



Alumnus Subject Graduated Place of Work Position David Overton
BSc Computer Sciences
1992
Microsoft
Partner Account Manager

Microsoft

Microsoft Corporation develops, manufactures, licenses, and supports a range of computing products and cloud services, delivering these to customers with and via an extensive network of business partners.

David Overton is responsible for collaborating with a small number of software partners who build software using Microsoft technologies to enable customers to get business benefits from deploying joint solutions.

Great minds go on to great places

Why did you choose to study at Royal Holloway?

I narrowed my search to four universities: Reading, Brunel, Queen Mary, and Royal Holloway. I was looking for a degree which gave me a good level of practical and theoretical teaching and Royal Holloway had the best degree in the country for what I wanted to do. The course had tutors who were well-published and well versed in up and coming technology. I felt I would be practically skilled at the end of my degree.

Why did you decide to study Computer Science?

I thought the course would give me differentiation in the marketplace and thus the best opportunities. I enjoyed the business side of work, but my passion was with computers. Royal Holloway taught Computer Science in a unique way that was aligned to how I wanted to learn.

What was your Royal Holloway experience like?

Perfect. I spent plenty of time in the Students' Union. My girlfriend at the time was part of the orchestra which meant that I enjoyed quite a lot of the productions. I also remember watching a production of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* in one of the quads, which was fantastic.

Were you involved in any sports or societies?

Yes, ballroom dancing for three years, which was fantastic fun. I also used to watch various plays and films put on by the Drama and Film Societies.

What did you learn at Royal Holloway that has helped you in your career?

Royal Holloway is a very international College – you realise that the world is much bigger than you ever imagined. I met people from Welsh coal mining families and the sons of Saudi princes.

Royal Holloway also gave me a huge breadth of knowledge, enabling me to work broadly in the IT industry, where I have to understand both the business impact and the technological impact of decisions.

What has been your career path at Microsoft?

I joined Microsoft in 2000 and my role was to engage with customers to explain how our products could help them in complex and often mission critical environments. I then moved into a technical account management role in pre-sales working with the likes of Tesco and M&S. In 2003, I undertook a role to help business partners who built PCs, but were losing market share, reduce the cost of branded PCs. My role was to understand their situation and help Microsoft put programmes

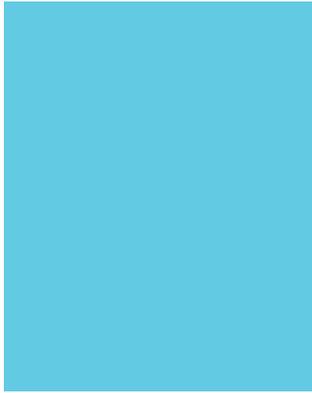
in place to help this large community. When I became Head of Technology for small business, I was responsible for understanding our partners' challenges and pulling together different parts of Microsoft's desktop and software products to give them a single view. One business said that they got 40-50 percent additional growth each year from our interaction, which is hugely rewarding. I currently look after software development partners who don't fit the Microsoft internal taxonomy for software solutions. Therefore there is no a natural alignment for these organisations inside Microsoft, however they have the ability to generate revenue for themselves and Microsoft. My role is to help them work internally with Microsoft and customers so that we both win business.

What areas of your role are the most enjoyable?

One of the things I've really enjoyed is supporting the graduate recruitment process – to date I have sat on 180 interview panels. Working and mentoring graduates to help them improve their decision making process and drive their career paths is really fulfilling. Graduates bring a bigger 'out of the box' perspective and highlight a fresh perspective on technology – which is always thought-provoking.

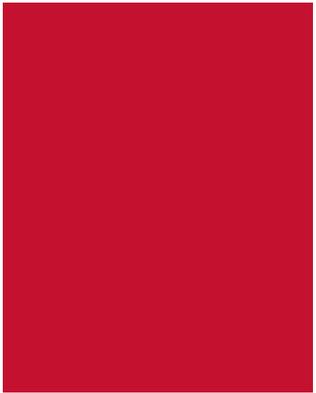


Royal Holloway
University of London



people *with* passion

“Royal Holloway also gave me a huge breadth of knowledge, enabling me to work broadly in the IT industry”



Why do you enjoy working at Microsoft?

There is a fantastic spirit at Microsoft. It is the best facilitated organisation that I have worked for. We have a coffee shop in every building, gym, on-site medical centre, X-boxes throughout the building, numerous social clubs (I'm a member of the photography and sailing clubs) and much more. We are encouraged to participate in local community projects and are given three extra holiday days for volunteering. Microsoft also matches employee charitable donations up to £7,500 a year per employee. Currently we are involved in a scheme to provide a quarter of a million PCs to deprived homes in the UK.

Have you been back to the College since graduating?

Yes, I've been back a few times and attended events from a physics lecture to musical concerts. Also, I have a lifetime membership of the Students' Union and I have also given money to the College. I would absolutely love to come back to more alumni-run events in the future and would be very much interested in sharing my knowledge with students.

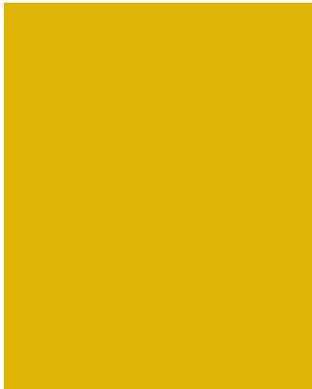
How is Microsoft injecting corporate social responsibility into the organisation?

The last Microsoft building was carbon neutral. All of our rooms have light de-sensors and PCs are automatically turned off when idle. We've also removed 38,000 tons of plastic bottles and 90 percent of our waste goes to recycling. Finally we have our volunteering drives and a matched charitable giving scheme.

Do you have any advice for current students?

Firstly balance work and play. Secondly, don't be arrogant. For example, when going in for a job interview, expect to be tackled from multiple angles that you may not be prepared for. Remember that there's a lot more out there that you don't know and experience is worth as much as enthusiasm and fresh knowledge.

I would always recommend students to look at a career at Microsoft as the support for graduates is excellent and you may even end up working with me. To find out more, go to: careers.microsoft.com/careers/en/gb/gradhome.aspx



For more Alumni Profiles visit: www.rhul.ac.uk/alumni/profiles/