



## Fast Facts

**Apprentice Name:** Sophie Bland  
**Age:** 18  
**Type of Apprenticeship:** Customer Service  
**Job Role:** Mail Order Customer Services  
**Training Provider:** East Midlands Chamber  
**Employer name:** Brampton Picture Framing  
**No of Employees:** 10



## Sophie's Story

### The Picture of Confidence

Sophie Bland is an Apprentice at Brampton Picture Framing, studying towards her Customer Service qualification. Here she describes the difference her apprenticeship has made to her all-round sense of confidence.

#### What were you doing before you became an Apprentice?

I was studying Childcare at Chesterfield College.

#### How did you hear about Apprenticeships?

My step-mum sent me the link to the job I am doing now and I applied as soon as I saw it.

#### Why did you decide to become an Apprentice?

It just sounded interesting to me - it was something different so I thought I'd give it a go and it's really good!



We're one big family at work and I get lots of support from everyone

### What does being an Apprentice involve?

You get well trained and you get a qualification at the end of it. Also, if you haven't passed Maths and English you get the chance to complete these too. You get lots of practical experience at work.

### What sort of tasks do you get involved with in your job?

I work in the dispatch area, packaging things up, answering the phone and talking to customers. I also look at the eBay side of the business.

### What do you like best about it?

I really like the dispatch work. I get my own system going every day and the work gives me a sense of achievement. I set myself targets for these. Some days are really busy. I work with a colleague and we work well together - it's always good to have someone to help you.

### What challenges have you had to deal with?

Answering the phone was a bit nerve-racking at first because I hadn't done much of it before. So I listened to what everyone else did and just pushed myself to do it. I found it was much easier than I thought!

### As an Apprentice what support do you get from your employer and from the Chamber?

We're one big family at work and I get lots of support from everyone here and at the Chamber. My confidence has really, really developed. I am normally extremely shy, especially around boys. But everyone here has been so friendly and helpful that I feel I can do so many more things than I ever could before.

### How has the Apprenticeship helped you progress into a career or a permanent job?

I'm interested in the sales side of things and would like to move into that area in the future. This role has given me the chance to look at that option.

### What do you feel were the advantages of doing an apprenticeship over other options such as full-time education or work without training?

Lots! This has given me work experience. It has also given me experience in team working and the opportunity to meet new people. My confidence has taken a huge jump. This is because I haven't just been working or just at college - I've had the best of both worlds.

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