

# Apprenticeship Ambassador: My story..

**Name:** Catherine Barrett

**Job title:** IT Assistant Buyer

Catherine is currently undertaking an Advanced Apprenticeship in Business Administration with Vauxhall. This is her story.

## My Story

I completed my GCSEs, then went onto sixth form and studied Biology, English Literature, Statistics and Dance A Levels – a real mix. I applied to go to Reading University to study Biology and was offered a place, but I decided to defer and went travelling for one year. I knew I didn't want to go back into full time education and have no money. When I was at school I'd been given a bit of information about Apprenticeships. My dad told me about the opportunities at Vauxhall because he works here.

A typical day for me is to start at 8am and I finish at 4:30pm. My role is to check purchase requests, check that the quotes are up to date and if they are not, I go back to the supplier and request an updated version. All of the purchase requests I deal with are indirect purchase equipment, things like laptops, conference callers, projectors - all of the things that helps the business to run.

Before I started at Vauxhall, I had no idea how many career options there are out there. I always thought I would be a dancer, not doing something desk based. I now dance in my spare time and take a class at a dance school – so I can keep my passion for dance alive and earn a full time salary.



My advice to others considering undertaking an Apprenticeship would be to make sure that you fully research the vacancy that you are applying for. Some Apprenticeships are only 1 year but the Vauxhall Apprenticeship is 4 years minimum. You also need to look into which qualifications you will achieve, if there is going to be career opportunities for progression and whether the bulk of your study will be job-based or at college. These things can make a massive difference to your experience, so take your time!

Don't leave applying for Apprenticeships to the last minute thinking that it's going to be quick and easy. It's not. Getting a place on an Apprenticeship programme is demanding and competitive, but joining the Vauxhall Apprenticeship was the best decision I ever made, and I can't imagine myself doing anything else now. All my friends at University are envious of how much money I'm earning and the fact that I've got my career started already.