



ROBERTA BAAH



TECH AND PRODUCT ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

(IT Governance) at the Financial Times

“The ‘conventional route’ is not the only way into higher education.”

From Level 3 to Bachelor’s degree

Roberta is a QA apprenticeship all-star – she started her journey as an IT Level 3 apprentice working on the IT service desk at the *Financial Times* (FT), went on to complete a Level 4 within 18 months and then launched a Bachelor’s degree apprenticeship (Levels 5 and 6) in Digital and Technology Solutions. She recently graduated with a 2:1 BSc in partnership with the University of Roehampton and has also been promoted to a new role in the IT Governance Team.

My degree apprenticeship

“When QA launched their BSc degree apprenticeship in Digital and Technology Solutions, it was an opportunity I couldn’t refuse! My employer agreed to sponsor me and I enrolled on the course. It was different from the L3 and L4 – there was more of a push to be an independent learner, motivating myself to get my assignments and course content done in a timely manner. I also found the approach to work-based learning much broader, which was challenging but really made me analyse and critically evaluate my work to show my understanding. Balancing work, assignments and exam prep with the support of my manager, I’ve just graduated with a 2:1 in January!”

How the journey started

“To begin with, I hadn’t really enjoyed my experience of sixth form as it felt like a lot of pressure in each chosen subject area. I was at the age where I really wanted a sense of independence, but working part-time in addition to full time studying didn’t seem like an option for me. So, after Results Day I went looking for other options, found the National Apprenticeship Service website and ended up applying for an IT apprenticeship with QA. I was excited for the prospects it could bring my career, and once I started working at FT, I began to learn so much about how the organisation worked – so I ran with the opportunity to keep on progressing.”

My first role in IT

“During my IT apprenticeship on the service desk, I created reports on stats or team and ticket performance, responded to emails and calls, resolved incidents and requests in my queue and handled queue management, like reassigning tickets to the team. For most of my time there, I was the ‘face of the front desk’, as it was established that I have a natural approach for customer-facing engagement!”

A new role in IT governance

“In my role now, I help facilitate arrangements for approved travel, code and manage the processing of invoices and purchase orders, book training and conferences, track travel and entertainment spend for the Tech and Product departments and more. These are all very time-sensitive tasks that need to be handled diligently to avoid payment issues and stay on budget. I’ve often been involved in organising events, like Hackathon and ‘All Hands’ events, and I also worked with my colleagues on many projects for the big move to our new office at Bracken House.”

Looking back...

“The biggest thing I’ve learned is that the ‘conventional route’ is not the only way into higher education. I’m really proud that I’ve graduated from my degree programme, having managed to balance work and learning throughout. For young people considering an apprenticeship – go for it! You have absolutely nothing to lose. Just keep focused, make good use of your time and keep up with your assignments. You will definitely learn a lot, both academically and professionally.”

... and looking forward

“The world is my oyster! I appreciate how my new role has taught me about the organisational structure and how everything fits together to operate in the way it does. I am definitely drawn to tech and enjoyed working on more technical elements in my previous role, so my next steps are inclined towards being back in the IT troubleshooting seat again.”

