

Patrick Walker, Applied Golf Management Studies 2008

Current role

I am currently employed by a company called Braemar Golf which also operates under the guise of PGA Golf Management. We provide a comprehensive service during the creation, management and marketing of golf courses, academies and integrated facilities. PGA Golf Management are currently contracted to deliver the coaching at the world class St Andrews Links Golf Academy and I am one of four instructors coaching at the academy. I also have a direct input into the marketing and promotion of the coaching at the academy.

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Career experiences

Since graduating from the University of Birmingham I have gained many valuable experiences. Immediately after university I was employed as an Assistant Professional at a Golf and Country Club in Newcastle called, Linden Hall. Whilst there, I gained a great insight into the operations of a large business. However, the position did not give me the opportunity to deliver much coaching and so I accepted a new job offer at a Golf Academy in London. There I was working in a self employed position which effectively meant that I had to manage myself and create business for myself. I found this to be an enjoyable challenge in which I succeeded very well – I managed to establish a good reputation for myself and became one of the busiest coaches at the academy within 8 months. At this point I was contacted by Braemar Golf and asked if I would be interested in a coaching position at St Andrews Links Golf Academy.

I have now been based at the Academy for 4 months and have found the entire experience very rewarding. Obviously, with events such as the Dunhill Links being played here each year, and the British Open being here next year, it is a great chance to meet a lot of great names within the golfing industry.

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

Whenever involved in something, it is nice to be at the forefront of new developments and I feel that this position allows me to do that. The academy itself is world class with regards to the facilities and the quality of coaching offered. Furthermore we are involved with some of the biggest golf tournaments in the world which provides numerous opportunities to gain recognition in the industry. Working for a company like Braemar Golf also provides me with long term opportunities to branch out from the coaching side of the industry should I decide that this is something which interests me.

What was the best thing about your time as an AGMS student?

The whole experience was an enjoyable one but, I particularly enjoyed the chance to study something which I had a passion for.

How did you grow as a person by coming to University? Did it change your life in any way?

I would say that I matured during my time at university and was required to manage / motivate myself which can be difficult at times. It definitely changed my life and is an experience that I would encourage anyone and everyone to consider.

What were your expectations and experiences of Birmingham?

Living and studying in Birmingham lived up to all expectations. It was a fun and enjoyable atmosphere surrounding the university with access to great facilities.

Advice for current students

Be prepared to work hard in order to gain a high quality qualification. At times people view the AGMS degree as a 'Mickey mouse' degree but, it was anything but that. I personally believe that it was a more taxing degree than a number of others due to the broad spectrum of subjects that you will have to research and learn about.