

Sarah Jane Pugh

It becomes very easy when sharing your views of University, to sum it up to the common cliché “University changed my life” but what if it really did? Ask anyone, undergraduate or postgraduate, what Uni life is like and each story will be different, all of them filled with vast collections of memories and experiences. Here is my story.

Two years ago I was homeless, sat in a musky, dark hostel room in which its downtrodden interior often reflected my state of mind. It was deadline day at the college I attended and I was racing against time to complete the last of my coursework. It was a difficult feat but I accomplished it. Homeless at the age of 17 wasn't easy, nor was it hard, it was painful and a constant struggle. Many days I wished for an escape, “a light at the end of the tunnel” or simply, a purpose. It is now that I realise, the first step to the fresh start I so desperately desired began with the ink on an application form.

My college years seemed like a lifetime, however the following summer flew by. A few more applications, an acceptance letter through the post and a packed back pack later; I was on my way to greatness. On the train journey to begin my new life I was blown away by the surroundings of the small Scottish town, with its huge mountains, beautiful green forests and the sound and smell of the sea. I fell in love with where I was going to study before my first day!

Instantly, Uni life became second nature. I was quickly adapting to the work load, time schedules and the new faces I had met. I'm a Marine Science undergraduate and every day I sit in a lecture room with the sea in my view, learning new aspects of the science by tutors who are respected in the industry themselves. Often days are spent on board a ship developing skills via field work understanding Arctic Ocean properties and inhabitants. University is truly the making of me. It has helped mould me intellectually and characteristically into the person I am today. Above all, the idea of having amazing experiences whilst investing into your future is a prospect that seems undeniably obvious to be a part of.

Two years later I am sat on a beach on the island of Bermuda. My developed education and skills resulted in my being awarded a Scholarship for a summer program. I am half way through my degree, concluding only a few chapters of my story and an eagerness to write the rest.

As a 21 year old girl, promising Marine Scientist and a university undergraduate, I leave you with a poem.

Let not the Waves of the Sea define you
Or by shipwrecks that are left behind you
Yet be defined by the deep depths you dive into
Disallowing controlling currents to confine you-Sarahjane Pugh

So this is my story. What is yours?