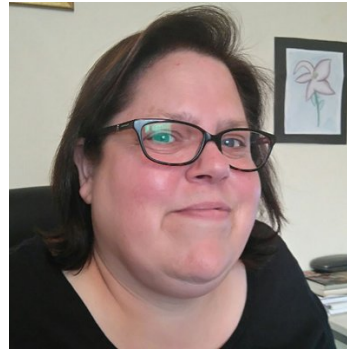


Q-Step Student Profile

Fiona Powell
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Why did you opt for a Q-Step programme?

Quantitative research wasn't my strongest subject so the attraction was twofold, the five-day bootcamp and workplace experience. I am a big believer in a mixed methods approach to research.

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

I didn't know what to expect. I was quite intimidated by the thought of the five-day intensive training, it differed because I was told the placement would be using R, however on my placement we used Excel. Ultimately this was better for me.

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

The most important thing that I gained was experience of using quantitative data in a workplace environment. But I also learned the value of my previous work experience. The other thing I gained was the support, not only from placement staff but also from University of Leeds staff. Lastly, confidence and self-belief.

Where did you go on placement?

I did my placement within the Department of Social Care, Ageing and Disability Directorate of the Civil Service.

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

I learned that using quantitative analysis methods is completely different in a workplace, things don't always work out as planned but asking for help is fine. I also learned that I can produce work faster than expected.

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

I have had so many opportunities as a result of my Q-Step experience. I am through to the final stage of the FastStream recruitment process, largely due to the encouragement of my supervisors at Quarry House, Leeds. I have also presented my research at Westminster.

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?

My current position is that I am through to the Final Selection Board for Government Social Research Stream of Civil Service FastStream. I also have a conditional offer for a Master's in Social Research at University of Leeds.

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

Don't be put off by concerns about the quantitative analysis. There is support every step of the way and you gain so much from the experience. Just go for it and surprise yourself!