

Q-Step Student Profile

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Why did you opt for a Q-Step programme?

I believed that the Q-Step programme offered the best opportunities for me personally. This was developing skills that would help me work towards attaining a career in research. I felt that it was an opportunity well suited to my strengths as a student.

What did you expect from Q-Step and in what ways, if any, did it differ in reality?

I was unsure what to expect from the Q-Step programme at first, but one thing I was sure of was that it was going to be a challenge for me. What I didn't expect, was the depth of support available from academic staff. As there was a Q-Step team who collectively supported students, I very much felt a part of a community. That helped particularly during challenging times working with data or solving problems associated with my research. I believe I became a stronger student and person as a result of being a part of this community.

What 2 or 3 things did you gain most from Q-Step?

The first thing is work experience. As part of my undergraduate dissertation, I worked in a placement with a partner organisation, Her Majesty's inspectorate of the Probation Services. Here I gained essential skills in the work place such as; communication skills, time management, working in a professional environment, presentation, and using other software's for the purposes of Quantitative Research.

The second most valuable thing I attained here was confidence. I jumped in at the deep end with little professional work experience, let alone research work experience. Working with an organisation like HMIP helped me prove to myself that I could not only do it, but do it well. This really helped with other university modules and having the confidence to apply to do a master's degree, something I never as myself doing before entering the Q-Step programme.

Where did you go on placement?

My most recent placement was working with Citizens Advice Manchester as part of my Masters Dissertation.

What 2 or 3 things did you learn or gain from your placement?

Time management. My placement involved both a dissertation and condensed report which all had to be managed and completed by a certain time. This was alongside my master's degree and part time job.

Another thing I gained from this placement was turning academic information into important organisation information. In order to help citizens advice Manchester secure further findings through the findings of my research, I had to learn how to communicate findings from an academic perspective into an organisational perspective. This included discussing the cost benefits of the organisations services and its value to the city of Manchester. This lead to various impacts from economic benefits of health services to the health related benefits of service users.

How has/will your placement experience help you in future?

This placement provided me with additional confidence in my abilities, along with empathy in those who are relying on me to provide them with the information using the skills that I have attained. I felt

very proud to have contributed to the work of such an organisation, and learned that I want to use these skills in my future career.

What is your current and/or planned position and in what ways, if any, does your Q-Step experience help with what you are doing now?

I am currently doing my PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University that is focusing on an issue that contributes to Q-Steps aims, exploring the attitudes to maths of KS2 Pupils in UK Primary Schools. Everything about this PhD involves skills attained through the Q-Step programme. From creating relationships with schools to conduct research, to analysing the data collected, to communicating those findings to a wider audience and demonstrating impact. I am very passionate about education constantly improving and meeting the needs of the world. Q-Step has allowed me to not only pursue that passion, but also build a career for myself in something I love to do at the same time.

What advice would you give a student considering Q-Step?

I would advise any student to explore the option of considering Q-Step. It is providing essential employability skills in an ever growing competitive market. I truly believe Q-Step is providing essential skills for various careers, and the fact that they can be attained through university is a huge bonus to those studying at those universities.

Q-STEP PROFILE