

HAMMERSMITH

Academy

HAMMERSMITH ACADEMY

ALUMNI. *Magazine*

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Welcome



Welcome to the second edition of our alumni magazine! As we continue to build and grow the HA alumni network, it's been a true privilege to connect with so many of you—hearing your stories, learning about your journeys since HA, and seeing the incredible things you're doing out in the world.

One of the standout moments this term was welcoming back a group of alumni who returned to give a fantastic Oxbridge talk to current students. Hearing firsthand accounts of life at Oxford and Cambridge was not only inspiring—it helped current students begin to imagine themselves there too. Events like this are a powerful reminder of how much impact our alumni can have, simply by sharing their experiences and offering encouragement. It's exactly the kind of support that makes this network so valuable.

We're also getting closer to another exciting milestone: our very first

alumni reunion! The energy around this event has been amazing, and we can't wait to bring everyone together to reconnect and celebrate.

If you haven't already, now is the perfect time to sign up to the alumni network—and to encourage your friends to do the same. Every new connection helps us build a stronger, more supportive community for both alumni and current students alike.

Thank you for being part of this journey. I look forward to what we'll continue to create together. ■

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lucy Frederick'.

Lucy Frederick
Alumni Coordinator

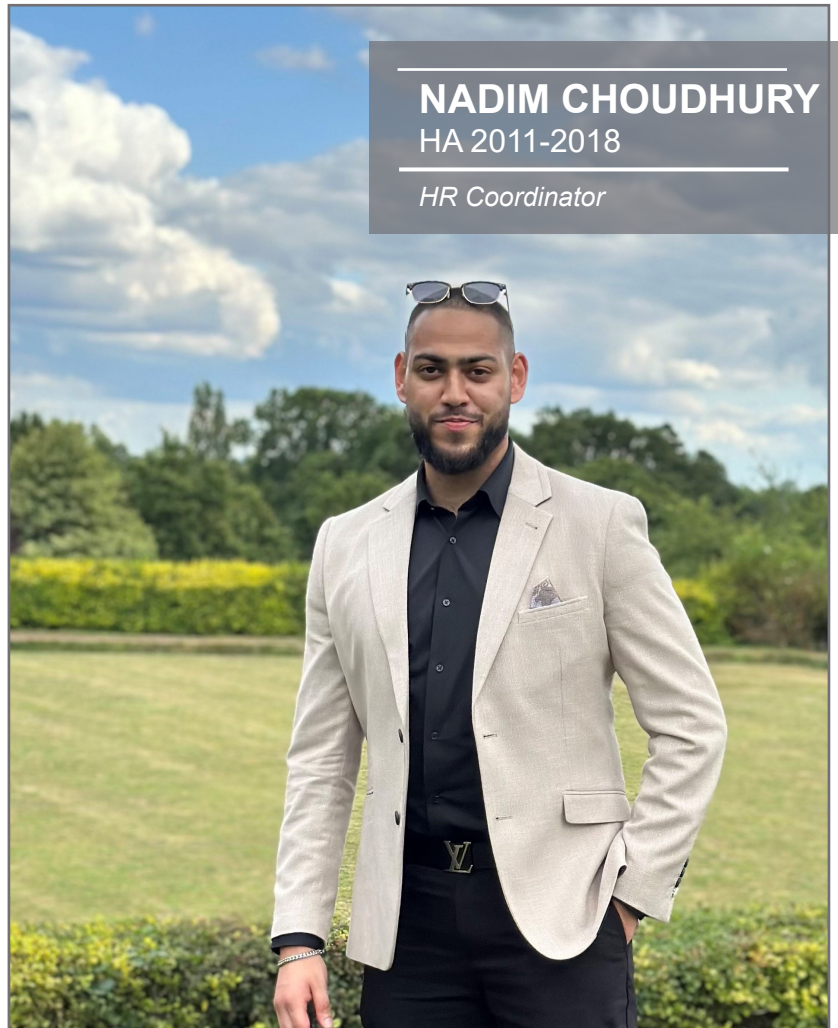
STAYING IN TOUCH

At Hammersmith Academy, we take immense pride in the accomplishments of our alumni, whose journeys beyond our school gates serve as a source of inspiration and aspiration for our community. In this section, we are delighted to showcase the fantastic achievements of our alumni, catching up with them as they navigate their careers, personal endeavours, and contributions to society.

By maintaining ties with the Academy, alumni have the opportunity to foster professional networks, rekindle friendships, and see how former classmates and peers are thriving in their respective fields. More importantly, this connection enables alumni to play a pivotal role in supporting the next generation of students—whether by sharing their expertise, providing mentorship, or offering insights into life beyond school.

We encourage all alumni to stay in touch and be part of this vibrant community. Whether you're looking to reconnect, explore networking opportunities, or contribute to the development of current and future students, there is a place for you within Hammersmith Academy's alumni network.

To join us, simply scan the QR code. ■



NADIM CHOUDHURY

HA 2011-2018

HR Coordinator

NADIM CHOUDHURY

What professional role are you in?

I'm currently working at Fitch Ratings, part of Fitch Group, as an HR Coordinator.

What does a typical day at work entail?

I manage the entire employee journey, from hiring to leaving, across regions like Asia, the Middle East, the Americas, Africa, and Europe. My job includes creating contracts, ensuring employees are paid correctly, and following local laws in different countries. I also help with global

transfers, remote work contracts, and collaborate with teams across time zones. My role is fast-paced and requires ensuring everything is done correctly and fairly for employees around the world.

What is the best thing about your job?

I love how international my role is. Every day, I interact with people from all around the world, from Dubai to New York, and learn how different employment practices work in various regions. Each country has its own unique onboarding process and employment laws, which makes the work interesting.

What don't you enjoy so much?

Employment law is constantly changing, especially across different regions. Staying on top of global employment regulations can be a challenge, but it helps keep me sharp.

Greatest achievement so far?

One of my proudest achievements is securing an HR role in one of the world's largest financial advisory firms, located in the heart of London's financial district. Another highlight was attending University College London, where I became President of one of the largest Bengali societies in London. I'm really proud of the events we hosted to showcase the rich culture of Bangladesh to a diverse audience.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

Resilience and perseverance are key skills I developed at HA. In HR, I face new challenges, difficult situations, and evolving policies. Having a growth mindset is essential to make effective decisions and solutions, and I'm glad resilience was instilled in me early on.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

I'll always remember the leadership opportunities I had, like being Deputy Head Boy for two years, a prefect, and getting involved in various events. I'm also grateful for the supportive environment I had, especially when I received straight As in A-Levels.

What advice would you give your younger self?

Be confident and stop doubting yourself. I missed out on a lot of opportunities because I didn't think I was good enough. Looking back, I realise the only thing that held me back was my mindset. The truth is nothing is impossible. If you put yourself out there and say yes to more opportunities, you'll be surprised at where life takes you.

Best advice you were given?

1. Stop comparing yourself to others. Everyone's journey is different. Focus on your path and what you want to achieve.
2. Learn one skill outside of school.

Whether it's a new language, graphic design, public speaking, or coding, having a skill outside of academics will open doors you didn't even know existed.

How do you manage your work/life balance?

I'm intentional about separating work from personal life. During the week, I make sure to plan time with friends, family, or some time for myself. If work ever gets stressful, especially when big projects come up, I balance it out by meeting up with friends, playing padel, or going out for a meal to unwind. It's all about balance.

Where do you hope to be in 10 years' time?

I see myself in a much more senior HR role, ideally as an HR Business Partner. On a personal level, I hope to be settled down and continue growing both in my career and personal life.

Who would you like to have dinner with and why?

Definitely Muhammad Ali. I'm a huge

boxing fan, and I've always admired his unmatched resilience both inside and outside the ring. I'd love to ask him how he stayed mentally strong during his toughest moments. His mindset was incredible. ■

Be a feature!

We'd love to hear your story - Whether you're climbing the career ladder, pursuing your passions, or making a difference in your community, share your journey with us and inspire others.

Get in touch to be featured in the next edition of the Alumni Magazine:
alumni@hammersmithacademy.org



NOOR SAEED
HA 2013-2019

Trainee Criminal Barrister

NOOR SAEED

What job/study are you doing currently?

I am currently studying for the Bar (Master's) at BPP University, training to become a criminal barrister. I aim to be called to the Bar of England and Wales this summer. My journey began at SOAS University, where I earned a Bachelor of Law and built a solid academic foundation. Outside my studies, I am passionate about giving back to the community. I volunteer at Citizens Advice Hammersmith and Fulham, advising clients on housing, benefits, and employment issues. I also volunteer with Vocalise, a student-led programme that teaches debating to prisoners. I have been allocated to HMP Thameside, and it has been an incredibly rewarding experience.

What does a typical day at work/study entail?

My week is a whirlwind of university, hands-on advocacy training, and real-world legal exposure. At university, I dive into Civil and Criminal Litigation, where I'm constantly refining my knowledge and skills. But it doesn't stop there - advocacy is at the heart of my training, and I'm always in the thick of it, whether that's practising examination-in-chief or cross-examination in class or competing in mooted competitions at Lincoln's Inn. As a candidate at Bridging the Bar Academy, I gain invaluable insights and mentoring from top barristers while networking with chambers. Beyond the classroom, I make it a point to sit in Crown Courts and the Old Bailey, observing high-profile cases, which fuels my passion for crime and gives me a firsthand look at the realities of courtroom action.

What do you enjoy about it?

I thrive under pressure, and the Bar is the perfect place for that. It's full of challenges that push me to grow every day. There's always something new, whether it's staying on top of recent case law or soaking in the experience of watching barristers in action through mini-pupillages. I love the variety, too, especially the chance to travel to different courts around the UK. Advocacy feels like second nature to me - I've never been one

to shy away from speaking up. What excites me is the incredible diversity of people and situations I encounter, from courtrooms to police stations to prisons. Every day brings a fresh challenge, and the friendships I've made along the way have made this journey so much more fulfilling.

What don't you enjoy so much?

The competitive nature of the Bar, particularly the pupillage process, can be exhausting. Although there has been some progress in increasing diversity, there is still a long way to go. The Bar can also be mentally demanding, and postgraduate study requires sacrificing a lot of free time. I have had to put parts of my social life on hold to focus on my career. There is also an ongoing need to prove yourself. At times, it can feel intimidating when surrounded by people who sound more polished or appear more confident. However, I remind myself that what makes me unique is also my greatest strength.

Greatest achievement so far?

One of my proudest achievements is the three-week expedition to the Amazon Rainforest in Peru with the British Exploring Society - an experience made possible by HA. I am incredibly grateful for the support I received, not just in securing this opportunity but also in the excitement of fundraising for it. From bake sales to sponsored runs, the journey started long before I set foot in the rainforest. The expedition pushed me beyond my comfort zone, teaching me resilience, adaptability, and teamwork in a truly breathtaking environment. Being completely disconnected from the outside world was both a challenge and a gift, allowing me to appreciate the beauty of nature while learning the value of perseverance.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

HA gave me a strong foundation in resilience, leadership, and teamwork. The opportunities I had, from sports to leadership roles, helped me build confidence and develop skills that I still use today.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

The unwavering support from

teachers and careers team made a huge difference. There were always opportunities to get involved, and the encouragement I received pushed me to aim higher. I was the captain of the rugby team, participated in an outward-bound programme, and was selected to visit Auschwitz for a history project. I was also awarded £500 for being the most improved student from school to Sixth Form. HA always found ways to make students feel included and supported our progress. Their belief in my potential made me want to work even harder.

What advice would you give to current HA students?

Take advantage of every extracurricular opportunity the Academy provides. These experiences shape you in ways you may not realise at the time. I still talk about my Peruvian expedition in pupillage interviews, years later. Your teachers have a wealth of experience and are there to help you, so don't be afraid to ask for support. Stay connected with HA even after you leave. It is more than just a school; it is a second home that has helped shape you. ■



SAMIA HOQUE

What job/study are you doing currently?

I am currently a technology/software engineering degree apprentice at Accenture. This means that I have two roles: a university student and a technology consultant associate.

What does a typical day at work/study entail?

I go to university once a week on Mondays and these days tend to be jam-packed with lectures, labs and tutorials. From Tuesdays to Fridays, I work as a technology delivery associate for Accenture and my role varies depending on the client project. At the moment, I am working as a data analyst/engineer for an energy client where I am building technology to help this client to understand and present their critical information. As someone who is very interested in data and AI, this is the perfect role to help me grow.

What was your biggest setback?

My biggest setback was struggling with self-doubt about switching to tech. After a year in Pharmacy, I found it tough to change paths, but pushing through that uncertainty ended up being a game changer for me.

Taking the plunge to switch degrees and pursue something was scary - but completely worth it.

Greatest achievement so far?

My greatest achievement since being a degree apprentice would have to be winning two different company-wide datathons. Having the opportunity to compete against professionals to build innovative technology using data is an honour in itself-and being part of the winning team is definitely something I am proud of.

What skills did you develop at HA that you have taken with you?

Being open-minded and curious: I was quite notorious with teachers asking lots of questions, both during lessons and outside of lessons. These skills continue to help me as they allow me to really understand my purpose, build knowledge and be present in learning.

What do you look back fondly on during your time at HA?

HA really built me as a person and allowed me to grow both academically and personally. I particularly appreciate the teachers who would encourage me to believe in myself and challenge me to be confident about my achievements (Mr Young played an integral part in doing this, from Year 7-11)!

What advice would you give to current HA students?

My advice to current students: remember to try and create a balance between your studies and your hobbies. As someone who was prone to overworking and burning out, I always encourage students to make sure that they are pursuing their own hobbies and giving themselves breaks regularly, alongside balancing studies. You work your best when you are energised, not exhausted.

What advice would you give your younger self?



SAMIA HOQUE

HA 2014-2021

Technology/software engineering degree apprentice

It is not always a straight path and it is okay to try new things. As someone who really valued academics, I (wrongly) believed that I would only have to follow one type of career path, but actually-changing and trying new things only adds to that experience.

Best advice you were given?

The best advice I was given was: be open to take risks-it is better to do it scared than live in regret. This was valuable as it made me realise that chasing your dreams often feels scary but will open doors in incredible ways.

How do you manage your work/life balance?

As a school student-I was terrible at this and focused solely on studying. Now, I make a conscious effort to set boundaries in place by finishing work at a certain time and scheduling in time for my hobbies: swimming, journaling, learning the Quran and spending time with family. I have made these things a priority by putting them in my calendar-which sounds rather overwhelming but it really works!

Where do you hope to be in 10 years' time?

I would love to continue working within data and AI and do some

research around data/AI in the healthcare space and to use my software engineering skills to build a passion project.

Who do you most admire and why?

I have always admired my parents the most: they have instilled in me the importance of having a rounded education whilst being passionate about your career. They have always embodied the epitome of being actively present by being a constant soundboard for my ideas-they are always the first people I go to when I have an idea, thought or dilemma! ■

Want to give back?

Are you an alum who wants to make a difference? Whether it's through mentoring, delivering a talk, offering career advice, or sharing your story, your support can inspire and guide the next generation of Hammersmith Academy students.

To get involved, contact the Alumni Office at: alumni@hammersmithacademy.org

We'd love to hear from you!

REUNION EVENT

We are delighted to announce Hammersmith Academy's inaugural Alumni Reunion event, taking place on Wednesday 18th June 2025, from 5pm to 8pm. This event marks the first time we are bringing together our alumni since the opening of the Academy in 2011.

Over the past 14 years, Hammersmith Academy has seen over a thousand students graduate and embark on diverse paths, pursuing careers and making their own mark in the world. This reunion is your chance to reconnect, share your journey, and celebrate the successes of our ever-growing alumni community. It's also an opportunity to meet with former teachers who played an instrumental role in shaping your school years and forge valuable connections with fellow alumni.

Event Information:

- **Date:** Wednesday 18th June 2025, 5pm to 8pm
- **Location:** Hammersmith Academy Garden
- **Alumni:** For those who left the Academy prior to summer 2022
- **Welcome address & keynote speeches:** Gary Kynaston, Tom Ilube CBE
- **Refreshments:** Drinks and freshly made pizza bites
- **Networking & catching up**

SIGN UP
NOW!



Whether you're just starting out in your career or well-established in your field, this is a fantastic chance to reconnect with old friends, expand your network, and relive fond memories of your time at Hammersmith Academy.

We warmly invite students who left up until August 2022 and former staff to attend. To secure your place, please RSVP by [clicking on the link here](#).

We look forward to welcoming you back and celebrating the legacy of Hammersmith Academy together and making this first reunion an event to remember! ■

GIVING BACK



Alumni returned to take part in an Oxbridge event for current students interested in applying for Oxford or Cambridge.

This spring, our alumni community continued to play an invaluable role in enriching student experiences and raising aspirations. On 27th March, three former students returned to

support an Oxbridge event aimed at encouraging current students to consider applying to the University of Oxford or the University of Cambridge.

Calvin Hartley (HA 2021-2019), Elaha Hasanzadeh (HA 2017-2024), and Anastasia Mackenzie (HA 2021-2023) generously gave their time to speak to students about their own journeys to Oxbridge. They helped demystify the application process and brought a fresh, relatable perspective to what life at these world-renowned universities is really like.

From sharing practical tips on writing personal statements to offering honest reflections on academic life and adjusting to university culture, the alumni provided a valuable mix of encouragement and realism. They also answered questions from students, many of whom left the event feeling inspired and newly confident about aiming high.

We are looking forward to alumni returning for our Careers Drop Down Day to share journeys and insights. Among those taking part are Omharia Pierre (HA 2014 - 2016), Amy Dhindsa (HA 2016 - 2018), Amir Hossain (HA 2013 - 2018), Soren Harrison (HA 2011 - 2016), and Dami Sotinwa (2014-2016) - all of whom have gone on to carve out exciting and varied careers since leaving school. ■

Hammersmith Academy Alumni


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