in order to support their further development in terms of both career and wider knowledge base. Additionally, we are keen to support the development of future, local talent and so have hired an external apprentice.

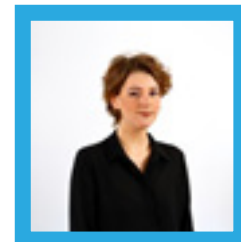
Our apprentices gain a deepened understanding of the areas of law we practice, and that we ask our Legal Assistants to support with. Additionally, our people know, and feel, that we are committed to their development and actively promote this.

The best piece of advice I would give to someone thinking about becoming or hiring an apprentice is just do it! Our apprenticeships have seen increased engagement, increased output, increased motivation, increased knowledge base, increased client service – what's not to like!

Our apprentice has been with our firm for a number of years in a support role. During her apprenticeship, she has achieved outstanding results in every single module with special comments from her course leader(s). Feedback from our apprentice directly has been that she finally understands the “bigger picture” and feels that she can now add real value to the team and to our clients who she loves to work with.

## Luckie Rae Pepper - +24 Marketing - Communications Co-ordinator

Luckie-Rae Pepper, 20 years old, Communications Co-Ordinator (role includes copywriting for web content, blogs and social media messages, social media scheduling and management, content creation, and proofreading)



I am in the midst of completing my Level 5 apprenticeship in Digital Marketing and Social Media with aspirations to obtain a Level 6/degree equivalent qualification in the subject . I work for +24 Marketing, a Burnley-based digital agency specialising mainly in digital marketing and social media, website design and development, bespoke software development and PR.

Although I enjoyed learning and school, being in traditional education from ages 4 to 18 was becoming isolating and the idea of continuing down that route felt to me like I'd be putting off starting my actual life. After working through college and part of the way through high school, I wanted to reclaim some of my free time by being able to work and learn at the same time, as well as learn skills in a more hands-on and practical fashion and gain the levels of work experience I felt I'd need to get ahead in the digital industry. Each day of the week is different at +24, which is brilliant because it keeps things exciting! The main aspects of my role of copywriting and social media management, so my days can involve writing blogs, optimising copy for SEO purposes, proofreading copy for social media or design work, assisting our Head of Creative on or video shoots, scheduling messages for an interesting variety of our clients and interacting with users on social media to raise our clients' (and our own) brand awareness. There's a diverse mix of things I could spend my day doing so my work days are never boring.

My apprenticeship has opened so many possibilities for me in terms of learning new skills, finding what I'm good at and what I have to contribute to the industry and giving me the opportunity to grow and develop my confidence in my abilities. For me, my apprenticeship experiences so far have been invaluable and it's confirmed for me that I made the right decision opting for this route.

I'm excited to see where my apprenticeship and the catalogue of digital skills I've garnered so far take me. Similarly to my current position at +24, I'd like to think in 5 years I'd find myself in a role where I'm engaging my love for writing or for photography and video work, and where I'm given the opportunity for constant development and growth.

My greatest achievement is finishing my A Levels. I had to resit a lot of my first year exams due to appendicitis and left with 2 Bs and an A (in Classical Civilisations, English Language, and Film Studies respectively).

The best piece of advice you would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice is to trust your own instincts. While it's important to talk about your options with those who know and care about you, ultimately it's your decision and you need to make the choice that best sets you up for the future you envision yourself in.

## Francesca Chapman - +24 Marketing – Project Digital Apprenticeship Scheme Education Co-ordinator



We offer Digital Marketer apprenticeships and the reason we hire apprentices is that apprenticeships are an excellent way to support young people and give them a wide knowledge of the digital industry including workplace skills. Investing in an apprentice is crucial to this fast paced industry and gives people the opportunity to progress onto degree apprenticeships.

Our apprentices bring a vibe and freshness to +24 Marketing, they are given fantastic opportunities to liaise with major clients, networking and being involved with new innovative ideas.

I would recommend the apprenticeship route for any person of any age, it allows people to learn and gain different skills. Progression and promotion through the apprenticeship scheme is excellent as organisations invest in quality training which is at the forefront of industry. It is also important that companies build their workforce for the future which apprentices play a huge part.

I have worked with apprentices for the last 12 years and a number of them have inspired others and also gained excellent promotions, some of these are

- being responsible for a local NHS trust dealing with their accounts and managing spend over 2 million pound!
- working in a local accountancy company and gaining promotion, moving to London and running a multi-million pound organisation!
- Award winner for National Apprenticeship Awards (regional awards)

I started on the YTS @ 17 years old and have never looked back. My son started his own career through a plumbing apprenticeship and he is now a project manager for a local business. My grandson will be commencing his apprenticeship this summer in construction. Apprenticeships are the future!!!

### **Joel Rhodes – Aftersales Team Member, Prefix Systems**

“I work for Prefix Systems and am working towards a Level 3 Business Admin who is one of the UK’s leading conservatory roof system manufacturers, they offer a wide variety of conservatory roofs & glazing solutions.



I never felt like university was for me. An apprenticeship seemed to suit my personality, as the ethos of earning while learning appealed to my ambitious nature. It took me many arduous weeks of searching, conversations and attending careers fairs to finally finding a progressive, permanent, meaningful apprenticeship because of a great career advisor at Blackburn College who saw potential in me and placed me with Prefix.

My day at work can vary from dealing with customers regarding a complaint and having to use my problem-solving skills to find a solution. Some days I have confidently managed the aftersales team on my own when they’re supposed to be a team of 4. On a day to day basis I build positive relationships with customers from speaking to them on the phone, via email or even going on site visits to help assist them with any problems they might have. It’s a demanding, busy role but I enjoy my work.

I enjoy learning and taking myself out of my comfort zone and being placed in new situations i.e. phone calls, finding varied solutions for customers’ needs and using my initiative and pro-active nature to facilitate my role. Every day is different, my peers, going to college, all help me to learn while I progress with building my skillset while getting paid. I enjoy being appreciated and respected from my work which makes me feel a part of something.

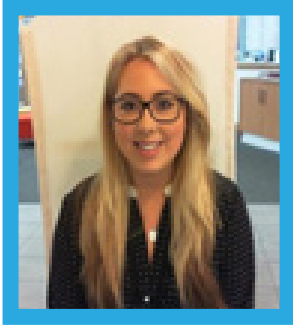
My career plan is to work my way up to management. Given a solid base of starting at the bottom and learning aspects can only give me a valuable, insightful and unique opportunity to work my way up as far as I can.

My greatest achievement was being nominated for National Fenestration Awards for Young Person of the Year and WON IT!”

### **Lucie Pollard – Apprenticeship Recruitment Executive, Nelson and Colne College**

“I previously completed an advanced apprenticeship in beauty therapy and I have also completed an advanced apprenticeship in Business Administration.

I chose to become an apprentice for the work experience and to gain my future career goals whilst also A day at work would include – meeting with students for a 1-1 sessions for apprenticeship advice and vacancy applications, classroom presentations on apprenticeships, designing programmes for students, maintain the



Instagram apprenticeship site, liaising with employers to gain vacancy's, attending career events and interview evenings, arranging interviews, advertising vacancy's and preparing students for apprenticeships and their journey as an apprentice. While I was an apprentice I felt like the best thing was getting that support from Nelson and Colne college and also being able to gain knowledge and skills whilst being able to earn a wage at the same time.

My career plans would include working my way up more at the college and going into management at some point. I love helping students find apprenticeships as I know how fantastic an opportunity it can be, I'd also like to help my colleagues in management to gain more experience of managing a team and listening to their suggestions and making a difference.

I feel like one of my greatest achievements would be completing my apprenticeship whilst working full time which has progressed my career which enabled me to gain employment with the college. I would say the best piece of advice I could give would be to really have a think about how this could impact your future, could it bring you more possibilities and opportunity, if it could then I would strongly recommend taking the position. I would also ask them to think about whether they could see themselves working in the company and progressing with them".

### **Peter Bell – Regulations and Employment Manager – Lancashire County Council**

I work at Lancashire County Council and am working towards a Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship. I chose an apprenticeship because I saw it as an opportunity to expand my knowledge base and to support my working day. My daily life involves managing 50+ staff deployed across the county, dealing with councillors, the public, keeping traffic moving! The best things about being an apprentice is the diversity of the subject covered and how it supports my working practice. My wish for the future is to still be working at the council, hopefully progressed up the management statue. The best piece of advice I would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice, is to ensure you can monitor your work/ life balance.



My greatest achievement is convincing my, now wife, to marry me!

### **Charlotte Catterall – Social care Team Leader – Lancashire County Council**



I have completed a business administration apprenticeship level 1 and 2 at aged 20 within LCC and I am currently completing a business management apprenticeship level 3 again within LCC.

I work in the Customer Contact Centre where my team along with 5 other teams take calls from customers ringing for support in relation to Social Care. The callers could be members of the public or professionals needing immediate support via a Social Worker, or a caller who needs to be signposted to appropriate external agencies for support. All staff are trained to a high level to support callers with any queries relating to Social Care.

I initially left school and went to college to complete A Levels but did not enjoy the classroom environment and the staggered class timetable. I enjoyed my evening job whilst at college and also enjoyed the fact that I was working whilst learning and also earning money. I decided to leave college and complete an apprenticeship so that I could still earn money and gain a qualification at the same time. I found that learning whilst putting what I have learnt into practice was the best way for me to develop my skills. I have since decided to complete my second apprenticeship in Business Management to further my skills whilst still in a job that I love. I complete this whilst at work and I am enjoying putting what I have learnt straight into practice to benefit my team and the office.

I currently manage a team of 10 and support them and the rest of the office with queries relating to their Social Care calls, manage sickness, performance targets, hold 121's, team meetings, balance leave, arrange and support with additional training and development. The Customer Contact Centre also has a daily service level to meet which I support the office to meet this target. As Social Care covers a wide range of services I am also the service lead on a number of topics relating to Social Care such as Finance, Respite and Direct Payments, one of my roles is to ensure that we have the most up to date information for our staff to provide accurate and relevant advice to callers.

I enjoy that I am learning something new following leaving college in 2006 and as a kinaesthetic learner it is easy to put what I have learnt into practice as my course is tailored around my job role. I also find it useful to share certain aspects of what I am learning with other managers so that the office can benefit. I think the best thing about being an apprentice is that I can still work full time and that my assessor comes to visit me in my work environment. The learning is all completed via an online system which is easy and friendly to use and the appointments booked with my assessor can be flexible to fit around business needs and my work schedule.

I thoroughly enjoy my current role and at some point in the future I would like the opportunity to progress within Social Care. I have been a Social Care Team Leader since September 2012 just prior to my 23rd birthday. At the time I was the youngest manager by a considerable amount of years and was proud that I managed to achieve this.

A fun fact about me is that I once fell down a flight of stairs and got back up to walk a couple of steps before falling down a second flight of stairs and I was completely uninjured.

The best piece of advice I would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice is if you are not one for classroom learning environments and are ready to get stuck into a job or are in a job that you love, want to continue to have a wage and gain life skills then an apprenticeship is the right choice.

## **Julie Childs – Carr Hill High School Business Manager – Lancashire County Council**

I work at Carr Hill High School, a maintained secondary school responsible for the education of young people aged 11-16, and I am working towards a Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship. I chose to become an apprentice in order to progress to a higher level in School Business Leadership as it would be expected / essential that the applicant would be educated to degree level. My current post is in Senior Leadership and the apprenticeship learning is supporting me in this strategic role.



A day in my work life begins with a 15 minute morning meeting with the rest of the Senior Leadership Team to review and monitor the day / week ahead. I have operational meetings on a fortnightly basis with all the staff whom I line manage. This supports us to keeping on top of our objectives and allows time to discuss any issues. This time is important as it builds on our working relationships. There are often planned meetings with contractors or service providers. Time is also spent on reviewing, analysing and forecasting financial implication of decisions or changes made to the school budget. Reactive issues are managed throughout the day and I attempt to make time for some reflective practice at the end of each day. I am enjoying learning enormously and the ease at which the CMDA can be applied to make me more effective in my role. I am enjoying studying with the cohort, it is helpful to bounce ideas around the group. The School Business Manager role has been in the school structure since January 2017. I would like to embed the position to support the school in obtaining the best outcomes for the students. Longer term I am possibly considering looking at positions with a MAT or a role within the Authority. My family is important to me, working at my marriage, being the best parent I can be and a good dog owner are my greatest achievements....even when they don't feel like it!

A fun fact about me is that I love Walt Disney World and Parker Pens

The best piece of advice you would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice is to be sure the commitment needed is really understood both by the individual and their employer. It really helps if you enjoy learning.

## **Mark Dixon – Highways Operations Engineer – Lancashire County Council**



I have completed a NVQ level 2 in General Construction Operations, an ONC and HNC and I am currently enrolled on the Chartered Management Degree Level 6 Apprenticeship

I manage 20+ operatives working on several different schemes. This includes sickness leave and training management. I am responsible for the delivery of multimillion pound construction schemes including, Preston City Centre, Preston Bus Station, Capital Construction schemes.

The best thing about being an apprentice is being paid to learn and develop my career and who I am as a person. I have been working for LCC for 11 years and been in education for the majority of this time.

My career plan is to continue to grow and develop, I aim to do this over the next 5 years and become a Senior Operations Engineer

My greatest achievement was becoming a parent in January 2019

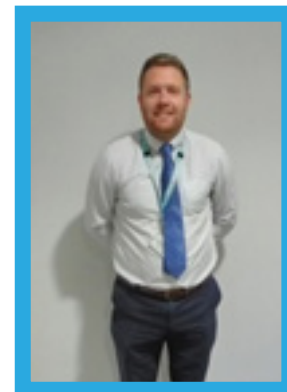
A fun fact about me is that I've been to Disney land Florida 11 times and it never gets boring.

The best piece of advice I would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice is that you can't go wrong!

## **Denis Greenwood – Team Leader Care Navigation East and Residential – Lancashire County Council**

I started with Lancashire County Council in 2008 as an apprentice in Business Administration starting on level 2 NVQ and continuing to complete Level 3. I am now currently an apprentice again as of October 2018 on the Chartered Management Degree Apprenticeship course which is a higher level of learning for 3 years.

I work for Lancashire Council under Patient, Safety and Safeguarding with Adult Social Care. I manage 2 services within Care Navigation. Those services include sourcing and brokering care for vulnerable adults of Lancashire working closely with those adults as well as their family members, Social Workers, Health colleagues etc.



I had a fantastic experience of apprenticeships previously which supported my progression to management. My reason again, is to further my knowledge and understanding in hope that I can continue to progress.

My day differs from one day to the next and this is the general theme when working within Social Care. A typical day however would involve ensuring the smooth transfers of adults receiving care and working to improve the service offer.

I enjoy providing a quality, empathetic service to those in need. Currently, I am exploring further areas of work which I have not done previously and I am finding it very though-provoking and challenging.

Ultimately, I would like to progress further into management within the Public Sector. In 5 years I would hope that the opportunity arises.



My greatest achievement is my family (if that can count). Not really an achievement, but I am recently married with a 2 year old son and a 9 month-old daughter whom I immensely proud of. On a work related matter, I am proud of the service I have built over the last 5 years.

I was also technically an apprentice on a third occasion in 2004 for 2 years as a footballer with Rochdale AFC.

The best piece of advice I would give to someone thinking about becoming an apprentice is to not expect or wait for you to be successful. You need to be proactive.

## **Daniel Sergeant – Technical Support Officer – Lancashire County Council**



I have completed an Advanced Level 3 Business Administration at Lancashire County Council and I have now progressed on to a Level 4 Higher Associate Project Management Apprenticeship.

I work in Waste Management. We are a Waste Disposal Authority for Lancashire, which mean that one of our main responsibilities it to deal with all the waste collected by Lancashire waste collection authorities (district councils). We also have a statutory obligation to provide recycling centres for the household waste that arises around the county.

I knew that I wanted to earn whilst I was learning. Although I didn't opt to go to university, I was adamant that I wanted to continue to learn and to provide myself with as much training as possible to assist me throughout my career.

My service, the waste management group, recently insourced the household waste recycling centre service, which is a huge operational service consisting of 15 recycling centres and over 130 members of staff. When insourcing the service, I started my new role as a Technical Support Officer working predominately on the operations of the household waste recycling centres. My role is extremely varied which I am grateful for. We work with contractors to ensure our recycling centre contract is adhered to, both financially and operationally, which means I'm regular dealing with data and finance. Furthermore, I'm often on site completing operational audits of the recycling centre operations and writing reports to feed this information back to a number of senior officers and managers.

It has been extremely beneficial learning the academic aspects of an apprenticeship via college and tutoring, whilst having the support from my managers and a team of people around me that understand that I am learning, continually trying make improvements to the service and I have been working on projects to assist with these changes. In doing so, I have been able to incorporate my apprenticeship learning in to my current role. Also as part of my training. I've started working with officers who work on various other tasks within the department, for example working with and shadowing officers who procure our contracts, and working closely with health and safety officers to develop risk assessments and safe working procedures.

It has been extremely beneficial learning the academic aspects of an apprenticeship via college and tutoring, Whilst having the support from my managers and a team of people around me that understand that I am learning, continually helping me to progress in the workplace. As an apprentice, my colleagues have invested time in training and assisting me in a variety of different tasks that I wouldn't have necessarily had the chance to partake in if I wasn't here to learn.

With waste arisings on the increase, the industry is constantly developing and im certain it will continue to grow with our priorities focusing on ways to maximise re-use and recycling rates. Hopefully I'll be able to apply my skills and knowledge to do so, whilst improving the service we provide to the residents of Lancashire. I enjoy my current role very much, but 5 years is a long time and by the I certainly hope to have progressed and to have progressed and to have hopefully been promoted. I guess that's up to me and I just have to put the work in to ensure that happens!

After completing my first apprenticeship, I featured both on the training providers website and LCCs internal 'Intranet' and was recognised for the hard work I put in to my work and qualification by my tutor and manager, My tutor referred to my work as 'some of the best I have seen' which I was fairly happy about considering she been working with apprentices for many years and retired just after I finished.

A fun fact about me is that I once featured on a BBC programme called the 'Exchange'. I represented Preston North End before the 2005 play offs. I spent a day around the stadium filming, which was summarised in a short clip during the programme I then went to London for the studio episode which was around 45 minutes long. It was fun, but I can remember having cold beans and tomatoes poured on my head... which still haunts me to this day! My mum shares embarrassing clips of me on Facebook every year that everyone else seems to find hilarious.

I would suggest that anyone given the opportunity of an apprenticeship takes that opportunity and makes the most of it. The effort you put in really does count.

### **Saad Kafrika – Team Manager – Acute Discharge Team East – Lancashire county Council**

I work for Lancashire County Council Adult Social Care and I am working towards a Chartered Management Degree. My job is to ensure safe and timely discharge from hospital for the adult residents of Lancashire.



I chose to do an apprenticeship to learn new skills that will support me in doing my job even better.

A day in my work life involves allocating work to a team of social workers and social care support officers to assess service users in hospital to ensure safe and timely discharge.

I enjoy learning while working and I feel that this is the best things about being an apprenticeship.

I would like to be a Service Manager in 5 years' time.

My greatest achievement is when I completed my Social Work Degree in 2013.

A fun fact about me is that I enjoy meeting new people and creating strong professional relationships.

I would say that an apprenticeship is a very practical way of learning and is certainly the best way forward for learning for myself.

### **What our Ambassadors have been up to over the last few months:**



#### **Joel Rhodes at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School**

Joel Rhodes at Queen Elizabeth Grammar School Careers Event chatting to learners and demonstrating a mini conservatory roof

"My time being an Ambassador was such a great moment in my career. I got the chance to teach young people about the benefits being an apprentice brings. They were all so keen and interested about my personal experience being an Apprentice, with many of them already decided they want an apprenticeship".

#### **Francesca Chapman at Rossendale Work Employability and Skills Event**

"It was a pleasure attending the Rossendale Works event last week".

"Speaking to the young learners from a different range of schools was invaluable; some of them knew



nothing about Apprenticeships and others had some idea. It was nice to speak to them and explain the process and give them an insight in to full time employment through the apprenticeship programme. Some of the students were unaware of the range of opportunities available to them which could lead to degree apprenticeships. It was a pleasure to speak to the young learners who conducted themselves professionally and remained interested and asked relevant questions which allowed them to gain a better understanding of the apprenticeship route”.

## Denis Greenwood at Rossendale Works Employability and Skills Event

“It was lovely to be part of the process that poses the question to young minds of Lancashire on what they would like to do upon leaving school and whether they have considered the option of an apprenticeship. I hope those that attended fully benefited from the day and gained substantial insight into the benefits an apprenticeship offers. I was impressed with the maturity of which the students approached the subject and in addition how they engaged with ourselves, given often some of the students were potentially as young as 13 years-old. Overall, it was a great experience for myself to be involved in an event in East Lancashire given I currently manage a service that operates in East Lancashire and has vacancies. Furthermore, it was refreshing to hear the thoughts surrounding apprenticeships and actually confirmed that the message is reaching an audience, but still further support is needed to ensure the benefits are fully recognised by both the prospective apprentice and the employer. It was time well spent and an enjoyable time at that”

Don't forget to let Cath know when you have attended an event or promoted apprenticeships within your own company [cath@lancsforum.co.uk](mailto:cath@lancsforum.co.uk)



## Useful resources

[Off the Job](#) – Myth Busting Factsheet

### SAVE THE DATE

The Apprenticeship Ambassador Network Autumn Conference will take place **10.00 – 1.00pm on Thursday 12th September 2019 at NLTG The Old Bakery in Accrington** and will include networking and lunch. Please confirm your attendance with Cath Robinson [cath@lancsforum.co.uk](mailto:cath@lancsforum.co.uk)

