

Alumni profiles - Nutmeg Hallett

BNurs, Bachelor of Nursing, 2009

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What are your career experiences since graduating from the University of Birmingham?

After graduating I worked as a band 5 forensic staff nurse at Reaside, a medium secure unit, for two and a half years. While there I collaborated with one of my tutors from University of Birmingham to publish a paper on service improvement. I knew that I wanted to go into research, so whilst working I took two research modules at masters level, also at the University of Birmingham. Following this I obtained a fully funded PhD post at St Andrew's, Northampton, investigating inpatient violence and aggression. I am currently half way through, and am thoroughly enjoying it.

How did your experience at Birmingham help you achieve this?

It's not an exaggeration to say that I would not be where I am now without my experiences at the University of Birmingham. Before starting the course, and for much of the first year, it was my intention to go into children's nursing. It was only having the opportunity to do a placement in a mental health setting that showed me that this field of nursing was the one I wanted to go into. The quality of the teaching was excellent, and gave me the best possible start I could have hoped for. The emphasis on evidence-based practice and research probably played a large part in the career choices that I have made.

What was the best thing about your time as a student here?

The mental health tutors were really supportive and inspiring. I think that it was also good that the group of students studying mental health was small, meaning that we had the opportunity for some lively and occasionally heated debates!

In what way did living and studying in Birmingham live up to your expectations?

Birmingham is a fantastic city, with lots going on, and despite being England's second city; it's still easy to get around by car, bike or public transport. The University of Birmingham campus is a really lovely place to be, especially in the summer. Also, it's the only university to have its own train station.

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

Work hard, but also enjoy your time as a student. Make the most of placements, and grab all the opportunities you can. And most importantly, don't walk under the clock tower when it's chiming!