

## Green Careers and Thoughts: My Internship Experience

My name is Ilaria Parker. I am an LJMU English Literature graduate, and I am currently on the LJMU English Literature MA course. My interest in the environment and sustainability started during my undergraduate degree when I chose to study a module called Literature of Extinction. This module introduced me to topics such as ecological degradation, relationships between humans, animals and plants, gender and race as ecological concepts, and environmental problems in contemporary society.

This passion for the environment has carried over into my MA and developed into an interest in the green sector. By doing this green career internship I also wanted to show other students that there are a variety of different career pathways into the green sector, even if your degree is not one commonly associated with it. The fact that this was focused on something I was interested in, as well as paid, only helped cement the fact that I should apply. I was unsure whether my lack of experience and knowledge about green careers would affect my chances of getting the internship; convinced that many other students from more suitable degrees such as Geography or Conservation would also apply. Confidence was something I struggled with both at the beginning and during the internship. My pre-conceived ideas about how English Literature could fit into the green sector and my lack of faith in my abilities meant that I continuously doubted myself in comparison to the other two interns. My confidence grew due to many factors. The advice given to me by many people that I spoke to or interviewed, and the information I learnt through research, showed me that there are opportunities out there for students of all degrees and that you must actively look for them and seek them out.

During my internship I was able to utilise many skills I have learnt from my degree, such as critical thinking, planning and research, oral and written communication, editing pieces of writing, blog writing, some pre-existing knowledge about environmental concerns, ability to work both individually and as part of a team. These transferable skills and the importance of them has been repeated to me over the course of my internship by everyone I have spoken to and interviewed. Often companies in the green sector will provide training for technical skills, but there is a growing need for transferable skills in the green workforce. Completing this internship has increased my confidence in the skills my degree has provided me with, not just because I have utilised them, but also because I have now seen how much employers want these skills.

Along with the skills from the Sustainability Challenge (budgeting, project management, decision making), I further developed my teamwork skills, interviewing skills, and gained an understanding of how it is to work with little supervision and new technology (such as using Sway, Excel, Forms, OBS Studio and Canva). There are so many opportunities like this internship available to students of all degrees, ranging from paid internships to networking events. These experiences do not cost anything but provide students with so much information, skill building, and valuable networking with experts, I would definitely recommend to everyone to get involved.