

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE VOLUNTEERING STORIES 2015/16



UNIVERSITY OF
WESTMINSTER 

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WELCOME TO VOLUNTEERING IN WESTMINSTER

It gives me enormous pride to introduce these stories to you. Stories of students just like you who, through volunteering, have made significant contributions not only to their own development but also for the benefit of society and the creation of a better world for us all.

Through our annual volunteering survey, students reported completing more than 24,000 hours of combined volunteering time. Such an achievement in itself deserves our accolades and our thanks, but the personal stories in this booklet highlight what else our students have gained.

They have developed the skills and attributes that will make them stand out as distinctive graduates who can demonstrate expertise and engagement in their subject area. The experiences of Kiu, who became President of Westminster Nutrition Society, and Amy – who volunteered in a school, supervising a school trip to one of Jamie Oliver’s restaurants to teach young people about healthy eating – are perfect examples of that expertise and engagement.

At the University of Westminster we positively encourage you to become entrepreneurial in your approach to work and life, and there are several cases in these stories where students have become founders of societies, including the Disability Society and Westminster Entrepreneurial Society. Students have created their own organisations, driven by a need to help other people. Sanusi set up the Mentor a Child Foundation, and Rachel founded Project Connect, both of which match young people to role models and mentors.

Helping Homeless Humans (Triple H), co-founded by Merlvin, Otis, Abby and Katlyn, is a university-wide student initiative to support the homeless in London, which raised over £500 in one evening.

The creativity of your fellow students knows no bounds, and in this booklet you can read about Raghad, who set up and ran an inspiring event to celebrate Syrian culture through art, music and food, serving an even greater purpose: “It’s the power of life over death, peace over war,” she explained.

These students have developed leadership, communication, planning and organising skills, not to mention the commitment, tenacity and vision to bring each project to success. All of these remarkable achievements establish a theme of cultural interaction and life-long learning that is more than the sum of its parts, the results of which will reverberate across the University, across society, cultures and global communities.

Read their stories for yourself and discover what you too can gain from exploring the thousands of opportunities that exist for volunteering or using your creativity to lead on a project of your own.

Frances Gow
Employability Manager,
Career Development Centre

ABOUT THE GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES

At the University of Westminster we want our students to have a distinctive learning experience. To help create this experience, our curriculum is shaped around five key ‘Graduate Attributes’ – areas of personal and professional development in which Westminster graduates will excel. These attributes will support our students to become highly employable, globally engaged and socially responsible.

The five Graduate Attributes, along with a short description of some of their key elements, are listed below. Every volunteering opportunity can help you gain many, if not all, of these attributes. Some volunteering roles will help you to develop particular strengths in certain areas. To help you find out more about volunteering opportunities that may focus on attributes which are of most interest to you, we have included details of the main Graduate Attributes gained through volunteering roles in each of our featured volunteer stories.

UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER GRADUATES WILL BE:



GLOBAL IN OUTLOOK AND COMMUNITY ENGAGED:

- cross-cultural experience
- community engaged
- valuing diversity



SOCIALLY, ETHICALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE:

- environmental sustainability awareness
- economic sustainability awareness
- contributing to sustainable societies



LITERATE AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS:

- communication
- numeracy
- information literacy
- digital literacy



ENTREPRENEURIAL:

- teamwork, collaboration and leadership
- self-awareness, self-evaluation, self-management
- networked and management of digital identities
- active problem solver



CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKERS:

- a critical thinker
- creative and critical thinking in professional and life-long learning
- a creative thinker

JOHANNA LIPPONEN

COURSE

European Legal Studies
LLB Honours

“A creative outlet to ‘let loose’ is a true stress reliever.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Global in outlook and community engaged



Literate and effective communicators



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



JOHANNA'S JOURNEY

For some, university can be a scary place. Lack of confidence and the effects of stress were things Johanna was familiar with when she moved to London in 2014. However, she made a conscious effort to change all that through volunteering. Johanna began volunteering with the Musical Theatre Society and the Choral Society, and firmly believes that “performing arts encourage students to be more creative and confident”. In May 2015, she was elected President of the Choral Society and Treasurer of the Musical Theatre Society. During her presidency of the Choral Society, as well as gaining leadership, public speaking, organisational and planning skills, Johanna was able to achieve something unique, a collaboration with the University for the Christmas Carol Service. The result? A University request that this would become an annual partnership.

On top of the legacy Johanna would be leaving for the Choral Society, she was able to learn a lot from her time as Treasurer of the Musical Theatre Society. She feels she has “definitely achieved better time-management and planning skills” that will be useful throughout her academic and professional career. Staging shows such as the Rocky Horror Picture Show live for Halloween involved much more than the actors on the stage; working and liaising with different people including external musical directors, the Students’ Union and other societies improved her teamworking, negotiating and problem-solving skills.

Johanna is a brilliant example of how to use your extracurricular interests to gain skills that may be transferable to your future personal, academic and professional growth. Through her passion for performing arts Johanna was able to obtain core graduate attributes that will serve her well after graduation.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I have gained numerous new friends and acquaintances through my committee positions, and I have truly learned a lot about myself as well as gaining valuable leadership, teamwork, organising, planning and time-management experience during this year.”

Johanna Lipponen

RAGHAD MARDINI

COURSE

Museums, Galleries and Contemporary Culture MA

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Global in outlook and community engaged



Entrepreneurial



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



“There is hope.”

RAGHAD'S JOURNEY

There is a common belief that during their academic careers, be it undergraduate or postgraduate, it is the students who gain knowledge from the University. Raghad proves that students can also impart knowledge through their personal experiences. Her belief in the importance of art during times of war led her to found an art residency in Lebanon to support emerging Syrian artists. On top of continuing to manage the project while doing her Masters at the University of Westminster, Raghad also participated at a conference at Duke University in January 2016 and at a panel at the Arab Women Artists Now festival at Rich Mix in London in March 2016. By sharing her story and the story of others she has helped to build a network to support artists.

Raghad organised an art exhibition at the University of Westminster to highlight the best of Syrian art, music and food. As well as helping artists, organising the

Celebrate Syria event also served an even greater purpose: “It’s the power of life over death, peace over war,” explains Raghad. “At this event, students were able to engage in Syrian culture through art, music and food.” Following your passion, no matter the obstacles, can have a positive impact on your personal growth as well as global outlook. Raghad is sure that it was the success of her exhibition which gave her the strength to follow her dreams in establishing a social enterprise in London to spread the Syrian culture through language, art, lectures, dance and food, and helping people to realise their own potential.

Raghad is not only keen on improving the lives of her fellow artists, but also keeps working on herself. She credits her time at the University of Westminster as being helpful in both her personal insight and professional growth.

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I was deeply touched by all the support that I received from the University of Westminster, the Students’ Union and the Career Development Centre during the preparations for my event, especially by the compassion and empathy from everyone I have worked with.”

Raghad Mardini

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Celebrate Syria was a truly inspiring event that gave us a counter narrative of hope to what we see daily in the news.”

David Shacklady

Director
Student Affairs



SANUSI DRAMMEH

COURSE
Medical Molecular
Biology MSc

“The world is best served by giving the little we have today to future generations for better life prospects.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Global in outlook and community engaged



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Entrepreneurial



SANUSI'S JOURNEY

Sometimes to go forward you must go back. When Sanusi was invited to give a speech to students at his old secondary school in his home town in Gambia, he realised many things. He realised that most kids lack the know-how to advance in education and do not have advice on future careers. He also realised that he was the right person to do something about it. “Every journey leading to success in life starts with a single step,” says Sanusi, and on returning to the UK he took that step by collaborating with the staff at his old school to form a foundation. This was the birth of the Mentor a Child Foundation (MCF). Fast forward a year and MCF is now a registered non-profit organisation with clubs already established in various schools.

No journey is without obstacles, but Sanusi doesn't focus on the past – he has his sights set firmly on the future. He knew from the beginning of this journey that the only way to achieve anything is

through selfless commitment, and that his dedication may motivate others. His main focus is to “expand our activities to all the schools within the Western Region of the Gambia and beyond”, and lay foundations for students to excel and become successful in their future careers. Having been exposed to the Western educational system Sanusi knows first-hand the integral role a mentor's influence can have on students. He strongly believes that every student deserves the same opportunity he had, regardless of geographical location. He hopes that with MCF he can have a positive impact on the life of students “who will eventually be leaders of tomorrow”. Looking to the future, he hopes the Foundation will help to inspire students to be the best doctors, lawyers, bankers, engineers and nurses they can be. “Together,” he says, “we can create a better world for future generations by giving them a platform for success.”

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“The Mentor a Child Foundation (MCF) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Voluno, a volunteer organisation based in Hamburg. MCF and Voluno will work together to achieve their shared objective for students from all over Gambia to benefit from career planning programmes.”

Sanusi Drammeh

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Sanusi has always been helping the younger ones to achieve their dreams through academic standards. From the day he did his presentations in schools and at Gambia College his heart was never at peace unless he helped to give the younger ones a chance to see their dreams come true. Mr Drammeh is such an intelligent and hard-working young man, ready to sacrifice his efforts for people, especially the less privileged.”

Lamin Dibba

Deputy Director
Mentor a Child Foundation



HASSAN HAKEEM

COURSE

Accounting with Management BSc Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Global in outlook and community engaged



Critical and creative thinkers



“It was one of the best experiences of my life.”

HASSAN'S JOURNEY

Volunteering comes in all shapes and sizes, from community involvement to fundraising through sport and even blood donation. Hassan has participated in almost all forms of volunteering. As the Regional Youth Co-ordinator for the charity and welfare programme at the Ahmadiyya Muslim Youth Association (AMYA), he has contributed to society at all levels through active integration and engagement. “It is an honour for me to be able to serve my community,” says Hassan, who worked with over 500 AMYA members in South London to engage local youth in community activities. On Christmas Day 2015 Hassan organised a day with the elderly at St Helier’s Care Home, Sutton Court Care Centre and Manor House, to offer a bit of festive cheer on a day which is all about coming together, extending season’s greetings and of course, handing out gifts.

Some activities were less glamorous than others but Hassan was not afraid to get his hands dirty. Together with 35 other volunteers he organised street cleaning, a collaboration with Sustainable Merton and Merton Council, which served the dual purpose of cleaning the neighbourhood and educating young people on the dangers of pollution. There is a comprehensive list of Hassan’s volunteering activities – including blood donation, tree planting and fundraising – that have helped his local community. But when disaster struck in Cumbria, AMYA did not shy away from the challenge. Hassan and his peers were there during the flooding crisis, proving that during times of need the idea of community extends beyond geographical limitations. “Volunteering helps you realise the problems of others,” says Hassan, “and it establishes a passion for sacrifice and promotes empathy and harmony for others without the desire of any personal benefit.”



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I went to Cumbria with my local peers to help flood victims. I helped local community people in removing affected things, making sand bags, making food bags and distributing water bottles and food bags to flood victims. We were appreciated as people from London coming to help flood victims.”

Hassan Hakeem

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“We’ve had the pleasure of having Hassan Hakeem volunteer for us on a regular basis over the last several years. His dedication and commitment to serving has been exceptional, and we’re fortunate to have him in our team.”

Muddassar Ahmed

National Director of Charities and Welfare AMYA

HELPING HOMELESS HUMANS (TRIPLE H)

Merlvin and Co.
Westminster School of
Media, Arts and Design

“All it took were a few students, will power, sympathy and kind hearts.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Entrepreneurial



Critical and creative thinkers



THE TRIPLE H JOURNEY

‘Charity begins at home’ is an age-old adage. Merlvin, Otis, Abby and friends used it to create an initiative that is not only a rewarding and educational experience for students at the University of Westminster, but is also helping some of the most vulnerable members of society. This student-led concept started at Harrow Campus this year and grew to involve students from other faculties in one common goal – to help homeless people in our capital. “Our main goal, along with educating ourselves on the situation out there, is to raise money to help,” says Merlvin, although achieving that goal involves stress, obstacles and sacrifice. Deadlines, a lack of funds and adversity were a steep learning curve for the team. What has emerged is a project that won the University’s Volunteer of the Year Award.

Triple H started off slowly, with fundraising to cover basic essentials such as sandwiches, socks and bottled water, which they distributed themselves. The students educated

themselves on the best ways to help, while balancing their time between academic and extracurricular pursuits. When critics commented on their venture their reply was simple – “homelessness can happen to any of us”. With the support of academic staff, Smoke Radio and particularly the Dean of Harrow Campus, the initiative really took off. Along with the collections provided from local vendors and donations from students, the team is looking to take the project further and grow as a charity within the University. “We are looking into developing a programme where students can help rough sleepers build their CV to help them get jobs,” says Otis, when asked about the future. They credit their success to teamwork and student involvement: “Helping Homeless Humans would not be where it is and would not be heading in the direction we are going without them,” says Abby. “We are still quite new at this,” she adds – but whatever the team may lack in experience they make up for with dedication.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“On 12 March 2016 we organised a student sit out fundraiser in Leicester Square where many students had gathered with signs saying ‘We are not homeless but we are raising money for homeless people’. That evening the Helping Homeless Humans initiative managed to raise £530!”

RACHEL LANDSBERG

COURSE
Psychology BSc Honours

“I hope that I can continue learning through volunteering for the rest of my life.”

RACHEL'S JOURNEY

Developing the courage to innovate sometimes comes from personal struggles. Rachel, who went through difficult times during secondary school, understood adolescent angst. She says that although she had support from friends, what she really needed was a mentor to give her direction towards a path of self-growth and stability: “Someone similar enough to be relatable but older and wiser to offer guidance,” adds Rachel. With the help of a friend she decided to create a new project for high school students, offering mentors who would provide guidance and friendship in an authentic and mutual capacity, a role she herself takes on with relish. Thus, Project Connect began. Hours were spent matching up mentors to potential mentees, based on commonalities such as similar interests and passions.

Together with educational benefits, the project provides emotional and social benefits to girls in mainstream schools. Along with wider community volunteering, Rachel can also see the benefits of volunteering within Westminster. As a President of the Jewish Society (JSOC) she was able to help students start the next chapter in their lives, promoting a healthier University atmosphere and a place for students to grow and flourish. She credits her extracurricular activities for her own personal transformation. The broad range of people she has met along the way has been a catalyst for her ability to self-reflect and become aware of personal weaknesses in her own skill set.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I have widened my scope of emotional intellect, sensitivity to others, a passion for giving people back their inner spirit, and encouraging them to do what they love.”

Rachel Landsberg

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Project Connect has enabled me to be connected with someone older and more experienced than me but also so similar to me – someone who can give me advice and mentor me through life in general, but also be there as a close friend.”

Student

Aged 12, involved in Project Connect

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Global in outlook and community engaged



Literate and effective communicators



HUSSAIN TAWANAEE

COURSE

Construction Management
BSc Honours

“Hard work and giving a few hours a week, can change your life to a better one.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Literate and effective
communicators



Socially, ethically and
environmentally aware



Entrepreneurial



HUSSAIN'S JOURNEY

The first year at university can be a stressful time for many students, particularly anxiety over living in a new location and meeting new people. Hussain decided to fight against 'first-year blues' by diving in head first. He ran for Course Representative in his first year, and soon after became a Student Representative for the Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB) at the University. He is also the Faculty Representative to the CIOB. This role involves working closely with professional practice to ensure fellow students have access to a network of construction professionals who set up mentoring schemes, support for dissertations and networking events. If you thought Hussain would have slowed down, think again. "Then I became a student ambassador," says Hussain, "and joined the Westminster Construction Society (WCS) as a committee member."

He persevered with his extracurricular activities during his second year and it paid off. He became the Vice President of the WCS in semester one, becoming Chairman of the Society by semester two.

You reap what you sow, and Hussain reaped the benefits of improved skills. For everything he gained, Hussain gave back. He supported the future advancement of students by informing the University that a computer upgrade was needed, and through meetings with lecturers and programme leaders in the Construction Department was able to order required books not available in the library. He was also able to secure book grants and recognition for students from the Society of Construction Law.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

"I improved my communication skills and contacts with the construction industry. I organised site visits, guest lecture events and educational trips for students studying construction, property and architecture."

Hussain Tawanaee

WHAT OTHERS SAY

"Through his volunteering he has played a positive role in enhancing the educational experience for both the undergraduate and postgraduate students and promoting the University to prospective students."

Martin Ball

Construction Studies Programme Leader

COURSE

Human Nutrition
BSc Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Literate and effective
communicators



Critical and
creative thinkers



Socially, ethically and
environmentally aware



“The years as a student at the University of Westminster have been a big stepping stone.”

KIU'S JOURNEY

Sometimes the biggest obstacles we face are those we create for ourselves. Kiu, before starting university, described herself as a shy person who was scared of doing things outside of her comfort zone. During her academic career at the University of Westminster her fellow students and staff inspired her to take up new challenges and opportunities. Kiu joined the Westminster Nutrition Society (WNS), a move that led her not only to gain inspiration and motivation in her studies, but also to learn more about herself.

The challenge was not always easy for Kiu, and some moments were particularly daunting. For example, she remembers how nervous she was taking on the role of Secretary and later President of the Society. However, with continuous support and guidance from the academic staff and the Students' Union, Kiu had many successes with WNS while simultaneously helping others to explore the world of nutrition.

During her presidency both student membership and the WNS presence on campus have gone from strength to strength. Working in partnership with staff in the Faculty of Science and Technology, Kiu made positive contributions to learning programmes, such as the introduction of mobile learning devices at Cavendish Campus. By communicating between the University and national professional bodies such as the Nutrition Society and the Institute of Food Science and Technology, Kiu was able to build and sustain relationships that should continue after her graduation.

Adaptability, creative approaches and teamwork skills enabled Kiu to bridge the gap between students, staff and the wider professional community, which helped her confidence in a leadership position. Most importantly, however, it gave Kiu the opportunity to blossom and find the spark and passion which will guide her through the rest of her career.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I am grateful for the opportunity to be involved with an academic, student-led society such as WNS. It has helped me to further my skills in areas such as communication, leadership, teamwork and people skills, as well as increasing my confidence.”

Kiu Sum

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Her involvement with the Westminster Nutrition Society (WNS) has helped offer opportunities and hands-on support for WNS members to become more aware of the current topics in nutrition, and the challenges and opportunities. Under her presidency, Kiu has continued to help grow WNS's membership and the presence of the Society at the University.”

Dr Ihab Tewfik

METTE HYLLESTED

COURSE

Linguistics and Creative Writing BA Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Literate and effective communicators



Global in outlook and community engaged



Critical and creative thinkers



“We are all FANS of the University of Westminster.”

METTE'S JOURNEY

Sometimes your reasons for volunteering may not simply be altruistic. Mette signed up to the Friends of Arriving New Students (FANS) project because of the positive impact it would have on her CV. However, according to Mette, it gave her “so much more than just transferrable skills”. Although supporting your fellow students can enable you to learn skills such as leadership and teamwork, making friends and knowing you have helped someone get the most out of their first few moments at a new university is a very rewarding experience. Sometimes it isn't the destination, it is the journey. Mette also believes in sharing her journey with her fellow students, and has written about FANS for *The Quintin Hogg* newspaper, spreading information about the project and inspiring others to take part.

Mette admits that when she began training for FANS she was very nervous, with the

same questions often running through her head – would she get on with anyone, and was it even something she could do? Ironically these would be the very questions the new students coming to Westminster would ask her. “Realising this fact helped me to overcome my initial shyness,” says Mette, but she also credits the instructors who provided interesting and knowledgeable training. “I won't lie, it was also super intense, but it was both fun and really informative,” she adds, especially learning all the ice-breakers that came in handy when she had to lead a group of 30 students. It was a good skill to have when meeting new people, and one that will serve her well personally and professionally. Mette also represented the University of Westminster at the International Students Event at the Museum of London in October 2015 – another great opportunity to meet new people and welcome the new overseas students.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“I totally came out of my shell and conquered something I had not expected to do. And on top of that I made a bunch of new friends that I would not otherwise have met. Becoming one of the FANS is hands down the best thing I have signed up for at University.”

Mette Hyllested

AMY BROWN

COURSE

English Literature
BA Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Literate and effective communicators



Critical and creative thinkers



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



“Volunteering alongside my studies has undoubtedly improved my experience not only of university, but also of London itself.”

AMY'S JOURNEY

Sometimes having the opportunities is not enough; you have to work hard to pursue them. Amy made the conscious effort to fill her spare time with as many meaningful experiences as possible. She described the result as “immensely rewarding”, making her feel both part of the London community, and a valued member of the University. As a Course Representative for the English Literature BA, she enjoyed “talking to my peers and discussing how the course could be improved”. It was a role with a lot of responsibility, but one which helped to improve Amy’s employability skills and her ability to build relationships. According to Amy, what she enjoyed most was taking an active role in university life and hopefully improving the experience of future students.

Amy was also able to boost her CV and experience in her chosen field, teaching.

Volunteering with Team Up and the University of Westminster Associates in Schools (UWAS) has improved her confidence and communication skills immeasurably. The feeling of accomplishment was something that followed Amy throughout her volunteering. “It was very rewarding to see my tutees improving by up to two grades,” she says. As an aspiring teacher, being involved with UWAS has given her enough experience to decide the direction she wants to take, and the confidence to take chances. However, gaining experience was not the only benefit of volunteering: “I have enjoyed the training sessions by UWAS – it was inspiring to listen to educators at the top of their field,” says Amy, who believes the training will have a major influence on her future as a teacher. Amy’s experience highlights just how valuable the journey towards a chosen destination can be.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“My volunteering highlight would have to be supervising on a school trip to one of Jamie Oliver’s restaurants with my UWAS school. We got to teach the children about healthy eating, while making and tasting some amazing food. I got to experience two of my passions – cooking and teaching – combined, and it was great to gain experience supervising outside of school.”

Amy Brown

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Amy has independently supported groups of children with their learning. She has been able to help the children proofread their work and carefully explain grammatical errors, building up a good rapport and helping them further their understanding. She has been a huge help in the classroom.”

Elizabeth Black

St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School

ANIL RAI

COURSE
Computer Network Security
BSc Honours

“It doesn’t matter how much you give as long as you give something.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Entrepreneurial



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Literate and effective communicators



ANIL'S JOURNEY

Anil believes university gives students the opportunity to access a lot of resources not usually available to them. It's a place to have fun and learn new skills, while interacting with a range of different people. Anil practices what he preaches, and is always ready to be part of any volunteering opportunity; at Westminster he is a Course Representative, a Student Ambassador and a Digital Ambassador, and works closely with academic staff. As well as being involved with almost all of the relevant University events throughout the 2015/16 academic year – such as Digi-Fest and Hackminster 2016 – Anil has also lent his skills to external volunteering, including the International Students Welcome (organised through the Mayor of London) where he volunteered and represented Westminster. Asked why he does it, his response is simple: “It makes me feel genuine happiness and helps achieve personal growth, and I will continue volunteering for the rest of my life.”

From creating educational blogs on preparing for exams, to passing on the advice he was given as a freshman, Anil encourages new students to take part in events alongside their studies. “I was quite inspired by some of the previous students,” says Anil, who tries to set an example to those joining the University.

For Anil, volunteering is more than just an extracurricular activity, it is exposure to useful skills that benefit both his studies and his social life. Regular volunteering to support his fellow students who were struggling with their modules enhanced his own communication and leadership skills, although that was never the agenda. “I truly believe that volunteering has to be done without the aim of securing any personal benefits,” says Anil. What he does want is for new students to do even better than him, contributing something positive for the University and for society, and he is sure it will reflect in their personal and professional growth.

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“Most importantly, I learned to manage my time. It's hard to maintain the grades and scholarship and try to apply for PhDs, but I prioritise my time, and volunteering helps me with that.”

Anil Rai



WHAT OTHERS SAY

“I had a great experience of talking with him in the first few weeks of university. He played an important role in introducing the University and the facilities. Furthermore, he helped us to feel more comfortable in a new environment and make friends.”

First year undergraduate engineering student

OMAR MAJID

COURSE

Business Management – Economics BA Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Entrepreneurial



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Global in outlook and community engaged



“People often forget the importance of meeting others face to face.”

OMAR'S JOURNEY

The 21st century is the digital age, and our reliance on digital mediums of communication has, according to Omar, overshadowed face-to-face contact. Essential to human interaction, that contact allows us to establish emotional connections through facial expression, mimicry and gesticulation – not something our age is known for. Many students say that the human interaction they experience through volunteering has helped them to understand behaviours and attitudes exhibited in the workplace, something that cannot be taught in classrooms.

Omar decided to help set up a youth wing for his local community, giving young people not only a place to socialise but also a platform where they have a voice. London Memon Youth Wing is about getting young people together to share ideas and

interests, and provide a platform for networking. Here they can discuss matters, keep themselves up to date on recent events and engage in a variety of activities that Omar was happy to help organise.

Helping to set up a new project is not without its obstacles. One of the biggest issues Omar had to overcome was time management. “I found it tricky to fit in the planning of charity meetings and events planning with juggling coursework,” says Omar, who committed his time to weekly meetings as well as organising fun events. This definitely didn't leave Omar with much time to himself, but when asked if it was worth it, there was no hesitation: “In the end the short-term sacrifice leads to long-term satisfaction, which is what I aim for in every part of my life.”



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“The best part of my volunteering was being able to see your hard work come into action; helping charities in a tangible way while also bringing the local communities together is also very satisfying.”

Omar Majid

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“He has always worked very hard contributing many hours towards the MAUK Youth Wing, and always keeps everyone smiling with his cheerful personality.”

Vali Noor
MAUK

RORY SADLER

COURSE

Business Management
and Entrepreneurship
BA Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Entrepreneurial



Literate and effective communicators



Critical and creative thinkers



“Volunteering has helped my employability and provided me with new skills I would have otherwise missed out on.”

RORY'S JOURNEY

“Our own trials and tribulations can be a learning curve not just for ourselves, but for others too,” says Rory. “I learnt a lot about the value of volunteering as I was helping others make difficult decisions.”

Rory spoke with prospective students while helping with taster sessions, telling them about his experience on the Business Management degree and why they should study at Westminster.

Together with the Westminster Entrepreneurial Society (WES), Rory helped to organise events such as the Live Talks – themed events aimed at helping aspiring entrepreneurs or students running their own business at the University. These events provided students with career advice and opportunities, and the chance to meet with speakers and network; they also taught Rory “the value of volunteering and giving back to my university” as he saw how much students enjoyed the events.

As well as the Live Talks, Rory and the WES team organised smaller, bi-weekly events – called Idea Lab – where students could share their ideas or problems, and get feedback and network with potential contacts.

All this work did not go unnoticed, and the Society received recognition from the National Association of College and University Enterprises. According to Rory, WES was “the most rewarding experience” he had during his academic year. The whole Society strongly believe that this has been a huge learning experience which developed both their personal and professional skills. Along with their own development they were able to help fellow students become more confident about networking, by offering educational opportunities which shared the real experiences of CEOs and entrepreneurs.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“The incredible feedback from every event proved to us that we were making a difference and supporting students by offering them real stories from real CEOs and entrepreneurs.”

Rory Sadler

WHAT OTHERS SAY

“Rory is a special student who recognises his competences and uses what he has to help others. He has relentlessly given his time to create an entrepreneurial spirit. Rory, and the WES, greatly helped fellow classmates and team mates to achieve their entrepreneurial ambitions through the setting up of Idea Lab.”

Jane Chang

Senior Lecturer
Marketing and Business Strategy

ANDREW SCARBOROUGH

COURSE
Human and Medical Science
BSc Honours

“Anything is possible. Just make things happen rather than wait for things to happen.”

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Critical and creative thinkers



Literate and effective communicators



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



ANDREW'S JOURNEY

Andrew doesn't think of what he does as volunteering, preferring to describe it instead as simply "following my passions and my interests". Those passions and interests are many and varied, and span projects based both within and outside the University. He is a member of the Medical Society and a Disability Officer who founded the Disability Society (which begins in the 2016/17 academic year); but Andrew says he still hasn't done as much as he wanted to this year. He is keen to get more students involved in the students' science magazine, and believes strongly that if you reflect the image of positivity, then you get results.

His enthusiasm is not limited to internal volunteering opportunities. Outside the University Andrew writes a science blog to share information that may help others, and is invited to give talks. In the long term he wants to help make the field of research more accessible to those with a disability, and

believes much of the attention and interest he receives is because he is carrying out these projects for others rather than himself. He also proves that you can get a lot done in a day if you prioritise your time.

Much of the practical advice that Andrew gives to others is drawn from his own personal experiences. "Volunteering can be very useful to allow you to explore what you can and can't do," he says. In his opinion voluntary work is an important way for students with disabilities to gain experience without a full-time commitment – something that they may not be able to give, depending on their individual condition. He is equally enthusiastic about the engagement opportunities offered by student societies. There is strength in numbers, so Andrew is determined to get students excited about these things, and he has a final word of advice from the lessons he learned while overcoming obstacles: "I think that sticking at it is a good lesson for everyone."

JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

"I learned a lot from working in a charity shop years ago – I think I learned most doing that actually. You come across all different types of people and you not only learn those employability skills but you learn people skills, which are really important. They give you a kind of freedom because it's a voluntary sector."

Andrew Scarborough

WHAT OTHERS SAY

"I met Andrew for the first time when he came in to give an interview about his volunteering experience. It was very clear the passion and dedication he had towards science, his first love, but also towards using it to help others. I was inspired and I am sure his story will go on to inspire many more."

Berekhet Berakhy

Volunteering Services
University of Westminster



COURTNEY STORY

COURSE

Biological Sciences
(Molecular Biology & Genetics) BSc Honours

MAIN GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES GAINED:

Critical and creative thinkers



Socially, ethically and environmentally aware



Literate and effective communicators



“I do all of it to help myself, the community and everybody around me.”

COURTNEY'S JOURNEY

A Professor of Philosophy named Arthur Szathmary once said that if you choose the job you love, you will never have to work a day in your life. Courtney was able to extend this adage to volunteering with great success. She has a passion for sports, so she picked volunteering opportunities where she was able to enjoy her time as well as improve her skills. Being part of the University of Westminster Students' Union Hockey club helped her to meet people with similar interests, and improve her sportsmanship and teamwork skills – both transferable to academic and professional development. A passion for sports helped her secure a lifeguard position, and previous work with LINKS (the student unit of St John Ambulance) helped to reinforce her first aid skills. “I have extended and updated my knowledge and experience of first aid and safety, so that in the event of an accident, I can save lives and promote life quality,” says Courtney.

But that is not Courtney's only commitment to extracurricular volunteering activities inside the University. She was passionate about helping improve the student experience, so she became a Course Representative and joined the Focus Group. Courtney also dedicates a part of her time to 'churchyard clear-up', helping to keep it pristine, something she feels strongly about. “I enjoy every moment of it,” adds Courtney, “especially the community coming together and working for a common goal.”

What does the future hold for Courtney? Well, there's no sign that she will be slowing down anytime soon. She is now starting to volunteer with St John's Ambulance at events, to help save lives and promote peoples' quality of life. Courtney is a perfect example that when you do something you are passionate about, it isn't really work.



JOURNEY HIGHLIGHT

“All my extracurricular activities that include first aid. I do this for me; I want to be there to help if I can, as there are too many accidents that could be prevented. It is a crucial skill to have and it is transferable to any situation and wherever I go, such as in University or even walking down the street.”

Courtney Story



ABOUT

We can assist with:

- sourcing vacancies
- developing employability skills
- identifying key skills and experiences
- planning your professional development
- presenting a positive image – how to market yourself effectively.

We have a team of friendly career professionals who are in touch with employers on a daily basis to provide you with up-to-date employment trends and job vacancies. We also provide guidance and information on further study and training opportunities.



OUR SERVICES



QUICK ONE-TO-ONE ADVICE

These 20-minute 'quick query' advice sessions can give you feedback and advice on CVs, application forms, interviews and other career concerns. Appointments can be booked through our vacancy and events portal, careers.westminster.ac.uk or by calling 020 7911 5184. Bookings can only be made on the day after 9.30am.

E-ADVICE

If you are not able to get a face-to-face appointment, you can get feedback and advice on CVs, applications, interview preparation and other career concerns via e-advice. A careers consultant will respond to e-advice via email (or telephone if convenient).

For more information visit the 'one-to-one advice' page at westminster.ac.uk/careers

MENTORING

You can develop your skills, and expand your knowledge and experience of the working world, by taking part in a mentoring scheme. The National Mentoring Consortium's Ethnic Minority Undergraduate Scheme and the Career Development Centre Scheme are designed to widen the aspirations and enhance the personal effectiveness of students.

For more information visit: westminster.ac.uk/mentoring

CAREERS GUIDANCE APPOINTMENTS

These 45-minute appointments provide in-depth careers advice*. You can attend up to four guidance interviews per academic year. Appointments at New Cavendish Street or Harrow can be booked by calling reception on 020 7911 5184.

* Students are normally required to attend a quick query session before booking a careers guidance interview.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering is a type of unpaid work that helps other people, local communities or the environment. Volunteering can boost your CV, open up opportunities for valuable work experience and increase your employability. For more information visit westminster.ac.uk/volunteering

EMPLOYER EVENTS

Employer events and company presentations allow students to meet employers face to face, and to gain first-hand information about a specific company and the market it operates in. There are a range of careers-related events on campus for both current students and recent graduates. For more information and to register for upcoming events visit our vacancy and events portal at careers.westminster.ac.uk

OUR SERVICES

TALENT BANK

The Talent Bank is an invaluable resource that provides students with paid temporary and part-time vacancies both within the University and with local businesses. Taking on work while studying is a fantastic opportunity for you to develop transferable skills, gain valuable professional experience and subsequently increase job prospects after graduation. For more information visit westminster.ac.uk/talent-bank

VACANCIES AND EVENTS PORTAL

Our online vacancy and events service helps you to look for part-time, placement, voluntary and graduate opportunities, as well as book a place on events with employers, professional bodies and other organisations. This service is also available to recent graduates. To access the portal, go to careers.westminster.ac.uk

ASSOCIATES IN SCHOOLS SCHEME

This is an exciting opportunity for you to gain valuable work experience in a school classroom. For 15 days participants support a teacher in a secondary school or college while exploring a future career in teaching. Recruitment is via three intakes per academic year:

Intake 1: June – August

Intake 2: September – November

Intake 3: December – February

For more information, visit westminster.ac.uk/uwas

INFORMATION RESOURCES

We hold a range of comprehensive materials in our information rooms relating to occupations, employers, voluntary work, enterprise, working and studying overseas, and further study and training.

WORK PLACEMENTS

Both the Westminster Business School and Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design have dedicated placements teams. These teams are tasked with helping to source placements and assist students in finding and applying for placements for summer and sandwich years. The Business School team also administers the Santander Universities SME Internship Programme which is open to all students.

ANNUAL EVENTS

THE ANNUAL CAREERS FAIR

The Annual Careers Fair is hosted by the Career Development Centre in semester one, and is open to students from every discipline and level of study. The Fair is attended by large graduate recruiters, as well as part-time recruiters. It is an excellent opportunity for you to meet employers on campus, and many students come away from the day with useful contacts or even having secured an interview.

For more details visit westminster.ac.uk/annual-careers-fair

LUNCHTIME SESSIONS

The Career Development Centre's Lunchtime Sessions can boost your chances of landing a graduate job, or finding a placement, vacation or voluntary work. The bite-sized lunchtime sessions cover topics such as CVs, job-seeking strategies, interview tips and much more. Look out for the lunchtime sessions taking place during semester two.

DROP-INS

The Career Development Centre liaises with employers to arrange drop-ins for anyone interested in working part-time during their studies. This is an opportunity for you to meet face to face with employers on campus. Employers come from a wide range of industries and recruit for casual part-time jobs on either a one-off or longer term basis. Details of upcoming drop-ins can be found on our vacancy and events portal at careers.westminster.ac.uk

SKILLS ACADEMY

The Skills Academy takes place at the end of semester two every year, immediately after the examination period. It provides an opportunity for you to prepare for job hunting after graduation in an increasingly competitive graduate labour market. These seminars are delivered by experienced consultants and external guests, and include sessions on the following: job search skills; commercial awareness; networking; starting a business; business consultancy and entrepreneurship; public speaking; interviews; CVs; assessment centres; job hunting with social media; and much more.

Details will be available around the time of the Skills Academy. For more information, visit our vacancy and events portal at careers.westminster.ac.uk

THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE ORGANISES A SERIES OF UNIVERSITY-WIDE ANNUAL EVENTS, SOME OF WHICH ARE HIGHLIGHTED HERE. PLEASE VISIT [CAREERS.WESTMINSTER.AC.UK](http://careers.westminster.ac.uk) FOR MORE DETAILS ON ALL OF THE EVENTS WE CO-ORDINATE.



CONTACT US

FIND US

We are on the corner of New Cavendish Street and Great Titchfield Street, next to Cavendish Campus.

*Temporary closures may occur during the summer vacation – please check our website or telephone before you visit us.

CAVENDISH HOUSE

FULL-TIME SERVICE

1st Floor, Cavendish House
101 New Cavendish Street
London, W1W 6XH

T: 020 7911 5184

E: careers@westminster.ac.uk

Tube: Goodge St, Oxford Circus, Great Portland Street or Warren Street

OPENING TIMES

Term-time:

Monday – Friday:

9.30am – 5pm,

except Tuesday: 12 – 5pm

Quick Query:

Only bookable on the day.

Call us or book online via

careers.westminster.ac.uk

Vacation: As above

HARROW

PART-TIME SERVICE

Room E.16,

Maria Hewlitt Building

Watford Road

Northwick Park

Middlesex, HA1 3TP

T: 020 8357 7325

E: careers@westminster.ac.uk

Tube: Northwick Park

OPENING TIMES

Term-time:

Mondays and Thursdays:

10am – 4pm

Quick Query:

Only bookable on the day.

Call us or book online via

careers.westminster.ac.uk

Vacation: Closed

SOCIAL MEDIA

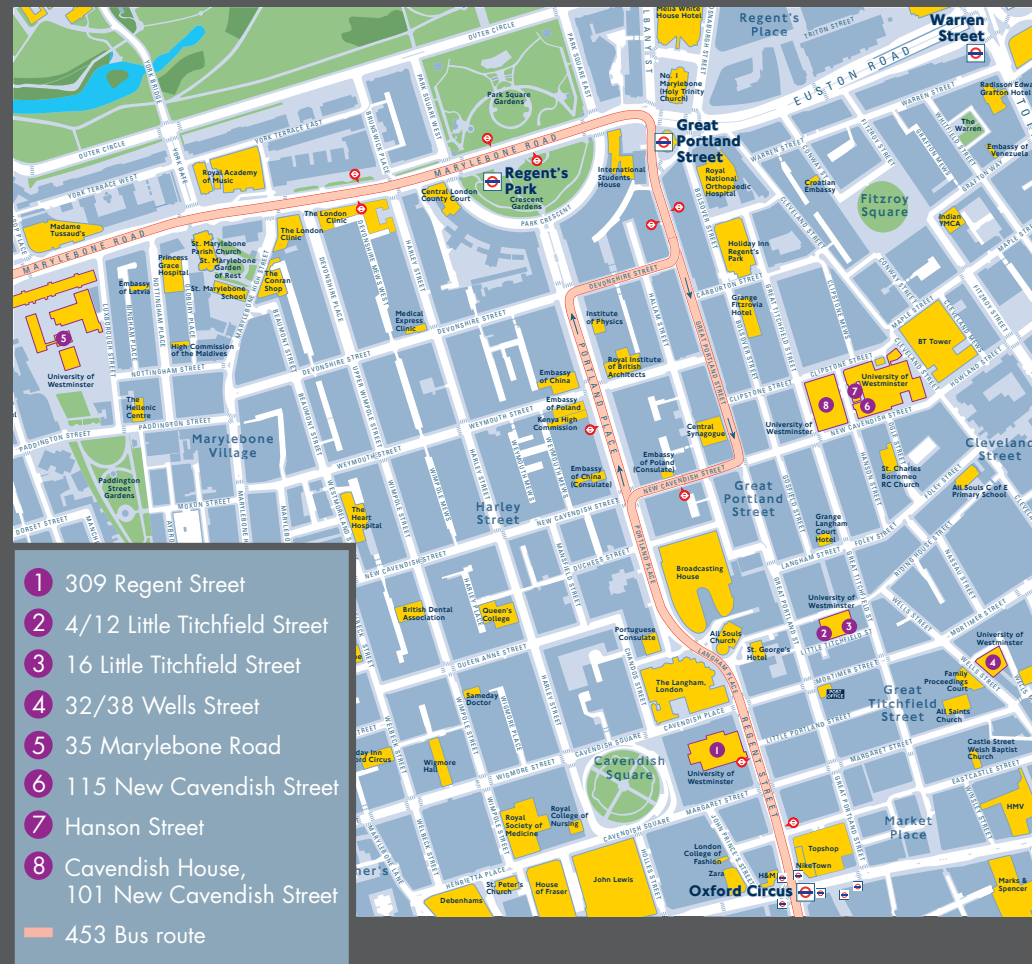
Contact and follow us on social media:

 facebook.com/uowcareers

 twitter.com/uw_careers

 blog.westminster.ac.uk/careers

westminster.ac.uk/careers



The Career Development Centre offers impartial, client-focused, confidential, collaborative and accessible services in accordance with the University's Equal Opportunities policy and the National Information, Advice and Guidance Code of Principles. For a full Statement of Service visit our website westminster.ac.uk/careers

We constantly strive to improve our services to all our users and welcome any feedback or comments. Please feel free to make any suggestions on areas you feel could be improved. Any comments on what you feel is working well would also be welcome. To submit these comments, please email us at careers@westminster.ac.uk

westminster.ac.uk/volunteering

VOLUNTEERING SERVICES

University of Westminster

101 New Cavendish Street

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T: +44 (0)20 7911 5184

E: careers@westminster.ac.uk

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Edited by Keith Potter

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