

# EL LONGDEN

New Talent Apprentice, BBC  
Chartered Manager Degree Apprentice



El started her CMDA Apprenticeship with the BBC after leaving school at 18, looking to get a head start into her career without going down the traditional higher education route.

“ I have always been quite ambitious by nature. I knew going through school that I wanted to get into working straight away, whatever form that might be. I didn't find school very fulfilling and, for me, university looked like an extension of school.

My school was very traditional and a bit stuck in their ways, and at the time, the assumption was that my only option for higher education was university. There was not much help available for looking into other options, and so I simply typed into google 'What can I do after school other than university?' the first thing that popped up was 'Degree Apprenticeships' I researched my options, found the right fit for me and the rest is history!

By the end of my apprenticeship I will have the qualifications that represent what I have learnt, but what I value the most is the experience I will have of working for such an incredible organisation from the age of 18.”

## LEARNING FOR THE FUTURE

“Confidence, resilience and ambition are just three of the things that I have developed as a result of my management apprenticeship. I have learnt so much about myself in just 18 months working at the BBC, imagine what I could develop at the end of it! Being one of the youngest people in my first team I had to learn very quickly the ways of the working world, I have learnt so much from the people I have worked with.

Being an apprentice, often I am asked how do you explore management given the fact that I don't manage a team. It is true, I am only in charge of myself and only manage myself, however that still requires management skills.

During my first 18 months of the apprenticeship I have had to juggle working full time and undertaking a degree, I have been put in group situations where I have taken on a management role and put the theory into practice; there are so many opportunities to develop your management skills, outside of managing a team.

The diversity and variety of people and ideas that you are exposed to in a team environment completely outweighs the anxiety and nerves I used to feel in collaborative work. The degree, and modules that I study have helped me navigate the dynamics of team situations and increase my confidence.”

## ON MANAGING THROUGH LOCKDOWN

“I simply don't think that I would have adapted to working from home so quickly if it hadn't been for the things I had learnt in my first 6 months of the apprenticeship. It is definitely a difficult time for everyone, it is hard to stay motivated and feel connected when you are working from your kitchen.

However, the exposure I have had to managing change, for example and the resilience I have developed has helped me to bounce back and keep on track with both uni and work. Of course, it is a one day at a time mentality at the moment, but my apprenticeship has been a real lifeline for me throughout the pandemic, it is my purpose and my reason to get up in the morning.”

## CHANGING FOCUS

“If you met me 18 months ago vs today I am a completely different woman. My confidence, self-worth and all round outlook on the world has been changed for the better.

““ My apprenticeship - both work and degree side - has given me a completely new outlook on learning and development of my knowledge. ””

For someone who was let down by school, who struggled to fit in with people my own age but with a massive driving force of ambition with regard to my career, my apprenticeship has changed my life. I have found my purpose and what I enjoy. I feel any stigma attached to apprenticeships is totally undeserved.

Juggling both studies and full time working is not for the faint hearted, and of course not every day has a rainbow, however the benefits and enjoyment are unimaginable. **APPRENTICESHIPS ARE INCREDIBLE!** ””

FIND OUT MORE

 [managers.org.uk/apprenticeships/](https://managers.org.uk/apprenticeships/)

 Chartered  
Management  
Institute