



## **Business and Management – Demis' Subject Experience**

### **My background...**

My name is Demis, pronounced with a silent S! I am a fourth and final year Business and Management student studying at De Montfort University in Leicester. Before I get into what I am doing currently and my future, a brief background to how I got to university and where I am at now is important. I was born in London and moved to Milton Keynes at around 3 or 4 years old. I stayed in Milton Keynes until I went to university at the age of 18, meaning I completed school and sixth form in Milton Keynes.

### **GCSEs and school...**

I completed 12 GCSEs. When it came to choices, I did Physical Education, because I had and still have a love for Football and enjoyed circuit training. I also chose Business studies, which I received one of my highest grades for. At the same time, I volunteered in my school library helping the librarians.

### **Then onto sixth form...**

I studied English Language and Literature, Business, and Psychology for my A levels, whilst completing an AS Extended Project Qualification. It was half-way through year 12 where I became interested in Business and knew I would like to study this further. I loved the way I could justify myself and think creatively, perhaps why I have gone on to study Business at university.

My advice is do not panic if you do not know what to do. Seek advice; speak to your teacher, get in touch with careers teams as early as possible so you can look back in five or ten years and not have any regrets.

I believe in making the most of your time and doing something outside of Sixth Form. I worked as a Sales Assistant at John Lewis which allowed me to build up teamwork, customer service, and communication skills and give me some experience at a top company. I thoroughly recommend John Lewis for part time work in Sixth Form or College!

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## Then came university...



I chose DMU over other universities for two key reasons; DMU Global and the vibe I got from coming to an open day. DMU Global allows students to go on global trips to different countries. Some of these trips are directly linked to your course, whilst others are for volunteering purposes. By coming to an open day I was able to speak with current students who gave me an insight into their experiences as well as telling me about how it is to live in Leicester, such as places to go and eat and things I can even do outside of my course. The open day allowed me to speak to lecturers as well as some of the benefits of completing a placement year in my third year. I later went on to complete a placement as part of my degree (will give some details further down).

But why Business and Management? The course, particularly in first year is broad in knowledge. I completed modules related to Marketing, Finance, Operations and Human Resources. This allowed me to know what my main interests were. In second and third year, I have been able to select modules based on my interests, which stemmed from the variety of modules in my first year. I have completed modules in Brand Management, International Marketing and Customer Management, all of which I thoroughly enjoy.

## Opportunities at university...

It was half-way through my first year where I realised that university is much more than a degree. In fact, I would strongly agree that there isn't any point in coming to university for just a degree.

Alongside my studies in first year I decided to join the Archery society. I thought it would be cool, something new to me, why not give it a go? 5 months later I had completed my beginners' course in Archery. University is about coming out of your comfort zone. I was never interested in doing Archery long-term, but did it has made me so confident when meeting new people and doing something that I usually wouldn't do. Today I would get involved in anything and everything and this small experience has shaped who I am today.



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In my second year I thought I would try and get a part time job, earn money alongside my studies. At the same time, I like to keep busy as I get bored easily. This made sense to build up new skills and develop existing skills. I became a Student Ambassador for De Montfort University. This looks fantastic on my CV as I have worked a variety of shifts with a wide range of colleagues. I have worked on DMU Aspire weeks, where I worked with sixth form students to help them with a university project. I also work on the phones, calling prospective students to ask questions and give them support. The best part of the role is working on DMU Open days... funny enough this was a key reason as to why I came to DMU. This gives me the opportunity to speak to prospective students and show them around our university that I am proud to be a part of. I love my job and will be sad to leave in a few months when I graduate. From this experience I have been able to meet some amazing friends, some of the best people I have ever met.

I also went on DMU Global trips. I went to Hong Kong (left), which was amazing. I worked at a Global Innovation Festival in the content team. In my free time I got to experience so much culture and will go back to Hong Kong when I go travelling some day!

A few months later into my second year I went to New York to present a project at the United Nations Headquarters (right). This was an amazing experience, and it was amazing to see how passionate people were, having got to sit in and participate in various conferences. I got to eat good food and go sightseeing in my free time. Have a look at the Sustainable Development Goals online and get involved if you are interested!

## **My placement experience...**

Key to my degree was applying for a placement! The placement team were extremely supportive in helping me gain this valuable experience. They conducted mock interviews and ran through my CV so many times. I will be forever thankful to them all. But it wasn't easy, I had applied for over 50 placement schemes, having approximately 6 interviews. Rejections were hard to take, mentally draining. I knew that the support of friends and loved ones alongside constantly popping into the placement office would help me secure a placement and it paid off!



I ended up completing a placement as a Brand, Digital and Communications Intern at Saint-Gobain UK & Ireland. This placement has allowed me to work alongside professionals in Marketing, HR, Communications, Procurement and Legal. It also taught me that go into a working environment where the people are fun, and that is the advice I give to you. The people you work with are just as and if not more important than what you are doing! A placement year typically takes place after your second year, where you go on placement for your third year and come back to university for the fourth and final year. Key to this experience was networking and building professional.

After my placement experience, I got another job, working for a maintenance company in Milton Keynes, to keep me busy before heading back to university for my final year. This experience was short, but great. Once again, this developed skills such as working under pressure, communicating and liaising.

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## My final year...



I was able to carry on my part time work as a Student Ambassador from my second year. I also work as an Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Consultant at DMU (some more work experience).

I became a Treasurer for the Ambassador Society, where mainly those that work around the university meet up and have socials. This could involve going to restaurants, bars, or clubs as well as bowling. At the same time I have been applying for lots of graduate roles!

## What will life hold for me after I graduate...

It is only halfway through my final year that I have realised what I want to do with my career. I would like to become a Business Consultant. I have applied for graduate roles as a Business Consultant with the technology industry as I believe a background with commercial knowledge, alongside the technological training I would receive will make me a valuable asset to many companies and provide me with a variety of opportunities in the long-term.

To me my family and friends are important, and wherever I go I will have someone around me, because to me that is important. Make sure you are somewhere where you have an outlet, maybe somewhere you can carry out a hobby and something that is important to you.

## Advice...

Firstly, choose subjects at GCSE and A level that you will firstly enjoy studying. You want to be self-motivated and do your best and this can come much easier if you enjoy something.

Secondly, think about the long term. If you do not know what you want to do speak to a careers team. Do not put pressure on yourself to have a long-term plan.

Thirdly, create a LinkedIn account! In basic terms it is a professional Facebook. You can network online and when you meet people add them, see what they post – this could help inspire you.

Lastly, get involved with some volunteering or part time work (when you are old enough!). I would have got involved with more volunteering at university, but I did go abroad to Nepal for three months where I worked as A Volunteer



Peer Educator, living with an amazing host family the entire time, The cultural understanding, and want to help others has grown.

Wherever I go next in the world of work, I will ensure I can do some form of volunteering in the workplace and continue to balance multiple things simultaneously.