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Mia De'Ath

WHEN SHE LEFT COLLEGE, MIA DE'ATH HAD DREAMS OF WORKING AS A MAKE-UP ARTIST FOR FILM AND TV. NOW, AT THE AGE OF 26, SHE'S A B2B SALES MANAGER AND COULDN'T BE HAPPIER

From her office at Yourcentre, an outsourced call-centre business, Mia De'Ath could see the University of Portsmouth's graduation ceremony. She realised: "I'd really love to graduate one day." Fast-forward a few months, and De'Ath is in her first year of a three-year CMDA with the University of Portsmouth, and still working as Yourcentre's B2B sales manager.

The course has been invaluable. Working full-time since leaving college at 19, she says she "never thought I'd have the chance to do a degree". Previously, she picked up managerial skills "through experience", winning the Customer Contact Association's Professional of the Year award in 2014. But the course has given De'Ath in-depth insight into the theories and operational side of management. She's now seeing the results of using her new skills at work.

As part of Yourcentre's sales team, De'Ath is always doing "lots of crazy things to keep everyone going". She runs teams, creates campaigns, does performance-management coaching and holds motivational meetings. She's constantly planning new work-related projects "because it's what motivates me; I don't switch off". Balancing university with these responsibilities does involve "chopping and changing", but, with university classes scheduled on one day a week, and supportive mentors, "so far everything's been okay".

De'Ath plans to gain more CMI qualifications and progress with Yourcentre: "Everything I've learned I've put into my work. I'm the type who always wants to learn and get better."

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