

## Student perspectives: journeys to career success (degree apprenticeships)

Eight students and alumni at Middlesex University share their journeys to career success, showing that combining a degree and work experience can lead to successful careers, despite social expectations, personal commitments, or lack of information. They each offer tips on how to choose and apply for a degree apprenticeship.

### Interviewers: Rebecca Griffin and Franca Tranza (Middlesex University)



**Debbie Ashcroft**  
Suffolk  
Vinci Construction Management  
'19 graduate

Debbie always felt that training was key to doing things the right way at work, so when the opportunity for studying came at Vinci construction, she decided to go for it, and has taken advantage of the support provided for professional development and progression from administrator to manager level roles.



**Khadiza Begum**  
London  
BT  
B2B Sales

Khadiza realized early on that her friends around her were finding opportunities at top name places and moving up the career ladder while she was studying at university. Determined not to miss out, Khadiza persistently applied for several roles to find the right apprenticeship for her at British Telecom (BT) in Sales.



**Freddy Ceely**  
London  
Paragon  
Construction Management

Soon after starting A-Levels, Freddy felt that the information available to him had mainly promoted university, but he wanted to learn skills to start a career. A degree apprenticeship has boosted his confidence in his capabilities, thanks to Paragon, who was willing to believe in him and support his learning even when he didn't think he was capable.



**Charlie Chandler**  
London  
Vinci Construction  
'19 graduate

Charlie worked in several roles after leaving school and was self-employed at one point. However, his determination to never stop learning didn't stop him from working towards a degree while working and credits Vinci Construction for supporting him to earn a degree around his commitments, and Middlesex University for employing a variety of formats for teaching.



### **Mayan Christophides**

Leeds  
Royal Mail, B2B Sales  
'21 graduate

100% of the reason Mayan chose the degree apprenticeship, is because of the degree behind it. While work experience is important for job applications, Mayan says the degree apprenticeship opened her mind to learning and earning at the same time. She did not expect she could learn sales skills on a degree, and this was the perfect solution for her.



### **Daniel Cotterill**

Hertfordshire  
Interserve Construction,  
Construction management,  
'19 graduate

Daniel was working in the fitness industry when he decided to begin a new career in construction. He wasn't sure how to change industries since university degree options weren't in construction at the time. However, through his research he discovered that a degree apprenticeship could get him directly into work, as well as work towards a degree.



### **James Evans**

London  
Collins Construction  
Construction Management

How can we change the perception that apprenticeships are just as good as a university degree? The choice to complete an apprenticeship may not be the obvious choice, but in James' experience, an apprenticeship offers flexibility and work specific training to suit people of all ages and experiences.



### **Louis Reece-Farrell**

Leeds  
Royal Mail  
B2B Sales

Like Freddy, Louis felt there was more support and guidance available for taking the university route, but decided he wasn't ready for traditional learning. A degree apprenticeship helped him to see that a degree and work experience go hand in hand to build his career, and that learning happens in the workplace just as much as it does in the classroom.