



Geography Past Pupil Career Profile Loreto Grammar School

Name: Shannon Starrs

Dates you studied at Loreto Grammar School: September 2007 - June 2014

A' Level Subjects Studied: Geography, Biology and Health & Social Care

Third Level Course/ Training Programme/ Qualification (with location) undertaken after leaving Loreto: BSc Geography at Queen's University, Belfast. I graduated with a 2.1 in June 2018.

What attracted you to this course?

I wanted to pursue Geography in University as I wasn't sure what I wanted to do for work, and I had enjoyed studying this subject throughout my time at Loreto. I decided that Geography would be a good course of study as it helps to develop several skills, many of which are transferable and can be applied in numerous jobs.

Company you currently work for, Job Title and Location:

I work for the Education Authority as an Executive Officer in Service Development for Children & Young People's Services in the Omagh office.

How has Geography helped you in your career? (skills development, e.g. time management, problem-solving, leadership, team work, literacy, numeracy, self-discipline, perseverance, etc)

Geography has really helped me with my career as I already had the skills I needed in University when leaving Loreto. A-Level Geography helps develop skills such as organisation and time management when completing coursework and preparing for exams, and these skills were very useful when I went to University and had to organise my time with complete independence. The coursework and various statistics involved can help make complex challenges easier, and can give you good examples of times when you have handled and analysed data effectively. The fieldwork element to Geography really develops the most skills. Not only do you have to work effectively in a team to gather all of the information in a timely manner, you also need to communicate effectively and at times, step into a leadership role. All of the skills that are used whilst studying Geography are really useful to take into any career path, as they help to demonstrate that you can use your own initiative and work independently, but have the ability to work in a team and have sound communication skills.

Has your study of Geography opened up new opportunities for you? (travel, working abroad, volunteering, leadership, etc)

Whilst at University, I took a voluntary year out to complete a student internship in the CREST (Centre for Renewable Energy and Sustainable Technology) Centre in South West College, Enniskillen. This afforded me with many great opportunities and gave me a great insight to the world of renewable energy. They provide information and support to small and medium sized businesses to bring sustainability ideas to life. This internship also gave me the opportunity to go to Athens on a 'Train the Trainer' trip, allowing me to learn as an instructor, how to teach students about the significance of freshwater as a resource, and ways to preserve this resource.

Why would you recommend A Level Geography to a young person today?

I would highly recommend Geography as an A Level to every young person. It is a really enjoyable subject with topics that are current and relatable in the modern world. There are various aspects to the subject which can suit, and appeal to everyone, no matter your strengths and weaknesses with regards to learning. There are so many transferable skills which you can adopt from studying Geography including your written and oral communication skills, but also numerical and analytical, as well as good leadership and teamwork skills. Throughout my time in Loreto, but particularly during my A Levels, Geography was my favourite subject. It was nice to have a subject where I knew what I was doing, as I was only building on knowledge that I had already learnt in junior school and during my GCSE's.
