

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; DR JAMES MOLLARD

James Mollard was at Bedale High School between 2002 and 2007. He achieved high grades in his GCSE's, which included geography, history and music. He was also involved in the school concerts, theatre and sports, often refereeing the football school and county games for Mr Coombs, or else representing the school at cricket or golf. Going to Q.E Sixth form, he began to streamline subjects towards science and geography, getting a place to do a degree in geophysics and meteorology at the University of Edinburgh, which he graduated from in 2013.

He then (for reasons unknown to him) decided to continue his studies further, taking on a PhD with the University of Reading and UK Met Office, analysing, rewriting and improving sections of the Met Office's new UKESM1 climate model, defending his thesis in 2017.



James had multiple part-time jobs between his studies, either to fund his university stay, or fund his hobbies. He continued working as a football referee in Scotland, before switching codes to rugby union in 2016. During the summers, he also worked in hospitality at the Open Golf at St Andrews, as a techie at the Fringe Festival and as an activity leader/manager for an international language school in Edinburgh, York and then London. These jobs helped pay the rent (and food), but also allowed him to take part in the British University Karting Championships and work towards his skydiving licence.

Since his PhD, he has continued to work as a climate impact researcher in Academia on various research projects at the University of Reading, National Centre for Atmospheric Sciences, and at the University of Edinburgh, which he returned to in 2020 after multiple failed previous attempts. His work has allowed him to do some amazing (and sometimes terrifying) things, including visiting West Africa, India and China, giving an invited talk at NASA (virtually only, thanks for that CoVID) and facing the media for news reports, podcasts or in-person panel events. He recently was a co-author on a UNICEF-led report investigating the impact of future climate change on children, which received massive media attention in the run up to COP26 in Glasgow and won multiple awards for its impact. Today, he spends his time continuing researching future climate impacts whilst attempting (not yet successfully) to secure funding for a full permanent or Fellowship position.

**JAMES'S TIPS; 1) Eat the frog** - the easiest option is just to get that thing on your mind done. Too often I made more work for myself by not doing this. **2) Take the jump** - something innocuous can lead to something massive, whether it be deciding to go to an event, or a random email to ask for something - it sometimes works out! **3) Take time to take care of you.** You are not just a list of achievements/potentials. It won't always go to plan, so don't burden yourself with pressure or expectations and learn to enjoy the ride.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; TANIA HARRISON

Tania Harrison attended Bedale School between 1978-1982. She represented the county in 800m, 1500m and cross country. Tania was easily distracted in lessons and was increasingly drawn to music, art and fashion. Deciding A 'Levels weren't for her she went to Scarborough to undertake a BTEC in Business Studies. Whilst it didn't light the fire of her dreams, the course gave her some useful skills. Knowing she wanted to do something creative but pressured to be practical with it, Tania then went to Birmingham University to study Communication Studies. Finding the writing of stories the most interesting part but the linguistics side rather dull, she again got drawn to music and going to gigs and moved to Leeds. It was in Leeds that Tania began to explore more creative options and took Theatre Studies at A level. Life suddenly looked more exciting, and Tania auditioned for drama school. It was the first time Tania registered that a career in the arts was an option and not just follow what everybody else thought she should do.



Tania began her career in the arts at London's Drama Centre training to be an actress which she loved and it opened her mind to a whole new world of possibilities. The Jazz Café was taken over by music festival promoters MFMG who convinced Tania to come and work at Reading Festival. Tania went on to create festivals including devising Latitude Festival which she curated for fourteen years. She also programmed artists for Reading & Leeds Festivals, Pimms Summerfest, Phoenix, Homelands, Trafalgar Square, US Fleadh, Electric Picnic Dublin and Big Chill. Tania won the AAA Editor's Award in 2016, the Dan Crawford Innovation Award in 2014, BAFA Award for Outstanding Contribution to British Arts Festivals in 2011 and The Stage Award for Special Achievement in Regional Theatre in 2008 and UK Festival Awards Best Line Up in 2013, 2015, 2017 and 2018. Most recently, Tania has set up Kite Festival in Oxfordshire and established the revival of the Bartholomew Fair with a contemporary twist to fashion and sustainability in the City of London. The pursuit of careers that give obvious financial dividends are not necessarily the right path for everyone and money often comes from ideas and creativity not the other way round! Each person has a natural interest and indeed aptitude in different areas. What our parents and teachers want us to do isn't always going to be the thing we are going to excel in, or feel passionate about.

**TANIA'S TIPS:** Finding something you love doing isn't always obvious, but seeing where your interests are and exploring those can open up opportunities you didn't initially know were possible. Developing skills that will enhance your interests can lead on to a career you want and that really works for you. Don't be afraid to fail, as often we learn more in failing than we do than by being an immediate success. Not all of it makes us feel good inside but if it's less than 50% of good, then make it change. Be the change you want to see.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; Dr. GEORGE STONADGE

George Stonadge attended Bedale High School from 2008 to 2013. Initially aspiring to become a chef, his hopes were dampened by an unsuccessful attempt at catering. This setback led to a lack of motivation and a sense of aimlessness in his studies. George adopted a minimal effort approach, coasting through the early years without a clear focus or having found much in the way of motivation.

However, a turning point occurred in the penultimate year of secondary school when decisions about long-term education took centre stage. The way he was going would likely result in not gaining access to Sixth Form, so George homed in on Geography, Science, and Maths—subjects that resonated with him and where he displayed academic ability. This shift marked a significant change in his academic trajectory, and his increased efforts were reflected in his GCSE grades and noticed by teachers and peers.



Achieving the grades to get into Queen Elizabeth's Sixth Form College, George concentrated on his strongest subjects, delving into Geography and Geology, captivated by the intricacies of natural resource formation and management. At the same time, his studies in Human Geography and Business provided insights into pressing global challenges, reinforcing the vital role of efficient resource utilisation for addressing global issues such as climate change, public health, and equality. This realisation fuelled George's motivation to study natural resources, aligning his passion with the societal benefits.

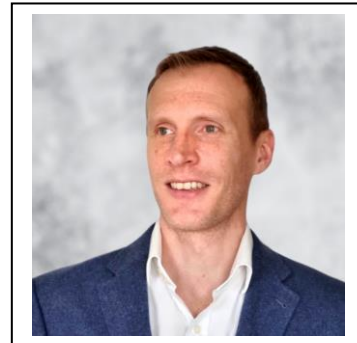
Newfound purpose turbocharged his work ethic, leading him to surpass the entry requirements to study Geology at the University of Leicester in 2015 on a Chancellor's Scholarship. George's unwavering commitment saw him stay at Leicester for eight years, pursuing a master's degree and a PhD focused on mineral resource formation and extraction. Endeavouring in mineral deposits research earned him accolades at national and international levels. This culminated in the recent publication of his research on locating Copper resources, a key metal for the green energy transition.

Reflecting on his journey, George acknowledges that his passion for Earth Sciences, the foundation of his fulfilling career, originated in the classrooms of Bedale High. His story serves as a testament to the transformative power of passion and purpose, and he hopes that other students understand that it's never too late to find your calling.

**GEORGE'S TIPS;** life is like reading a map. To begin with, you must understand where you are, for example, what motivates you and what you are good at? You then need to identify your destination, i.e., what do you want things to look like in the future? And finally, you must diligently plan how you get from where you are to your idealised future self. This has helped me stay focused in both my career and personal life.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; PAUL NOONE

Paul Noone attended Bedale High School between 1993 and 1998. Like a lot of boys, he struggled to focus on studying as much as he could have done, to get the best grades. He achieved A-Cs in all subjects which allowed him to study A-levels (Physics, Maths and French) at Northallerton College. 1999 was a difficult period for Paul, reflected in his lack of attendance in his first year at the college. In the summer Paul decided to start again, this time studying Physics Maths and Business Studies and went on to achieve 4 A 'level's (including general studies) obtaining grades A-C. Paul went on to study Electronic Engineering at Sheffield University which he found challenging and not as interesting as he'd hoped. In hindsight he should have chosen Physics/Astrophysics as this what he enjoyed the most and still has a love of today.



His first role out of university was as an Electronic Engineering in a lighting company in Doncaster. There was nothing he liked about that job and looking back that was obvious given how he felt about studying the subject. That experience inspired him to do the things he wanted to do and be move brave in decision making. He decided to take a temporary position closer to home to find something he wanted to do. Having learned and enjoyed problem solving at university, he found a job as an analyst in Financial Services which he loved. After a year, despite loving the job Paul took a year out of work to travel the world with his girlfriend (now wife), Charlotte. This changed his outlook on life forever, seeing what is important to live and be happy when you don't have much gives you a very strong perspective as a basis to live your life. On his return Paul relocated to Bristol to take on a graduate job in Financial Services. Despite only living there for 3 years (2008-2011), it feels like his second home and some of his closest friends live there. Paul left Bristol to work in the Czech Republic (now Czechia) for 2 years taking his wife and young children with him which was a hard decision but very rewarding. He now has his own business (9 years and counting) consulting in financial services. This wouldn't have been possible without taking a few risks. This job has taken him all over the country and the world but, there is no place like home. Paul moved back to North Yorkshire 6 years ago where he lives with his wife and 2 children (Eva 12, Orla 10). He works from home mostly meaning he gets to spend lots of quality time with his family when he's not training for an ultra-marathon or attempting to play football. Being able to reconnect with old friends from Bedale School has been a real pleasure.

**PAUL'S TIPS;** Think about the things you enjoy and that you feel confident in and work that into your career choices. Don't be scared to be different. That doesn't have to be academia or a particular subject but a skill perhaps. Doing something you enjoy will be rewarding and inspiring. Be brave enough to take on new challenges and opportunities. I have always taken opportunities when they have presented themselves, whether that be to travel for a year, work abroad, change jobs even if that means moving my whole family or working away from home. Those decisions have enriched my family and my life in so many ways and looking back I wouldn't change any decision I have made.

# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; NIGEL ROBERTS

Nigel was brought up in Manchester and moved to North Yorkshire when he was 12 and joined Bedale High School which was very different from his city experience. His first job, at age 13, was picking eggs at a Kettlewell's Farm, Exelby for 40p an hour! At 15, Nigel progressed to the Little Chef on the A1 doing pot wash before waiting on tables. Not a lover of school, Nigel was determined to leave after O-levels but stayed on for the 6<sup>th</sup> form. Possibly giving in to peer pressure, he again changed his plans to go straight into a local job and went to Bedford College (now University of Bedford) to do a Sports Degree. Nigel funded his degree years and social life by working in pubs and night clubs, pizza delivery, pest control for Bedford council and bread delivery. Finally, because of his interest in cycling, he found the perfect job at Trek Bikes in 1991, in customer service and sales for independent bicycle retailers in the UK.



After a few years in local sales, Nigel moved to Bath, was promoted to regional sales and relocated to Milton Keynes in 1998 following the birth of his two children (now 28 and 25), soon becoming responsible for the entire UK business as General Manager. Over the following years he became responsible for some additional markets around Europe; Poland, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Ireland and managing the teams for all of those markets.

Nigel has been a keen cyclist since the age of 15, initially in the Dales, and it continued to be a passion wherever he's lived and is a key part of his career. Most notably, he has completed the amateur Sportive event which is a stage of the Tour de France (l'Etape du Tour) nearly 20 times.

Nigel and his partner, Jo, regularly cycle together and have plans to do the Velodyssée through France and some other longer UK and European routes.

In recent years Nigel has completed several triathlons, the biggest of which was Challenge Roth in Germany in 2021.

**NIGEL'S TIPS;** Do jobs and work hard! Don't be afraid to do anything, it's all experience and teaches a good work ethic. An important lesson Nigel learnt through all of his jobs, was communication skills, how to work with people and build a rapport with customers and colleagues. Find the fun but work hard and commit to it even if it's a short-term role.

Also, don't be afraid to change your plans! Or even to proceed without a plan; sometimes the best things come from no plan at all.

# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; Dr JACOB ANDERSON

Jacob Anderson was a student at Bedale High School between 2008-2013. Once described by a teacher as 'so laid back he's practically horizontal', it would be fair to say he didn't apply himself at school; instead, he chose to spend his time trying to make his classmates laugh - much to the displeasure of the teachers. It was a few years after high school that he realised this was not a good long-term strategy and so he pursued his passion for physics and maths. In 2016, Jacob attended Newcastle University, where he studied Mathematics, achieving a first-class honours degree. He was awarded a scholarship jointly by the University of Leeds and Sellafield Ltd. to continue his academic journey. Jacob completed his masters in Fluid Dynamics with distinction at Leeds and began a PhD in computational fluid dynamics in 2020, where he researches the behaviour of nuclear waste physics.



As part of his PhD, he has been accepted to speak at conferences in locations such as Japan, Barcelona, Rome... and Glasgow. Jacob is currently writing his doctoral thesis and has accepted a job offer to work as a senior modelling and simulation engineer at an aerospace company upon completion of his studies. Once finished later in 2023, he will known as Dr Jacob Anderson.

Jacob found enjoyment and motivation at school through sport, playing in the school football team, and representing the area for tennis and table tennis. But he did not reach his potential academically at school, or at college, and was directionless until university. Despite this, he looks back on his time at Bedale with fondness thanks to the life-long friendships he formed with classmates, and the confidence he gained as a result of a few great teachers he had. He eventually found much needed direction when the passion that a couple of his lecturers had for their work at university inspired him. He found that the further you go into education, the less it becomes about passing tests, and instead you begin to be able to be creative with your thinking, which is fun.

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# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; JONATHAN SADLER

I attended Bedale School between 1978 until 1983. Maths and physics were my strongest subjects and I also enjoyed modern languages, going on a school exchange trip to Germany and studying French to GCSE level. English was my worst subject, in fact I had to retake that when I went to 6<sup>th</sup> form. I left Bedale with good, but not excellent grades and went to Ripon Grammar School where I focussed on A levels in Maths, Further Maths and Physics. In 1985 I got an apprenticeship at British Aerospace in Warton and then I studied for a BEng in Aeronautical Engineering and an MSc in composite materials at Imperial College in London. In 1994, I joined the Benetton F1 team and in 1998 I joined the Prost Grand Prix team as a composite engineer. I moved to the Arrow F1 team in 2001 and in 2002 I joined the Mercedes F1 team as a composite design engineer.



Having lived in Bedale since birth, growing up so close to RAF Leeming gave me a love of planes, so I decided to pursue a career in the aerospace industry. Based on my A level results I had gained a place at Imperial College in London to study a degree in Aeronautical engineering, sponsored by British Aerospace in Lancashire. This involved working for a year ahead of going to university during which time we had further training in practical engineering skills such as engineering drawing and machining. We also had the opportunity to work in a variety of areas within the business. I continued working for BAe during my summer holidays and for four years post-graduation. By this time, I had a growing interest in Formula One from a career point of view so after a couple of failed attempts, I was successful in getting of job with the Benetton F1 team. Since then, my role has changed a few times, but I have worked for only three other teams and have been with the current team (Mercedes) for over 20 years.

Outside of work, I love everything to do with two wheels. I own a few motorcycles and do a lot of cycling (having competed in road and mountain bike races for many years. Having lived in cities like London and Paris, it has given me a great appreciation of growing up in a town like Bedale, which is surrounded by beautiful countryside. I still try and get back when I can.

## **JONATHAN'S TIPS;**

Don't always take the easiest option. I do think I have been very lucky in my career so far however, I have not always taken the easiest option. Choosing both Ripon School and university in London was both due to their reputation rather than being the most convenient. Try and get some part time jobs whilst still at school. Some can be fun anyway, but you will get to learn new skills and they also will look good on your CV when you apply for colleges or jobs and set you apart from others with similar qualifications. Whilst at school and sixth form I had a variety of jobs including paper boy, ride attendant at Lightwater Valley and a job at a builder's merchant in Leeming Bar.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; CATHERINE MELA

Dr Catherine Mela (nee Burton) attended Bedale High School from 1984 to 1989 and always enjoyed the science lessons, but struggled in writing down all her ideas in class due to dyslexia. Catherine went to Harrogate College and completed a BTEC National Diploma in Science and then a degree in Biochemistry at Salford University. Following some advice from her tutor at Salford, Catherine applied for and was awarded a European Social Fund Scholarship to study an EU Masters Degree in Biotechnology. She then went to work for the civil service at the Institute for Animal Health in Pirbright where she worked on the world eradication programme for Rinderpest (cattle equivalent of measles). This job started Catherine's love for overseas work travel. Following many shorter-term science jobs as a technician, Catherine was encouraged by her professor to work towards PhD in medicine at Imperial College London, studying treatment strategies in HIV-1 infection. After being awarded her PhD in 2003 Catherine stayed in university research until, 2008 when she moved into pharmaceutical company research. Having reached an executive position in AstraZeneca, Catherine is now looking to move back into the Civil Service and work on the UK medicine and Healthcare, after the pandemic re-ignited the passion for patient led research strategy.



Catherine lives in Cambridgeshire with her husband and two children Sophia (13) and Henryk (10). Catherine did not know what she wanted to do when she left Bedale High School but knew it would be in a scientific field as this was what she found both exciting and fun. Catherine had some FANTASTIC science teachers at Bedale who helped her realise that dyslexia did not have to limit her ambition or her path through education. She needed to adapt to work in a way that suited her but did not let dyslexia define her life. It's not always simple to achieve what you want but don't let difficulties get in the way, find a new path. Having been encouraged and supported by many fantastic role models in her career, Catherine strongly supports neuro-diversity in the workplace and had championed a number of mentees who also have dyslexia, anxiety or autism, ensuring the right support for them to succeed in their careers. Outside of work the Melas love to travel together and have just completed an EU road trip to Austria taking in several cities on the way. Catherine also does a lot of sewing, gardening and cake decorating.

### CATHERINE'S TIPS;

Don't let anyone tell you what your career limits are - that's for you to define! Find a way to reach your goals by breaking them into smaller more achievable aims first. I never left Bedale thinking I would be a Doctor of Science working with new medicine development - so dare to imagine and see where you end up!



# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; PHOEBE POWELL

Phoebe Powell was a student at Bedale High School between 2008-2013 and was a smart, but tricky student, who struggled with the concept of school life and balancing the demands of being a young sports person but achieved good GCSE results. She enjoyed PE, English and geography and was on the gifted and talented programme, but she found it very hard to gain good exam results from subjects that she had no interest in. Following on from high school Phoebe worked hard to begin a business training and selling sports horses to continue to fund her competitive career in eventing. She also gained experience working for several market leader professionals and began training and competing horses for new owners.



In 2015 Phoebe moved from Northallerton to Shropshire to be more central in the country for competitions and clients and 'properly' start her business on her own. The first few years were extremely hard work, working 7 days a week and as many hours as possible either teaching riding lessons, dealing horses, riding clients' horses and mucking out stables but Phoebe knew that it was just temporary until the business was established and had a strong work ethic from the start. As well as this Phoebe was also an event rider competing nationally and internationally frequently representing the region and UK, and regularly competing at the very top advanced level of eventing, so it was a lot to balance!

In 2018 Phoebe moved to her new base in Staffordshire and was able to expand the sales business. She focused primarily on this and established quickly, growing the business by 300% within the first 12 months and when she began doing this full time, she felt like she had found her calling! With the business continuing to expand over the next couple of years staff were hired, clients kept coming and Phoebe also began representing herself as a sales agent, successfully sourcing horses for America, Dubai, Qatar, Ireland and Europe. In 2021 Phoebe also started another business venture buying, producing and selling top quality high value show jumping horses that are placed with professional show jumping riders, and are sold when she feels is the right time for the horse and/or the business.

Completing college and obtaining a University Degree was something that Phoebe felt guilty about not achieving for several years after high school, however this path isn't for everyone, and Phoebe is very successful at her job and feels fulfilled and proud of all the happy customers she has worked with over the years, and is always working towards a new venture Phoebe still competes and recently won a class at the prestigious Bolesworth International Horse Show, however she enjoys competing for enjoyment now, rather than as a career.

**PHOEBE'S TIPS;** You have to be prepared to work hard for anything that you want in your education or career. You can work hard enough to be good at something, even if you aren't a born natural! Don't be afraid to start your own business if education isn't for you, but don't expect it to be the easy way out. Being your own boss and the boss of others comes with its own set of problems and rewards, but if you are committed to it, it will be the best thing you ever did!

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; KATIE KITCHING

I attended Bedale High School between 2010-2015. I loved school, especially playing sports. I worked hard to get my GCSE's and my favourite subjects were PE and French. After school, I moved to Richmond Sixth form. I had been scouted to play for Manchester City reserve squad, so I decided to do a BTEC Sports course instead of A levels which meant I would be missing a lot of lessons due to travelling to Manchester. During this time, I also worked two part time jobs: waitressing at The Milbank Arms and Border House Teas in Masham. I was not sure what I wanted to do after 6th Form. I had many ideas but nothing that I was passionate about. However, I knew that I wanted to continue playing football and that I also wanted to continue my education. I applied to a variety of courses at different universities in the UK, but I still didn't know what the best path was for me. After speaking to friends that had gone to America for university, I was accepted at the University of South Florida in Tampa.



I spent five years in America playing football and studying. I ended up winning a few trophies, getting a degree in Health Science and making friends for life. I was able to combine my love for football and desire to further my education and, at the same time, having the "uni experience". I was able to travel around America for games and experience a different way of life. There were times when I felt homesick but luckily FaceTime exists, so it didn't feel too bad. After graduating in 2021, I decided that I wanted to go into the professional game and I knew that I wanted to be back in England. I signed for London City Lionesses in the Women's Championship spending one and a half seasons in London. I have now made the move up north to sign for Sunderland Women (August 2023), also in the Women's Championship. I have had lots of setbacks such as injuries, being benched and being homesick but these setbacks have helped me become the person I am today. I have also learnt that as much as I love football and always will, it is not the be all and end all. There are other things in life and for me, spending time with my family and friends is so important as they have helped me through many obstacles I have faced and shown me compassion.

Throughout my life, I have faced many challenges as a female trying to play football. From a lack of opportunities and funding for girls' football at a young age, to social pressures and historical prejudices. However, these challenges have only made me want to succeed even more as a female footballer and I am proud of how far I have come.

**KATIE'S TIPS;** Don't be afraid to take a **different route** than all your friends. Your path is not going to be the same as everyone, so make sure you make decisions for you, and no one else. **Hard work** can get you further than you think but also don't forget to enjoy yourself and make time for your family, friends, and hobbies. Try not to worry about things that you cannot control. Focus on the things you can control, and the rest will sort itself out. It is OK to not know what you want to do in life. Try to stick to the things you enjoy, and something will pop up eventually.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; ALEX BOULTON

Alex attended Bedale High School between 2007 - 2011. At school, I was a social animal and adored the days that would have triple PE lessons - the idea of having to sit and study things that didn't interest me was torture. I wasn't good academically, so my motivation was very low. And you can forget the homework... I was the 'do it on the bus' kind of guy who would always try and get away with the bare minimum. If homework was taking away my time to be outside playing, it wouldn't be done. During my time at school, I wasn't sure on my career path at all. However, I didn't feel lost as such, because I would fill any time outside of school building bike jumps or playing drums, which sure drowned out any thoughts of going to university and studying for any longer than needed. After Bedale I went to Harrogate Grammar School to follow my sister Rebecca, who also went there.



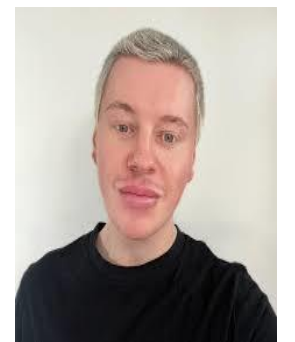
Since leaving education at 18, I took our band, The Purple Mafia very seriously and began drumming and touring with my best mates for a few years. This in no way made me any money, but it almost felt like my 'University' where we could let off some steam and travel the UK. During this time, I fell in love with making tour videos and content for the band and every day I had away from music, I was up in the Lake District or down in Cornwall making travel videos for fun. As the music side of things grew, we were spending more time in America recording and then back to the UK for large tours, supporting the likes of The Vamps. The highlight for me in that period, was playing drums in a sold-out London O2 Arena. We were finally getting success, but this came at the expense of my creative freedom, and I soon fell out of love with music and began gravitating towards making videos full time. My first adventure was backpacking in Indonesia with my best mate trying to make videos in one of the most beautiful places in the world. The video got the attention of MTV who asked us to become travel ambassadors and make content for them and their tourism partners in Australia and The Philippines. Our ever-growing company, Dream Beach Media have filmed in Indonesia, France, Switzerland, Malta, Sweden, Italy, UAE, Jordan and have projects in Albania, Spain, Argentina, UAE and Croatia in the months ahead. We are now taking on bigger clients and have built an international network of producers, videographers, photographers, drone pilots, social media managers and highly skilled VFX artists, who all share our creative approach and high standards of client service.

At this stage I was grateful to say I had landed on a perfect combo of travel and creative freedom, but we never dreamed it would develop into something like the global business we run today. How lucky am I?

**ALEX'S TIPS;** **Socialise** - being able to have a good chat with anyone can hold so much power in your life! This is super valuable. **Create** - Creating is the gym for the brain and like anything if you don't use it, you'll lose it. In anything you do, be imaginative and flex the brain. **Mess up** - Make mistakes and don't hold them personally, you'll never learn from being right or being the best. Go out there and make some mistakes. **Enjoy** - We aren't here very long, have fun with it and don't take anything too seriously.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; JACK WETHERILL

Jack Wetherill attended Bedale High School between 2004 and 2009. He was an academic student, senior prefect and achieved nine GCSEs A\* to B. He then went to Queen Elizabeth's Sixth Form College in Darlington to study English Language, Media Production and History. There he achieved an A\*, A and B in his A Levels and went to Southampton Solent University to study Magazine Journalism & Feature Writing. Jack had known he had wanted to go into journalism from around Y9 and chose subjects at A Level he thought would be beneficial. At university, he managed to balance a very active social life with his studies and left with a First-Class Honours Degree. Rather than going straight into work though, he went to Cardiff University to do a Master's Degree in Magazine Journalism, which helped give him the confidence to go out into the real working world



During Jack's four years of university, he had a number of internships, including at the Northern Echo, the now defunct Star Magazine and OK! Magazine, and got down to the final two for a PR internship with MTV. The summer after he finished his MA, he returned home to Thirsk and immediately started applying for jobs, and by November had moved to London to start work. His first job was as the Overnight Showbiz & TV Reporter at Daily Star Online. He worked 11pm to 7am, Sunday to Thursday, for seven months. In his years in showbiz journalism, Jack has attended events such as the National Television Awards, the British Soap Awards and countless celeb parties. He's interviewed the likes of Love Island stars, K-pop singers, Rylan, Amanda Holden, and countless other celebrities. Jack was recently promoted to Acting Showbiz Editor and now manages a team of reporters, as well as writing about celebrity and television news, and interviewing celebrities. Based in Canary Wharf, no working day is the same and good communication is key within the role. He recently bought his first home in London at the age of 30 and is loving the peace and quiet of living alone., so you need to be able to stand out. You also probably won't get your dream role straight away, but having the commitment to put in the graft early on pays off - and then you get to enjoy the perks. It's also nothing like you see on TV dramas definitely doesn't pay as well as you think it does for most people, so it's a career your really have to be passionate about to do well in.

**JACK'S TIPS:** If you know what you want to do in life, great. If you don't, also great, there is no real rush. I knew what I wanted to do so I made sure I did everything I could to put me in a position to reach that goal. As for journalism, it is a very, very competitive industry and is always changing due to technology and reader habits, so you need to be able to stand out. You also probably won't get your dream role straight away, but having the commitment to put in the graft early on pays off - and then you get to enjoy the perks.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; CRAIG WHEATLEY

I was a very shy person at Bedale High School (1984 - 1989) and probably didn't fit into the academic category of an ideal pupil. I liked practical lessons, art and problem solving, so I knew I wanted a job that involved creativity and design and was encouraged by my art teacher Miss Mackenzie. Through commitment and hard work, I managed to pass the 4 GCSE's I needed to go to do a BTEC at Harrogate College of Art and Design. At the end of my 2 years at Harrogate college I had a setback as although I was a good student, I didn't get into the universities I had selected. I took the courage to stay on at Harrogate Collage for an extra year and take a part time job on a market stall before reapplying to different universities. The following year I started my BA Degree course in textile design at Loughborough Collage of Art and Design, 3 years of working hard and playing hard as a student paid off as I was one of 5 who graduated with a BA 1<sup>st</sup> class with honours and get a scholarship to continue my studies at the prestigious Royal College of Art in London for 2 years where I gained an MA in Printed Textile Design.

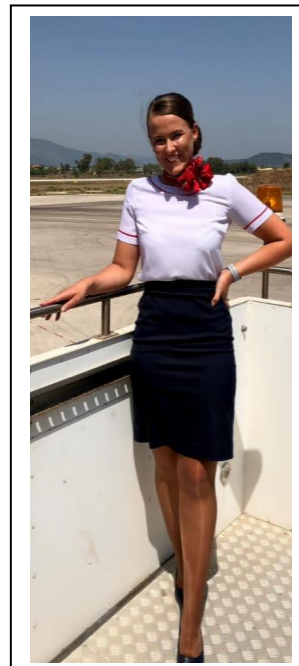


I applied for what seemed like hundreds of jobs before finally getting an interview for a printed textile designer at Christian Lacroix. I had to find the courage to go as the position was based in Paris and I didn't know anyone over there and didn't speak French. I got the job and within weeks I was living in Paris. My dream was coming true, I could never have imagined living in Paris or even London when I was at Bedale. I was eager to learn, worked long hours and moved my way up in the company very quickly until I became Creative Studio Director and a company executive. After 17 rewarding years at Christian Lacroix, I needed a change so decided to leave and set up my own business. Studio Wheatley was born in 2014, having my own company has given me more freedom creatively and personally, a new set of objectives; I can work when I want and decide what kind of projects I want to work on. I still like experimenting, trying out new things, problem solving and the challenge that design has to offer so usually never say no to a job even if it's something I've never done before. Through my work I get the chance to travel and meet people from different countries and cultures which I find very rewarding. I also enjoy working with various charities and was lucky enough to have been selected to decorate a lion sculpture for Windsor castle to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Queen Victoria which was sold at auction in 2019. Being a designer and illustrator can be tough at times and extremely competitive but seeing my designs on clothes and products for famous brands, people wearing them all over the world and the buzz I get from working on fashion shows makes it all worthwhile and extremely satisfying.

**CRAIG'S TIPS;** Have the courage to follow your instincts. The hardest thing when it comes to your career is making the right choice, what kind of job is right for you and what kind of lifestyle you are looking for. Choose a career that you enjoy, if you enjoy what you do and work hard it will pay off and lead to success. Don't be afraid to do something different from others, take risks and seize opportunities. Learn to how to promote yourself, you are your own brand. Challenge yourself because everyone develops at a different pace, so don't compare yourself to others. Learn from your mistakes, we often come through life's obstacles as a stronger person. Put personal satisfaction before money. Keep an open mind and embrace the unknown. Believe that anything is possible. Don't give up.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; SHANNON WILSON

Shannon attended Bedale High School between 2007-2012 having moved around the country a lot due to her dad being in the military. She found it hard to settle in one place, so she didn't really enjoy school, finding it hard to fit in. She didn't get the best GCSE's but knew she had the personality, commitment, and determination to succeed. She loved Food Technology and still loves cooking, a key skill to living on your own. Her inspirational teachers were Mrs Kinloch and Mrs Lewin, who both helped Shannon when she got into trouble, and took the time to help push her in the right direction showing a lot of compassion on the way. After Bedale, she travelled 2 hours to attend Stockton Riverside College, to make a fresh start and to make new friends. She worked part time from 13 years old in a local cafe on weekends and after school and college which gave her confidence a boost, and meeting strangers helped her interpersonal skills.



Perhaps having such a nomadic early life, travelling was something Shannon really enjoyed so it was no surprise when she applied online to be cabin crew with Jet2.com. She failed to get in in 2016 but she was successful in 2017 and her current job is, Air Cabin Crew looking after passenger safety and comfort and making sure each passenger's holiday gets off to a good start. Shannon lives on her own in the suburbs of Leeds and with Jet2.com being a short-haul airline, most of her trips are there and back in one day, with duties between 6 and 16 hours a day.

Even though her family still live in Bedale, she says leaving home to become independent was the best thing she ever did. Shannon admits not getting the job the first time was a major disappointment, but she never gave up and she had the courage to apply a second time because she didn't want to be defeated. One of the perks of working for an airline is the opportunity for holidays abroad and visiting new cities in the UK. She loves spending time with her family (especially take her mum on a work trip to Nuremberg) and also loves socialising with friends in Leeds. She really enjoys being able to go in the cockpit during flights and seeing some incredible views. Shannon did worry that her GCSE's might prevent her realising her dream, but it absolutely hasn't. She has done lots of other jobs before being cabin crew so all the skills she gained, have helped her get to where she is now. She says commitment is key, you must have this in order to be successful!

**SHANNON'S TIPS;** If at first you don't succeed, try and try again! If you truly want something, you must be prepared to move 'Heaven and Earth' to get to where you want to be. Don't be afraid to leave your comfort zone, to move away from home, to travel and try new places and experience different things. There's so much more to life than a little market town in North Yorkshire, but it's always wonderful to come home to visit family and friends. Don't be afraid to take risks as you only get one life, so make the absolute most of every minute of every day and continue to look forward, not back.

# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; JONNY COOMBS

Jonny Coombs attended Bedale High School between 1992-1997, was a very average student but excelled at games representing the school and area in a wide range of sports. He achieved the minimum GCSE's necessary to study for a BTEC in Business Studies at Northallerton School and scraped enough qualifications to go to Huddersfield University to study business. In retrospect, Jonny followed this academic path to appease his schoolteacher parents when he wasn't really cut out for studying. He had never been afraid of hard work, was always very practical and had a wide range of part-time jobs including paper boy, butcher's lad, pot washer, coalman, burger flipper, coach cleaner, barman and packing pies. Despite enjoying the social life for 3 years at university where he made friends for life, he left without gaining a degree and started looking for work in the real world.



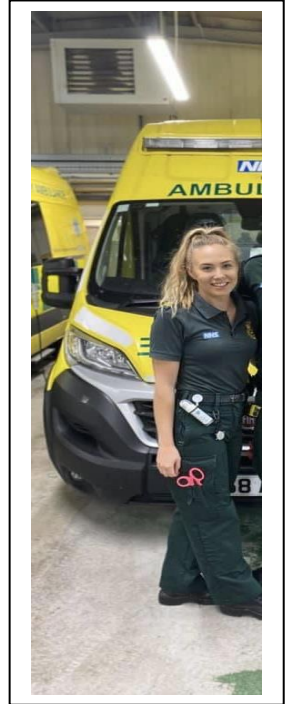
His first job after university involved wearing a shirt and tie every day and he soon realised, working in an office was not for him. By chance, a friend in York who had a tiling business asked if he could help for a couple of weeks, and this led to a career where he has been incredibly successful as his own boss. Going to university and studying for a degree is not for everyone and Jonny soon realised that people will always need builders, carpenters, joiners, chefs, HGV drivers, coach drivers, plasterers, plumbers, heating engineers, painter and decorators, electrical engineers, motor mechanics and every other trade you can think of. Being a self-employed tiler is extremely rewarding especially when you have completed a job, and everyone is delighted. You can work the hours you want, take holidays when you want and are not answerable to anyone other than yourself. If you are good at what you do, you will always have a full order book. However, *'all work and no play makes Jack a very dull lad'* so it is important to become involved in sport, not just for the fitness benefits but for the friends you make. Jonny has played football at Bedale AFC since he was 16, plays golf and tennis and is able to spend quality time with his family.

Happily married to Jessica, they live in Bedale and have two children Charlotte (aged 6) and Jack (aged 2) and Jonny, even at 42 years of age, still plays for Bedale AFC captaining the team in 2023 to a unique treble of the Harrogate League division 1, the Intermediate Cup and the Supplementary Cup.

**JONNY'S TIPS;** Always do things for yourself, not for other people and have the courage of your convictions to say no. Getting a raft of GCSE's, A-levels, diplomas and degrees is not for everyone so be brave, take risks and don't be afraid to get a trade and start your own business. Why work hard to earn money for other people when you can work hard to earn money for yourself? Don't be afraid to up sticks and travel, to take a year out to see what it is like on the other side of the world - travelling really does broaden the mind and allows you to experience different cultures and amazing people.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; HANNAH CORNFORTH

Hannah attended Bedale High School between 2006-2011. She thoroughly enjoyed her time at Bedale and was a good student, taking part in many sports, especially swimming and athletics. She also swam for Bedale Sharks ASC whilst at school. Her favourite subjects were Geography and Physical Education. She was a senior prefect and put effort into her studies, leaving with 11 GCSE's to attend Northallerton Sixth Form College. Hannah also enjoyed her time at sixth form but soon found the pressure was put on her to go to university, and found this difficult at the time as she did not know at this point where she wanted to go with her career. Hannah initially applied to do nursing at university, but after a few open days she realised she would rather take a break and have a think before diving into something she wasn't sure she wanted to do. Hannah left sixth form with 3 A Levels and decided to take a year out of education.



Hannah then worked at a local care home and Bedale Leisure Centre for around a year. In this time, she browsed the NHS jobs website where she stumbled across the "Emergency Care Assistant" role for the Yorkshire Ambulance Service. She got the job, and this is where her career in the Ambulance Service began in 2014. Hannah soon realised this is the career she loved and found her ambition of becoming a paramedic. She had a few setbacks over the last few years, with applying for the paramedic degree twice after a year of working as an Emergency Care Assistant and she was unsuccessful. Her commitment and compassion for the job is what kept her going. Hannah then progressed through the roles of Emergency Medical Technician and Ambulance Practitioner within the Yorkshire Ambulance Service and then completed the BSc Paramedic Practice degree at Teesside University to become a registered paramedic. She now looks back on this way of progressing and believes "everything happens for a reason" as she gained the experience, courage and skills over her career to progress to be a paramedic. Hannah now lives and works out of Northallerton and is happily married, expecting her first child in October (2023). She still maintains her love for fitness and regularly attends her local leisure centre to attend the gym and classes. She also loves going out for long walks with her husband and her little dog Lola.

**HANNAH'S TIPS;** Your parents will tell you school will be the best time of your life and you will think "yeah right!" but they are correct..... so enjoy it! Choose the subjects you enjoy for your GCSE's! Don't give in to pressure and always choose what is best for you, even if this means taking a break. Don't just get a degree in a random subject that you're not going to do anything with. My career has shown you can apply for jobs that put you through university, even if this means completing a degree in your 20's instead of when you leave college!



# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; SOPHIE HAMMOND

When Sophie Hammond was in Y7 at Bedale High School, the music teacher at the time Mrs Zena Bentley, took her aside and asked her to sing in the school summer concert, and from that moment Sophie has never looked back. Sophie had attended the Stagecoach drama school whilst at primary school so she had a sort of ambition to perform on stage, but never really felt as though it could be possible. Knowing that someone believed in her, gave her the courage to leave her comfort zone and try something new. She sang in school productions of Bugsy Malone and Oliver as well as the school version of Britain's Got Talent and attended York College to study performing arts and musical theatre. At the high school, she was known as 'the girl who always sang and pirouetted down the corridor.' Sophie left the high school in 2009.



After high school, Sophie attended York College studying for a National Diploma in musical theatre until 2021 and then she took the giant leap to move to London, to leave her comfort zone, to study for a year at the American Musical Theatre Academy, which claims to 'make your dreams a reality, to help you use your unique talents and push you to reach your full potential.' Her time was spent between London and New York learning her craft and she soon appeared in several episodes of the ITV drama Breathless and on graduation, she collaborated with Kerry Ellis, one of the leading ladies of West End musicals, on the production of 'Barry The Penguin.'

The world of theatre is a very cut-throat business with so many talented people vying for so few places on stage. Sophie reached the final cut for Bend It Like Beckham and Wicked, two amazing West End Shows, which she just missed out on. She realised that fame of the London stage might be a step too far, so she had to re-adjust her goals. She enrolled at the University of Huddersfield in September 2020 and successfully achieved a Bachelor of Arts in teacher education in 2022 enabling her to get a job in teaching. She currently teaches Performing Arts at Beckfoot School in Bingley.

Sophie still manages to perform professionally as she did at the Grand Opera House in York where she played the lead role of Jovie in the Elf the Christmas Musical, running for 11 performances in 2022.

**SOPHIE'S TIPS;** Sophie emphasises how important it is to have the courage to keep going when all doors seem shut, and to have the commitment to keep trying when everything seems stacked against you. She has experienced the highs and lows of musical theatre and the disappointment of just missing out on two starring roles - she used these disappointments as a spur to kick on and be successful elsewhere. She says, 'as one door shuts, another door opens.'

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; EMMA CURTIS

Inspired by her science teacher Mrs McGuinness, Emma Curtis completed her GCSE's at Bedale High School in 2010. At school Emma was a quiet girl who enjoyed PE and thrived on challenge. After her A levels, she was devastated to receive four rejections from medical schools and really began to wonder if a career in medicine was really meant to be. It is so easy to give up after one rejection, let alone four, but Emma had the courage to persevere.

She decided it was vital to build up her curriculum vitae which meant volunteering as a swimming coach at Bedale Sharks, as a lunchtime assistant on a stroke rehabilitation ward and becoming a Breathing Space volunteer. Emma felt that prospective interviewers and employers always look at the extra voluntary things that people are engaged in, in their spare time, so she was determined to make sure her CV was as thorough as it could be.



The rejections Emma had from medical schools, made her more committed to overcome these setbacks and after a gap year doing a lot of voluntary and low paid work, she successfully applied to Durham University Medical School and eventually qualified as a foundation doctor in 2019. She has experienced work on the acute medical ward, trauma and orthopaedics, accident and emergency, psychiatry and more recently, obstetrics and gynaecology. On International Women's Day in 2022, Emma was working in the delivery suite at the Royal Victoria Infirmary in Newcastle and delivered two babies naturally, one set of twins and two C-section babies and all five babies were female. She loves being able to bring new life into the world and has the compassion necessary when dealing with mothers about to give birth.

Being a doctor involves working with incredible teams, so the experience she had at school as part of sports teams, has been useful. The thing she loves about her job is that every day is different and the having the ability to change people's lives. She must deal with traumatic injuries in A&E and sometimes has to make the heart-breaking decision to turn a machine off. As a doctor, it is difficult missing out on so many Christmas and New Year celebrations and missing so many weddings and anniversaries, such is the pressure of shift work and 60 hour working weeks but, Emma says she wouldn't change it for the world.

**EMMA'S TIPS;** As students approach their examinations, Emma's advice is to plan a revision programme that includes rest breaks. Concentrated bite-size chunks of revision may be better than long, hard slogs. Emma has experienced many rejections since leaving school, but she has used every one as a stepping stone, not a stumbling block. She urges everyone to stay positive and look for solutions to problems instead of simply giving up. There is always another route forward.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; DARREN PEGRAM

Darren Pegram attended Bedale High School between 1990-1995 traveling on the school bus every day from the family home in Hunton. At school, he was very much a difficult student describing himself as a 'bad lad' who didn't have a clue about the direction his life would take him. He kept bad company, was smoking and getting into mischief so much so, that he was sent home from the annual Y9 residential field course at Bewerley Park, because of his behaviour. He is now the owner of four major businesses and at 43 years, is partially retired. Darren attributes his 'light bulb' moment, the moment when he realised there was more to life than simply coasting, to the day his PE teacher Mr Coombs invited him to join the football squad giving him an opportunity to mingle with positive people. This life-changing moment was when he re-invented himself to do the right things in life.



From that moment he focussed on having the courage to experience failure, the commitment to carry on despite setbacks and the compassion to treat others with respect.

Leaving the high school with good GCSE grades, he studied at QE in Darlington and then on to the Manchester Metropolitan University between 1997-2002. Despite becoming more accomplished and determined to get the right results, he still didn't have any idea what he wanted to do as a career. In his second year he came up with the idea to supply ink cartridges and toner via a website he designed himself to businesses, individuals, charities, and schools. Using 30-day credit to pay his suppliers, INKredible.co.uk was born and today it is now one of the leading consumables suppliers on the web. His business empire now includes a property portfolio and 4EV, a business specialising in the supply of high-quality electric vehicle charging accessories. 4EV, an e-commerce business has launched its new website in the Netherlands and is now targeting further growth in the US.

Darren said his intention throughout his career has been to build businesses which would give him a passive income, where his day-to-day input is not critical, and which allows him to spend more quality time with his wife and three daughters at their home in Durham and to spend quality time with them on his boat cruising in the Mediterranean. He was able to partially retire aged 29.

**DARREN'S TIPS;** Darren advises students to learn for learnings sake to gain as much general knowledge as possible, to take big risks while you are young and don't be afraid to fail, to buy assets not liabilities (assets appreciate and generate income), to live frugally until you don't have to and to create systems to enable you to achieve your goals. He suggests entrepreneurs don't need to invent a unique idea but simply need to identify a better way of doing things or to improve on what is already in the marketplace.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; FREDDIE CLEARY

Freddie Cleary attended Bedale High School between 2013-2017 and is a musician and songwriter, playing gigs around the region. He struggled at school and needed a lot of extra help because of his autism, a condition that saw him picked on a lot. Freddie says he wasn't like the other kids, he got easily distracted and needed a teaching assistant with him most of the time, as well as requiring extra time for examinations. Despite struggling at school, Freddie had the courage and commitment to follow his dream to perform on stage and entertain people. He liked PE to keep himself fit and history because he was interested in civil rights, wars, how society was portrayed differently when the world was without technology.



Mr Fawcett who taught leisure and tourism, always made a fuss of Freddie, and as much as he fell behind, he always had the compassion necessary to stay back at lunchtime to do extra work, and to help him revise for his exams to get the grades he needed to get a place at college.

Freddie went to York College after high school to study music where he barely passed the level 2 course. He was hoping to study for the level 3 music course but his tutor, aware of his difficulties and how he would cope with the paperwork and workload, encouraged him to enrol at Harrogate College to study Performing Arts because he felt it would boost his confidence on stage, since for many years, he had been a shy, introverted and timid teenager.

He had an opportunity to go to university but decided, he would have become a nervous wreck with all the paperwork and examinations, so he devoted himself to doing what he loved best, performing on stage. At this time, Freddie was already busking and getting booked to play gigs at pubs, parties and weddings and getting paid for doing something that he really loved. Freddie has written 5 original songs called Mercy, Untouchable, I Am In Love With You, My Everything and Ghost. He is busking daily and plays gigs in Ripon, Bedale, Harrogate, Masham, Richmond and Robin Hoods Bay, and the occasional gig in Leeds, so he is keeping very busy and earning good money doing something he never thought he would have the courage to do.

**FREDDIE'S TIPS:** Always persevere through the good and bad times. Expect life not to be easy all the time. At the beginning of 2023, Freddie was in a very dark place when his dad passed away. He says 'don't look at the dark colours in life as a way that the world wants to bring you to your knees, look at the dark colours as a way of experience and that you've lived this moment once, and now you know how to deal with a time like this in the future. In the words of the Foo Fighters "it's times like these you learn to live again." Sometimes you're gonna come into school and have a good day and sometimes you're gonna have a bad day, but you've gotta strive through it at the end of the day and know that that's a part of life and that you can let it bring you down and get the best of you.

# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; ROSS ELSWORTH

Ross Elsworth studied at Bedale High School between 1993 and 1998 before moving to Northallerton School to study Business GNVQ and then to Sheffield Hallam University studying business. At school he loved business studies, history and PE and his favourite teachers were Mr Coombs, Dr Truman and Mr Grayson, all tough people with high standards, but also taught with a smile and weren't afraid to have a "laugh" with students when the time was right. Two of those teachers attended his wedding in 2018 and are classed as friends today. Ross loved sport, but was never anywhere near good enough to play professionally, but he always put his heart and soul into it. Because of this he had the courage to become a policeman, and did his Y10 work experience at North Yorkshire Police HQ and went to university to "fast track" his way into the police force.



However, on another placement at INBev, a global brewing business, he fell in love with the prospect of a career in sales. Ross always had the courage and commitment to take risks and was never afraid to fail. In fact, he says 'it is important to fail and to fail early so you can learn from your mistakes.' He started his working life at the company where he was on placement from university.

In 2011, he joined Froneri Ice Cream (Formerly R&R Ice Cream) on the Leeming Bar Industrial Estate, a company with a global turnover of £5.2 billion and a UK turnover £352 million. Their core UK brands are Nestle/Rowntree's Ice Cream, Cadbury, Oreo, Kelly's of Cornwall, Nuii & retailers' own brands. Ross has shown the commitment and growth to become the Sales Director for the UK & Ireland business and sits on the UK Board of Directors. Not bad for someone who wanted to be a cricketer or a policeman.

Ross is married to Angela (who also holds a senior UK Management position within Froneri) and has two sons, Alexander (born September 2018) and William (born February 2020). He is an avid fan of Manchester United and travels home and away to watch them and has been lucky enough to watch them play all over Europe. He is a member of Bedale Golf Club and watches Yorkshire CCC and will be following England at most test match venues through the summer.

**ROSS'S TIPS;** Try your hardest. I was "average" as a student and rubbish at exams. At university, a lecturer told me without any compassion after 6 months, that university probably wasn't going to be for me. Ross showed real grit and commitment to prove him wrong graduating with a 2:2 four years later, not the best degree but it's never done me any harm. I was never an A\* student at school but I do have determination to succeed. My bits of advice are to be humble, be honest, be loyal and show compassion. Have a smile on your face, treat others with respect, help others and don't be afraid to make a mistake - as long as you learn from them and make sure you set high standards.

## PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; JESSICA COOMBS

Jessica Coombs (nee Ash) started at Bedale High School in 1996 having relocated from Scotland when her family were posted to RAF Leeming. At school she was inspired by Mrs Bradley, and she successfully passed her GCSE's in food technology, history and geography and then at Richmond School, she opted for English literature, geography, biology and food technology, thinking a career as a doctor might be possible. After sixth form, she realised people will always need food, so she chose Sheffield Hallam University, to study food and nutrition. Jessica says, 'so many students think they know what career or job they will probably go into but invariably things change so much, that as one door closes, another door opens so don't worry about things unduly.'

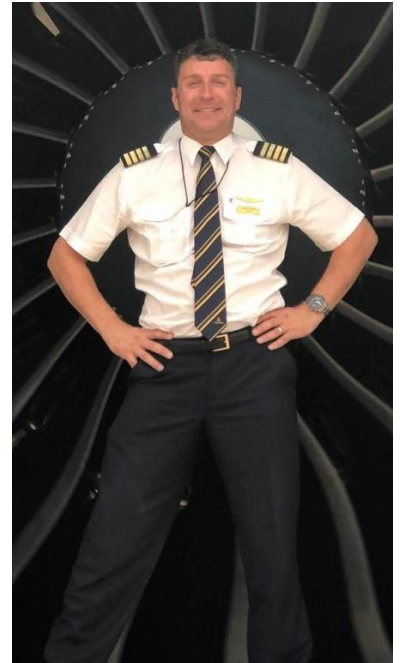


Her degree course included a placement at Samworth Brothers who make ready meals, sandwiches, pork pies and desserts for the supermarkets and she was based at Melton Mowbray in process development. She graduated with a 1st class honours degree and Samworth Brothers asked her to come back as a graduate to the same job before moving her into a project management role, liaising with Asda and a factory making pasta in Italy. She soon moved into sales to work as an account executive supporting the sales team, and after a couple of years, she had the courage to move to Greencore, a large food manufacturer and then moved out of her comfort zone by moving to sell frozen chips to Iceland for McCain. She was headhunted for a role at Tangerine Confectionery which make the famous Blackjack, Wham and Fruit Salad sweets as well as making sweets for Aldi and Lidl. Since 2014, Tangerine have had various name changes, acquisitions and mergers (it is now called Valeo Confectionery) and Jessica has had 5 different senior sale roles and promotions as well as leading on the strategy for the business. When the business bought Kettle Foods, she had the opportunity to sell crisps, tortilla chips and popcorn and has just been promoted to sales director for confectionery, which had always been her ambition to achieve before she was 40, and she did it with 6 months to spare! Outside of work, Jessica is married to Jonny Coombs and their two young children, Charlotte and Jack keep them very busy. Jessica also enjoys running, bootcamp and following Sunderland AFC with her wider family.

**JESSICA'S TIPS;** Jessica says 'I wouldn't hesitate to advise anyone to work in the food industry - it's diverse, fast paced, challenging but also rewarding, if you have the commitment. In my role as sales director, I have a lot of people working under me, so I have found it essential to show compassion when needed. This is a great industry to be in since people will always need food, so it is really rewarding to be able to produce and sell food at a fair price. Make sure you keep updating your curriculum vitae because this is the document potential employers look at almost as much as they look at your qualifications. How can you make yourself stand out against everyone else who wants the job you are going for?'

# PAST STUDENT CASE STUDIES; GRAHAM TREWITT

Graham Trewitt was born into a farming family near Newton-le-Willows and his farming life path was marked out for him from an early age. He attended Bedale High School between 1985-1989 before moving on to Askham Bryan College studying farming. There was no way Graham was going to do anything else apart from farming, but he held a fascinating dream to become an airline pilot, but he knew it would probably never happen. It was during his spare time on the farm that he bought a microlight to satisfy his burning ambition to take to the air and eventually paid for his private pilot's licence in the late 1990's involving 40 hours studying, 20 hours dual flying and 10 hours solo flying. Could this ridiculous dream become a reality?



He joined the St George's Flying Club at Teesside Airport and gained his pilot instructors licence before finally having the courage to push on to try to achieve his commercial pilot's licence, involving 20 examinations over 2 years, 200 hours flight training to qualify to fly a single engine Piper Cherokee aircraft. This passion to fly intensified as he moved onto twin engine aircraft before getting his first commercial job in 1999 with Debonair Airlines, flying throughout Europe. After the company went into administration, he joined Jet2.Com flying out of Leeds Bradford Airport where he stayed for 6 years before an opportunity presented itself in 2011 to move to Dubai to take up a career with Emirates Airlines flying Boeing 777's long haul, to every continent and every major city in the world.

In 2022, after 11 years in the United Arab Emirates he took up a career with DHL flying freight out of East Midlands Airport to the USA, Japan and Hong Kong. Jokingly, he calls himself a 'flying postman.' His longest ever flight was from Dubai to Auckland in New Zealand which was almost 19 hours and his shortest, a 9 minute flight taking Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher from Northolt to Luton. In his time in the air he had a few 'close calls' utilising the TCAS (Traffic Collision Avoidance System), when aeroplanes come within 1000 feet of each other and he has had two Mayday calls. In this situation, you simply revert to type and put into practice the things you train for every 6 months in the flight simulator.

Married to Christine, Graham who has over 15,000 hours of flying time, now lives in Harrogate where his boys attend St Aiden's School and whilst he intends to fly for a lot more time, his spare time is spent building an aeroplane in his garage.

## **GRAHAM'S TIPS;**

Everyone needs commitment and courage to take on something completely different. It is dead easy to remain in your comfort zone and you need real drive and commitment to move on. Never be afraid to fail and always aim high. Everyone has the ability to realise their dreams, so dream away and reach for the skies.