

Interview with Edge Hotel School student Charlotte Chambers



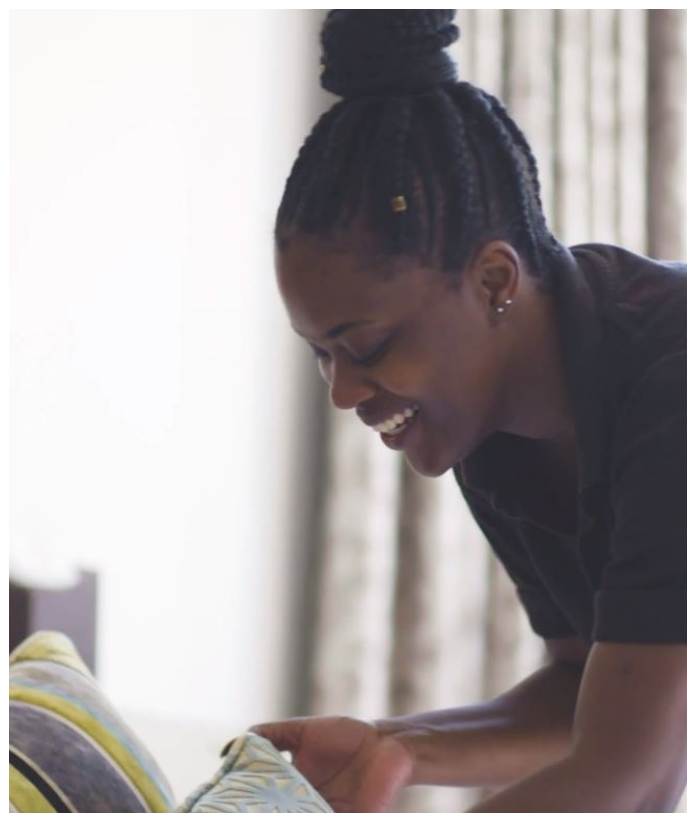
To mark the return to campus for EHS students, we've been chatting to current student, 20 year old Charlotte Chambers who will graduate this summer with a BA in Events Management with Hospitality.

What attracted you to study at EHS?

"Being able to experience working at a 4-star country house hotel (Wivenhoe House) plus other opportunities such as working at the BRIT awards was key. Before going to EHS, I had not worked before and worried that my lack of experience would limit my opportunities to do placements and work experiences. However if you are committed and work hard, the training and experiences that you get at Wivenhoe House really prepare you for the industry. Also, because the course is a 2-year accelerated degree, I will graduate at 20 and already be prepared to work in the industry with experience and knowledge behind me."

What skills are you gaining at EHS that will help you succeed in your career?

"Lots of really important skills – my short list would include flexibility, time management skills, organisation, confidence, leadership skills, attention to detail, resilience.... You need all of these to be successful in the events and hospitality industry!"



What opportunities did you have during your studies to meet people in the industry? And how did that help you?

"During our first month at university, we were given the opportunity to take part in the careers fair – even though at this time I was still very unsure on which part of industry I wanted to work at, going around each 'station' and discussing possible career paths allowed me to get a better idea of what was interesting to me.

We also had the opportunity to take a trip to London and visit Amazon and have a networking event at the Royal Lancaster Hotel.

Unfortunately, due to COVID these type of in person experiences have been put on hold but workshops with the Dorchester Hotel were organised over Zoom which were extremely helpful. The School were very good at reassuring students that despite the pandemic, there would still be many job opportunities for us once we graduate – this was really helpful as the Covid situation made many students fear for work opportunities in the industry."

What's the best piece of advice you've received since starting at EHS?

"I've constantly been told to always network with new people and companies as you never know who you will meet. I remember being told that it is not what you know, but who you know that will help you succeed in the industry. EHS has provided us with many opportunities to network and strengthen our contacts with industry professionals."

As you've commented, Covid-19 has greatly affected the hospitality industry. Has it impacted you and what advice would you have for someone thinking about a career in hospitality now?

"The pandemic has impacted my studies a lot. I have stayed on top of my course work but I missed not being able to work at Wivenhoe House Hotel whilst it was shut. It has made me determined to work intensively after graduating to boost my experience and confidence so that I can then begin to apply for more senior and managerial roles.

"During the pandemic I continued with my studies online, took part in all the workshops being provided by EHS to boost my certifications on my CV and have also started my own small baking business back home in the Netherlands. It has been hard work balancing both my education and this business; however, I believe this is great experience to add to my CV and shows my hard work and determination to not allow anything to stop my passion and drive for the hospitality industry.

My advice for someone considering the industry is to not be afraid to give things a try.

At first, I was extremely nervous about trying new tasks and working in new departments; however, I quickly learnt that this is how you will learn what you like and where your passion lies. I was hesitant to apply to work at the BRIT awards as I didn't feel I was ready for such a high profile event. But I did and afterwards I felt so much more confident and realised that if I had not pushed myself and had not taken the opportunity, I would have really regretted it. This industry is hard work but also extremely rewarding."

That's very true. With your graduation fast approaching, where do you see yourself in 5 years' time?

"I would like to be working at a high-class patisserie or even have my own patisserie store, developing and sharing my passion for French cuisine. Seeing the success of my own business has increased my love for baking!"

We at Edge also love patisserie so please keep in touch so we can join your customers!



To find out more about studying at the Edge Hotel School visit:
<https://www.essex.ac.uk/departments/edge-hotel-school>