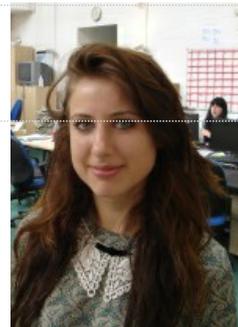


Annie Tickell

BA International Studies and Political Science (2009)



"I would definitely recommend Birmingham to any prospective student because I had such a fantastic time there. The opportunities you have as a student are endless and Guild really does have something for everyone. Studying politics was incredible because the course was so structured and the teaching was exceptional."



Where are you working now and what are you doing?

Researcher at Maverick Television

For the last 6 months I have been working in development which involves coming up with new ideas for television programmes. My job involves researching potential ideas, generating ideas, brainstorming ideas and coming up with original formats and titles. I am always on the lookout for interesting and exciting places or people who could make great TV.

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

When I graduated from the University of Birmingham I knew I wanted to work in TV because I loved the concept of communicating my ideas to the general public. Upon graduating I took an internship for 3 months at the BBC in the News Feature Department, where I worked as a production assistant on a film called Firing Line for the BBC News Channel. I then did work experience at Maverick Television for 2 weeks and from this I got an interview for an upcoming receptionist post, which I got. Working on reception for 6 months enabled me to meet a huge variety of people and get a great insight into the world of TV production. I then got promoted and worked on a Channel 4 Documentary called The Model Agency for 3 months. I then got promoted again and I have now been working in development for 6 months.

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

I love every part of my job. Every day is different and the variety of work I do keeps it exciting, fresh and innovative. I love that I get the opportunity to be creative on a daily basis. Thinking of a great idea which other people love is such a rewarding feeling. I spend most of time researching and this means I am consistently learning new things and improving my mind. Part of my job is to read the newspapers everyday and keep up to date with the celebrity gossip which sounds crazy but I could read one line in one newspaper which can inspire me. I have loved learning about TV and what makes a great TV show. I love working at Maverick Television because it makes the types of programmes that I enjoy watching which in turn means programme ideas which I like could be commissioned.

Why did you originally apply to do your course at Birmingham?

I applied to Birmingham because I visited the University and fell in love with the campus! I found it so beautiful throughout my degree especially in the snow and during the summer when the sun is shining. I am from London so I knew I wanted to go to a university in a town and I heard Birmingham had a great night life. I studied politics for A Level at school and this led me to pursuing a degree in that area. I loved the way politics was so current, it was constantly changing and this really gave it a sense of purpose. I heard Birmingham had a fantastic reputation for studying politics and department seemed really friendly.

What did you think were the best points of the course and the University?

I would definitely recommend Birmingham to any prospective student because I had such a fantastic time there. The opportunities you have as a student are endless and Guild really does have something for everyone. Studying politics was incredible because the course was so structured and the teaching was exceptional.

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

Without studying politics at Birmingham I would never be able to do the job I do now. POLSIS teaches its students how to research quickly and effectively and it taught me how to analyse information independently. I was taught a depth of understanding and critical reasoning which has prepared me for my career. Although my career choice might seem unusual for someone who studied politics I feel it has given me a huge advantage in making me an intelligent and analytical individual. My job involves a lot of writing which my degree taught me how to do in a focussed and structured way.

Did you find your degree at Birmingham challenging or easy?

I found my degree in Birmingham very challenging and I think that's the way it should be. I do not remember finding any modules easy and each essay required me to do a huge amount of reading to obtain the concepts talked out. I found my dissertation tough because you were so independent, however I was able to write about a subject which was of a huge interest to me.

Did you find the University helped you to find your first teaching post?

I received a lot of support for my dyslexia which helped me hugely. The learning support centre taught me how to understand the way my brain works and identify my strengths and weaknesses. While I was doing my degree I did the PSA which were extra modules giving careers advice. This was a huge help when applying to jobs and has taught me how to sell myself, be focused and gave me more confidence. Thinking about my career prospects made me determined to find a job which I enjoyed and enabled me to fulfil my potential. While I was at University I spend a lot of my time at GTV (Guild Television) which was the biggest reason I pursued a career in TV. Finding something you are passionate about is so important, being part of GTV gave me a whole group of new friends as well as getting experience in the media.

What advice would you give to current students?

My advice to current students would be to make the most of the opportunities Birmingham has to offer. The World is your oyster and University is really the time to pursue your passions and try new and unusual things. I met so many amazing people from so many walks of life. Pick module choices which you find interesting and inspiring. I would advise students to be open minded and do what makes them happy.

What are your plans for your future career?

TV is a very unstable industry because the vast majority of people are freelance with contracts from 1 week to 6 months. As long as I am enjoying what I'm doing and continue to learn and develop I am happy. In the future I see myself being a TV producer and eventually an executive producer.

