

Michael Hughes

MBA (Public Service) 1995

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Who are you currently working for and what is your job title?

Director of Studies and Knowledge, The Audit Commission

Member of the Methods and Infrastructure Committee, ESRC

How has your career developed since graduating from the University of Birmingham?

Mine was a post-graduate, part-time, degree so I was already in work. I moved from the Local Government Management Board (my employer when I was doing the MBA) to work at Birmingham University (Lecturer in the Department of Local Government Studies) in 1978. I left the University (as Director of the Department of Local Government Studies) to join the Audit Commission in 2006.

What is the best thing about what you are doing now?

The best part of my job is that I manage a team of highly-motivated and well-qualified social researchers who produce published national reports that have an impact on public services in the UK. I can continue to use and develop my own skills whilst having a senior management role.

Why did you originally apply to Birmingham?

I applied to study at Birmingham because of its unrivalled reputation in the study of local public services.

What are your fondest memories of the University?

The university, or at least the people I dealt with, has a clear understanding of the needs of mature and part-time students: but it still challenges them to do work of a high standard.

How did you grow as a person by coming to University?

I realised that I could develop a career in social research – doing it and managing it.

What did you think of the learning experience within the University?

The whole public service MBA was relevant to my future career. I would not be where I am now without it.

Did you find the degree programme at Birmingham challenging or easy?

It was certainly challenging – and that's how it should be.

What advice would you give to current students studying on your degree programme?

I think the degree programme has changed now. My main advice would be for them to use it to either deepen their commitment to existing career choices or use it to widen their horizons (I did the latter).