



Rebecca

STUDYING

Molecular Biology

YEAR

Third Year

FUTURE CAREER FOCUS

Research Assistant in a Biosciences lab (ideally carrying out cancer research)

Q&A

ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY CLUBS/ SOCIETIES AT UNIVERSITY?

Yes! I am a member of the Pharmacology Society – this is a group for Bioscience students to share ideas, help each other if we are confused about anything and socialise! We also invite speakers to come in and talk about their research with us which can be very inspiring.

ARE YOU INVOLVED IN ANY SPORTS AT UNIVERSITY?

I am not a paid member of a university sports team, however I attend 1-2 Active Students sessions per week. Active Students provides free gym classes every week, these range from roller-skating to boxing and my personal favourite, Zumba dancing! These classes are great as you can just turn up whenever you have some free time, with no pre-booking or commitment needed.

During Freshers week, there is the opportunity to go to taster sessions for most of the university sports teams, so you can try a new sport before committing to join. I had a go at rowing which was a great new experience but after feeling like I was going to fall into the water on the taster session I decided it wasn't for me!

WHERE IS YOUR FAVOURITE PLACE ON CAMPUS?

For me this has to be the Science Building! The brand-new building opened in 2016, so it is very modern and well equipped with spacious labs. There are lots of screens all around the large labs to ensure you get a clear view of instructions, examples and more wherever you are. There are always several lecturers and experience PhD students in the labs to help if you get stuck. The Science Building also has excellent computer suite facilities and even a little coffee shop, which is a nice place to chat to friends before or after classes.

WHAT IS YOUR GO TO MEAL TO COOK?

To save money, I usually cook a big batch of pasta, sauce and veg on a Sunday and bring a portion with me to university each day to have for lunch. This works out a lot cheaper than buying lunch on the go every day!

For dinner I usually make veg and noodle stir fry at least 2 nights a week as it is very quick to make, cheap and healthy.

CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING INTERESTING ABOUT ONE OF YOUR LECTURERS?

One of my lecturers organises a yearly Research Conference for the School of Life and Medical Sciences. Planning for this event takes place all year round to invite speakers and researchers from all over the world. I have attended and helped at the conference each year, which should boost my CV and is a great chance to learn about the latest research from different countries and universities.

HOW DID YOU MAKE YOUR FIRST FRIEND AT UNIVERSITY?

I met my first friend at university before I even moved onto campus and started my course! Once my accommodation offer came through, I knew which flat and court (group of flats) I would be living in. I was keen to talk to anyone living in nearby flats or even my own flat, so I looked to see if there were any groups on Facebook run by the uni where new students could find each other. Once I found a group for my court, I saw a post from a guy called George who was in the same flat as me! We ended up chatting on Facebook almost every day until we moved in; it was reassuring to be able to talk through the things we were nervous about and share ideas about what pack to bring to university. We have now been at uni for 3 years and we are still very good friends!

WHAT IS IT LIKE LIVING ON CAMPUS?

I lived on campus in an Enhanced room on College Lane Campus in my first and second year and really enjoyed it! Most of the accommodation on College Lane was only built a few years ago so is well designed for student living and there are several room types to suit all budgets and needs.

My Enhanced room had a small double bed, a built-in desk and wardrobe as well as a personal en-suite just for me to use. My room was within an 8-person flat and we shared a large kitchen with 2 ovens, 2 fridge-freezers, a comfy sofa area with TV and a table to eat meals at – this space was ideal for socialising and meeting your flatmates. All the classes for my course are delivered on College Lane, meaning I had just a 5-10-minute walk from my bedroom to my classes! In my second year, I was able to apply to stay in university accommodation with some of my friends, meaning I already knew 4 of the 8 people I was sharing a flat with that year.

WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE STUDYING IN LOCKDOWN?

I was completing a placement year when the UK went into lockdown in March 2020. This means my experience is a bit different compared to students that were studying full time at university that year. My placement was in a biology research laboratory and since lockdown started, I have been working from home. During this time, I have been writing a big report for uni about everything I learnt on placement as well as reading about similar work carried out by biologists all over the world to understand how my lab results compare to other scientists.

THE HARDEST THING FOR ME ABOUT GOING TO UNIVERSITY WAS...

Moving away from home and my family. Thankfully, I was honest with myself and knew that I would really struggle if I could not see my family for several months at a time. Because of this, I chose to only apply to universities within 2 hours drive of my family home so that I could visit more often and go home for weekends or family birthdays.