

Q&A



SO, YOU WANT TO BE...

A HUMAN RESOURCES APPRENTICE?

Alice Lockett's role as an HR degree apprentice at bp is opening her eyes to the variety of roles available in people management – and beyond.

What's great about working as an HR degree apprentice at bp?

One of the joys of belonging to an early careers scheme is the opportunity to rotate frequently and get a taste of different roles in the profession. Human resources (HR) covers all things related to an organisation's people, from staff recruitment to skills development. Currently, I'm supporting bp with its reorganisation, helping to design the organisational structure.

Being given a huge amount of trust at such a young age and with limited experience is an amazing compliment; it shows that the company sees potential in you. I can truly see the benefit of the roles I perform to the business and I'm treated the same as my full-time colleagues; bp also has such a great culture and I can safely call my teammates friends as well as colleagues.

What sort of person would a degree apprenticeship in HR suit?

The role is intense as you have to juggle a full degree with a job, so you must be mindful of balancing time commitments and expectations. You must be willing to learn proactively from corporate activity. Being able to take a step back and reflect on the bigger picture is also a favourable attribute.

What subjects would it be useful to study at school and what practical experience is beneficial?

Within my cohort, we have a range of previous educational qualifications. The similarity lies in us all having worked part-time while studying, teaching us to balance our time and share learning between the classroom and workplace. This is a key skill that will stand out on your CV and explicitly show your time-management.

Studying business has proved useful during my first year of university. The communication and writing skills developed from English Literature and Psychology have helped me to articulate myself professionally and work well with others.

With the world ever-shifting towards digital ways of working, studying IT would have helped me understand certain processes quicker. Part of the joy of my role, however, is learning on the job and covering this skill as part of my degree.

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Could you outline the routes into entry-level roles in your field at your organisation?

The early careers programme at bp has schemes suitable for school leavers and graduates in multiple disciplines. Entering the company on one of the schemes allows you to accelerate internally into job roles suited to your skills and interests.

What personal skills and qualities would you need?

Curiosity and an eagerness to learn has certainly served me well! It helps show you are engaged and value the time that other people have given to you. Most importantly, though, it's vitally important to be your true self; that way, you can build authentic relationships with your colleagues.

How could your career develop as a degree apprentice at your organisation or beyond?

My corporate practice in HR, degree in business management and chartered management qualifications open up a plethora of roles internally. Within the HR discipline, the expertise I am gaining opens the door nicely to becoming an HR business partner. The skills are also transferable to other roles within the business due to the leadership principles from the programme.

What has been the highlight of your job so far?

Knowing that every day I can add value and make a tangible contribution to the functioning of the business, ultimately serving my colleagues. Working with people around the globe with different experiences has also enhanced my maturity and social network. Above all, I relish the trust put in me and am so thankful knowing that I have secure career prospects.

