

Student Ambassador Alumni Testimonials

2019-2020

Demi Akande

Since graduating from St Mary's University in 2019, I am now undertaking a Graduate Diploma in Law (GDL) to boost my prospects of entering into a career in the legal sector. The roles I am undertaking alongside this course through various internship schemes have enabled me to develop and improve my interest for professional service delivery. Participating in the student ambassador scheme at St Mary's gave me an appreciation for collaboration as information and ideas could be exchanged. I now understand the value of being a single point of contact with the knowledge base of Higher education or any other subject matter to be able to sustain interactions with individuals from all walks of life. This is a skill I will be able to harness throughout my career. The student ambassador scheme is definitely worth applying for when you join St Mary's as it will definitely broaden your employment prospects and strengthen your sense of community.



Jack Render

After graduating from St Mary's I took up a position working as a Graduate Intern for a company called the Higher Education Progression Partnership (HEPP). Working in the position I have for HEPP has really allowed me to utilise many of the skills I learnt and developed as a Student Ambassador. I worked as a regular ambassador in my first year, then progressed onto the roles of WP and later Senior Ambassador in my second and third years.



The type of students that HEPP works with are typically from a WP background, and my work as a WP ambassador really allowed me to gain a much better understanding of the sorts of issues and potential barriers that students from this background face; which has allowed me to excel in my current role. My role as a Senior Ambassador meant that I spent time delivering St Mary's sessions to students with no senior member of staff present, and the vast majority of the work I do for HEPP involves going out to schools and delivering similar sessions. Without the experience of working as a Senior Ambassador I don't know if I'd have had the confidence to work in such a role.

I feel like the work I undertook as an ambassador prepared me very well for this line of work as I got the chance to practice lots of skills that I have had to rely on in my job post St Mary's. Aside from that; being an ambassador was really fun and allowed me to meet lots of new people and I would highly recommend anyone to do it!

Ballerina Preeti

I loved every minute being a Student Ambassador and a NCOP Ambassador, I learnt new things everyday, I gained skills and experience which prepared me for work as a teacher and now I'm helping students achieve their dreams. The student Recruitment and Outreach team are awesome and supportive. I got loads of opportunities and one of them was going to Liverpool with a group of students, the picture says it all!



Simeon Thorne

As a Student Ambassador I was able to gain skills that are relevant to succeeding in my course as well as in work beyond university. Furthermore, I was able to earn a decent wage on an hourly rate while being able to dictate when I worked. This opportunity allowed me to support my uni lifestyle, while not inflicting on any study life or social life commitments.



You might have a preconceived idea of what it's like to be a Student Ambassador, but let me inform you from my experience. There is a

range of working options that you can choose from, from helping out on Open Days to delivering talks and workshops in schools. Even within these there is a range of jobs available. On an Open Day, Student Ambassadors are those in the brightly coloured t-shirts delivering tours of the campus and accommodation, providing directions around the campus, supporting academics and even supporting security staff on parking around the campus. This means that there is a range of opportunities for those of all skill sets.

It is also a chance to further your inter-personal skills and push yourself beyond your comfort zone. This will help when delivering talks and presentations in your studies.

This will also help when interacting with colleagues in future jobs, as you will be able to deliver information in a clear and concise manner. It will also illustrate to future employers your good work ethic and ability to manage your workload, to be able to work and study. Lastly, you will earn a decent hourly London living wage, which will help support you when you study at university, while not putting pressure on you to work a certain number of hours a week.

This is a fantastic opportunity for you to succeed at university and beyond.

Amy Coates

My time as a Student ambassador allowed me to grow in confidence, and offered me so many different working opportunities. One event that stands out the most, is an open event I attended to promote the university, at an all girls boarding school; I was asked by the recruitment to chat to potential students at the school and during this time I was approached by the head of the school, and here I am working at that exact school 15 months on!



Since leaving St Mary's I have been working as a Graduate Assistant at Mayfield Girls School. I am a core member of the boarding staff team for the sixth form student house - I work alongside two staff members, supporting the girls academically and pastorally. During the school days, I have 1/2 teaching timetable teaching Psychology and PE, and working in the school office.

I often think back to the typical question we were asked at school "where do you see yourself in 5 years" and surprisingly I was the quiet one, scared to read out in-front of my friends, let alone where I am today leading a class of students a few years younger than myself. That is where the Student Ambassador Role helped me so much. Through student ambassador, I built up the courage to approach visitors at open events to ensure they were comfortable. Alongside a fellow student ambassador, we were asked to develop our own sessions to deliver across 5 weeks to year 10 students to help them see their potential - material of which I now use with my own students as they make university/general life decisions, and in my own understanding, I can empathise with these students and help them better than I helped myself in the past! For my final two years as a Student Ambassador, I had the pleasure of working on a residential weekend, for first year students in order to help them break the ice with other freshers and have a friendly face around campus - this is probably my favourite memory as a student ambassador, It allowed me to see that I am capable of making others feel at ease, and support them, even simply through going for a drink and a catch up; That I've been able to apply for my students, but also for my colleagues - I'm much more aware of simply checking in on friends just because, rather than waiting for them to show any red flags.

And now onto where I go from here, I love my job as a graduate assistant, it has been an amazing year, however, thanks to the interviewing skills, including those I have already mentioned, and general confidence I have developed over the past 4 years, from September I have decided to take up a Masters in Applied Animal Behaviour and Training. With this masters I will definitely be adapting the time management skills I developed as a student ambassador, and hopefully starting my own business! But lastly, I can't thank the recruitment team enough, for the opportunities they gave me as a Student Ambassador, and the support they still provide for me today!

Muhammad Ahmad

The main reason I applied for the Student Ambassador role was so I could earn some money. I also considered this role because it allowed me to stay at the university to study and be flexible with my working hours. It further gave me more time to invest in my studies as I did not have to worry too much about commuting for work. The role was fun and fulfilling. I met students from different courses and societies from my university and from other universities. As a WP ambassador, I also got to work with secondary school students to highlight the importance of further education and answering their queries. Furthermore, working as a student ambassador does help



you gain interpersonal skills due to the various roles you are offered to work. I enjoyed working on a range of tasks while I know some people preferred one role, so it is completely up to you in what you are comfortable with.

I would say if you are thinking about becoming an ambassador, just do it! You will meet amazing people from different walks of life. Whether that be your colleagues, students or even their parents. Most of all, you will also get paid while being at the university and gaining extra skill set.

Stephanie Willmott

I was advised and encouraged to apply to become a Student Ambassador on my first day, when I enrolled as an undergraduate studying a Joint Honors Degree in English with Philosophy at St Mary's back in 2016.



Becoming a Student Ambassador, participating in both Recruitment and Widening Participation (WP) activities was one of the best things I have ever done and the whole experience has benefited me greatly. It provided me with the opportunity to broaden my experience and skills by engaging with other educational institutions which allowed me to interact with young people to explore the benefits of Higher Education. As a Student Ambassador I took part in a variety of Recruitment events and activities including university open days, helping with registration and enrollment, student focus groups and conferences as well as stewarding at graduations. My WP work allowed me to work on a variety of school visits, summer schools including: Get Set for Success and Warwick Summer School, alongside online mentoring projects.

In my own case I enjoyed every minute of my time as a Student Ambassador at St Mary's which really helped me to learn more about my university and allowed me to contribute to the St Mary's community. I have noticed my self-confidence increase over time and my hard work and commitment was recognised and rewarded, when I was appointed and promoted to the position of Senior Student Ambassador in October 2018, during my final year of studies.

Following my graduation, I applied for the post of Senior Graduate Ambassador at Newcastle University at their London Campus. I am sure the skills and experience I gained and acquired as a Student Ambassador for St Mary's helped me secure my position in my desired field. For my part I enjoy my role immensely and have gained a large amount of job satisfaction promoting Higher Education.

I would certainly encourage St Mary's students to apply to become a Student Ambassador. The flexibility and variety of roles and responsibilities this position gives students has many benefits, both individually and collectively, which enhances St Mary's reputation on campus and externally throughout the wider community. I reflect on my time as a Student Ambassador at St Mary's with fond memories that I will always cherish!