

**How did you choose your course and university?** *E.g. was it location, course content, external expectations?*

I chose to study Geography as it was a subject I always found fascinating and covered such a broad range of topics, so I knew I would never get bored!

I chose to study in London as I wanted to experience the city lifestyle (I grew up on a farm) and knew that being a student there was the perfect opportunity. My first year halls of residence were in Waterloo – a 10 minute walk from the London Eye! When would I ever get the chance to live that centrally again!

Name: Lydia Tabbron

Year of leaving: 2011

Course studied: Geography



**What was your favourite part of university?**

My favourite part of university was meeting people that I instantly clicked with as we had the same interests and world views. The people I met on my course are still my best friends now and will be for the rest of my life I hope!

**What was the transition like between studying at school and university?**

I found the transition between school and university relatively hassle free as I enjoyed the independence. Sixth Form was probably more what people think Uni is like in terms of work load! If you're comfortable with being given more freedom and less guidance when making decisions then you should be fine. But always know that there is someone to ask if you're unsure, you just have to start looking for that information rather than being offered it.

**What have you done since leaving university?**

In the summer after I finished my final year exams I went travelling around South America. I then got a job in my local council as a City Planner. After a few years of doing that and learning lots of new skills I decided I needed something a bit more challenging so I moved back to London to be in the Civil Service. I was the Private Secretary for the Environment Minister at DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs) for 18 months, before moving to my current role of Sustainability Advisor at the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

## If you have time, we have some additional questions:

### **Which, if any, societies were you involved with while studying?**

None really, but I think that was a London thing. I would have loved to have done some team sports but they were all miles away!

### **How did you find the workload?**

Much less than I thought, but there is a lot of independent study and reading. So you can spend as much or as little time as you like doing that

### **How did you financially support yourself while studying?** *(One of the biggest concerns of young people is the amount of debt and expense of uni)*

All my money to live in London came from government grants/loans and a bursary from the Uni. I then worked full time during the holidays for extra money.

### **Any other comments...**

Top tip – most lectures finish at Easter and don't start again until September, so if you can, cancel your uni accommodation early and move back home to live rent free during the summer months! If you can work as well then that's a bonus! I saved thousands each year doing this!