

Nafisa Aksar, BA Social Work (2010)

Where are you working now and what are you doing?

I am working for Birmingham CYPS as a social worker.

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

I feel that the opportunities that I have been given in terms of my work experience and also the theoretical knowledge, has really helped in my role as I am able to draw on things that I have learnt, to do my role as a social worker more effectively.

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

I feel that the changes that I am able to make in the lives of the families that I work with are so rewarding that it makes it worthwhile doing the job, and is the best part of my job. I also enjoy being able to have that relationship with families where they are able to comment on the approach that I have in my work and that I have been able to make their negative experience of social workers into positives.

How far did your social work degree prepare you for practice?

I feel that my social work degree has made a big impact in my role. I have found that what I learnt whilst at University has impacted on the role that I do and the way in which it is done. I have found that my placement with the police meant that I am able to have a better working relationship and have a better understanding about multi-agency roles and expectations.

What were the most positive and also the most challenging aspects of your social work degree?

I found that the most positive aspects of my degree were going out onto placement, as I was able to put my theoretical work into practice and have a better understanding. I found the course demanding at times, although I soon found that the key to this challenge was being organised and managing my time. This is something that I have been able to take into my role as a social worker and find that by managing my time and being organised, I find the job rewarding.

What advice would you give to current students studying on the social work degree?

- Ensure that you attend lectures as there is so much you can get from these compared to just reading lecture notes.
- Regarding your time at University and your assignments, it is imperative that you manage your time well and ensure that you use the resources at the University, i.e. the library. Ensure that you give yourself time to do the reading before starting to write your assignments and always ask for help if you are unsure.
- Although a placement may not be what you want or what you hoped for, in every placement there is something that you can learn and take away into your future role as a social worker.