Naqeeb Ahmed, BA Social Policy (2008)

I graduated with a degree in social policy from the University of Birmingham in 2008. Since completing my degree, I have undertaken a three month research internship at the Young Foundation, been offered a further research internship at the New Local Government Network (a 'think tank' involved in local government research) and I am currently working at my local council as a policy analyst intern. My experience demonstrates that graduates from the University of Birmingham are highly valued by employers - a source of motivation for any prospective graduate.

The Young Foundation is a 'think tank' based in London and carries out an array of research initiatives. Currently, some of the research involves changing the behaviour of obese people by creating incentives to eat healthily as well as promoting ways of neighbourhood empowerment. Whilst interning I gained valuable experience in research, for instance, I produced a literature review for the neighbourhood empowerment project. Additionally, I made initial contact with housing associations, urban regeneration companies and local authorities to help lay the foundations of a new national consortium. I thoroughly enjoyed my internship at the Young Foundation and what was great - I witnessed the implementation of academic research in a way I would never have seen, had I not undertaken the internship.

My current assignment as a policy analyst involves analysing and assessing the impact of national ethnic diversity policy for the locality I work in. Undertaking this internship is giving me valuable experience in policy formation and analysis. The most exciting aspect of this internship is being involved in work that has an impact on the lives of thousands of people.

Pursuing a career in policy or research requires dedication and hard work, and unless you're lucky, working for free in order to gain valuable expereince. These days, landing an internship is almost as competitive as acquiring paid employment so you will need to be both dedicated and resolute.

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