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Psychology Bsc
Graduated 2004
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Why did you choose to study Psychology at Royal Holloway?

Psychology was my favourite A-level so I had an overview of the subject and found it most interesting. Originally, I wanted to do something with media or advertising. I was interested in understanding behaviour and what makes people do things in different ways, so initially I wanted to see if I could combine both psychology and media. When I actually started studying psychology here, things changed a bit and I was more inspired to go down the psychology route.

Also, I was looking for campus based universities as I really like that kind of atmosphere. I knew that Royal Holloway had a very good department and ran one of the best courses in the country, which was the main thing for me so I was happy to go there and very grateful that I met the criteria to get on the course!

Who inspired you on your course?

I was always inspired by the lecturers' knowledge and how they knew everything about their particular area, I think that's fantastic. Dr Alison Woodcock was my research supervisor and the passion that she had for her subject I found very inspiring. I stayed in touch with Alison after College as well, so I was invited back to careers

talks, which were nice to take part in and to give something back. When I came back last year, there was such a diverse range of alumni who were there who had gone on to do so many completely different things with their degree.

What is the greatest skill that Royal Holloway taught you during your degree?

Probably my study skills, I use them even now, such as how to structure a report and throughout your career you always have a similar structure to the things that you do, such as writing academic papers, it's always useful to know. It was also a good lesson in getting things done to a high standard.

What are your fondest memories of being a student Royal Holloway?

It was the social side. I'm still in touch with many of the friends I made there and about six or so are quite close friends for life. I'm going to the wedding of one of them soon and I hope to visit Sydney to stay with another. The lifestyle as a student is such that you have time to focus on your studies, but there's no other time in life when you have that luxury of enough time to spend with your friends. I seem to remember having more money back then too!

Great minds *go on to* great places

I also signed up to several clubs and societies when I first started here. One of my class mates couldn't believe that there wasn't a comedy society, so she set one up and I became the founding vice-president so I hope it's still going! I was the treasurer as well for a while and we organised screenings of comedian's shows, invited comedians to come to the SU for stand up comedy and organised trips to go to the Comedy Store in London, that sort of thing. My friend in fact went on to do much more of that and now works as a tour manager for comedians!

There was one other moment when my friends and I were in our third year and exams and essays were all finished and handed in. We had a lot of spare time and it was a golden opportunity to be outside by Founders on a sunny afternoon and play Frisbee and have a laugh. I have some great memories of going to the Student Union too.

What was life like at Royal Holloway?

I would never leave any work 'til the last minute so I don't remember being too stressed, but there was one moment in my second year when I had a few deadlines coming all at once. I just took a step back and tried to look at the bigger picture and break things up in to manageable pieces. Revising for exams was just one of those things you had to do; I had to train myself to do it.



Royal Holloway
University of London

people with passion

“I look back with very fond memories; the quality of life here was great.”



I definitely would recommend people to come here, I look back with very fond memories and obviously the quality of life here was great. It was not that far from London, so if you wanted to be in a big city you could be, although that wasn't my choice at the time. I never really went there myself that much because I had everything that I wanted in and around campus; everyone lived there so all my friends were always around.

What has been your career path since graduating?

I was thinking very consciously in my third year about what to do next and looking at all the different fields of work that I might want to work in. I didn't want to go into the clinical side; it was between health and occupational psychology. I spoke a lot to Alison about it to see what she thought and got some recommendations for different courses. I did my Masters that September, which you really need to pursue a career in Psychology.

I worked part time in a business environment for quite a while. You need the experience of how things work and be able to link it to the theory. I would recommend people to do that, although it's

difficult going back to doing essays and lectures again! While I was doing my Masters I was offered a junior role for a business psychology consultancy based in London. I started on a one year contract and then was promoted to Analyst, which was brilliant as it was just what I wanted to be doing, but in a small business like that there was no guarantee as to where the work is going to come from, or what the next opportunity will be. The most interesting thing I learned there was more about personality theory. I had learned a bit about that at university but here I was trained on how to use the tools and then designing tools and expert reports linking personality to individuals' behaviour, it's one of the things that I still find fascinating.

What would you say has been your greatest professional achievement?

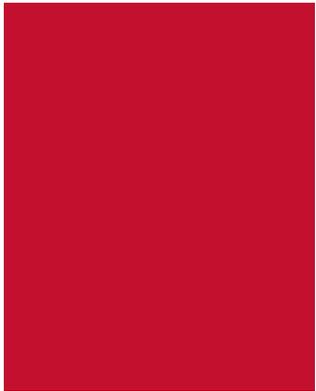
Personally, becoming Chartered was a big thing for me; there is often a lot of weight put on that by the profession. You have to go through the process of logging all the work you have been doing and then it gets signed off by an assessor from the BPS. It gives people confidence in you and shows your background and experience.

What advice would you give to someone considering a career in Psychology?

Get your head around the stats lessons because they will pay off! As awful as they can be, there are some easy to understand books around and it is well worth getting to know the basics. Work experience is another thing which allows you to demonstrate your pro-activity, which is something that employees look for. Being able to self-start and arrange this for yourself is important.

Why is it important to you to still be involved in your College?

I like staying in touch to see what's going on and what the latest is at Royal Holloway. I'm still affectionate about it and I do think it's important that students know where they could end up working if they are interested in occupational/ business psychology. I'd like to be able to help them nurture that and get to where they want to be.



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