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Lauren Blatch, age 27, Bournemouth Building and Maintenance Ltd.

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I worked in recruitment for four and half years, but I always knew I wanted to work in Human Resources (HR). I found trying to transition into a HR role quite difficult as many employers couldn't see my transferrable skills - the feedback was always the same, that 'I didn't have the relevant in-house experience', common feedback for anyone looking to change direction in their career! However, I knew this was something I wanted to pursue and so I decided to step away from recruitment to focus on achieving a HR qualification

When I came across the Apprenticeship at [Bournemouth Building and Maintenance Ltd](#) (a trading company of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council), it was a no brainer! Being offered the opportunity to gain experience in the workplace, and work towards a qualification at the same time would be a fantastic stepping stone into the field of HR.

The company provides professional maintenance and construction services for BCP Council's owned housing stock, as well as corporate properties and public areas. I work alongside my manager looking after everything related to HR. There's only the two of us working in HR, so I think it was quite beneficial that I came with some work experience. The company have been extremely supportive throughout and have provided me with great opportunities and exposure to have a strong understanding of a generalist HR professional.

Each day is a learning day and with that, my confidence in the role is continuously growing, too. It's taken me a while to get here, but to be actually doing a job I have always wanted to do is a dream come true. Plus, getting a Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) qualification will give me so many opportunities following the Apprenticeship.

The group at college are great, we're a real mix of ages which really enhances the discussions in class. Both my tutor and assessor have both been helpful at guiding me through the course and are always on call should I ever have any questions!

When I finish the Apprenticeship, I am keen to continue onto the Level 5 CIPD qualification and continue on this journey, developing my skills whilst working within the field of HR.

I have friends who have been to university and can't get a job because they don't have the experience, they can't get the experience because they can't get a job - catch 22. To anyone thinking about an Apprenticeship, I'd say do it! You get the chance to get on-the-job experience and a qualification at the same time. The fact that I will walk away with experience will put me in a great position.

