

# THE UP TO



OCTOBER 2023

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# YOUR STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



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She/Her  
Independent Education and Welfare Advisor



**Rosie Felt**  
She/Her  
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**Dan Odebode**  
He/Him  
Events and Engagement Officer

# MEET THE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION SERVICES AT BPP

HAJRA BABARIYA

A VISION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS AND INNOVATION



## Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I am honoured and excited to introduce myself as the Director of Education Services. I joined BPP around 5 years ago as a Student Voice Manager within the Students' Association and my most recent role has been the Group Head of Student Affairs, where I worked across BPP to empower the student and learner voice while managing the Students' Association. The Students' Association has gone from strength to strength over the last year and they have been a fantastic team to work with and I look forward to continuing to work with them.

I bring with me a deep passion for improving the student and learner experience at BPP

and a commitment to fostering innovation and excellence. As I embark on this journey, my primary goal is to reach new heights and collectively achieve great results.

## What is Group Education Services?

In an era of rapid technological advancements and evolving global challenges, the role of Education Services at universities has never been more critical. As the Director of Education Services at BPP, I am privileged to lead a team dedicated to equipping our students with the knowledge, skills, and mindset needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. Group Education Services' main role is to provide a range of services to support schools and individual students and learners in achieving successful outcomes. We play a key role in responding to and resolving complex student needs and cases. The Service comprises of the following teams:

- Careers
- Social Impact
- Inclusion & Learning Support
- Learning & Teaching
- Library
- Safeguarding
- Students' Association

## Which of the above teams do you manage?

I work closely with all the above teams but specifically manage the Careers, Safeguarding, Students' Association and Inclusion & Learning Support teams. The remaining teams are managed by the Dean of Education Services, Dr Pete Alston.

## What was the highlight of your last role and in your opinion what do you think will be the highlight of this role?

One of the highlights of my previous role was the opportunity to drive positive change and directly impact the student experience at BPP. I hope this will continue to be the highlight of my new role and I hope to foster a culture of empowerment and innovation. I hope to lead on initiatives that have a lasting impact on students, faculty, and the entire university community.



## What advice would you give to a new student starting at BPP?

### 1. Stay organised

Use tools like calendars, planners, or digital apps to keep track of your classes, assignments, and deadlines. Being organised will help you manage your time effectively and reduce stress.

### 2. Attend Classes

Regular attendance is crucial for understanding the material, building relationships with professors, and staying up to date with important announcements.

### 3. Engage Actively

Participate in class discussions, ask questions, and seek clarification when needed. Engaging actively in your classes will deepen your understanding of the subject matter.

### 4. Time Management

Create a study schedule that balances your academic work, extracurricular activities, and personal time. Avoid procrastination and prioritize your tasks.

## 5. Build Relationships

Connect with your classmates, professors, and academic advisors. Building a strong network can provide you with valuable opportunities, resources, and a sense of community.

## 6. Explore Extracurriculars

Join clubs, organizations, or sports teams that align with your interests. These activities can help you make friends, develop new skills, and enhance your university experience.

## 7. Take Care of Yourself

Prioritise your physical and mental well-being. Get enough sleep, eat balanced meals, exercise regularly, and practice stress-relief techniques.

## 8. Plan for the Future

Start thinking about your post-graduation plans early. Career services, internships, and networking events can help you prepare for life after university.

## 9. Enjoy the Journey

While academics are important, remember that university is also a time to have fun, make memories, and enjoy the experience. Take time to explore your surroundings and make the most of this unique phase of your life.



# SAFEGUARDING SPOTLIGHT – WELLNESS AT WORK

For our safeguarding topic this month, we are promoting a healthy and balanced workplace. Considering how much time many of us might spend at work, workplace environments and culture can impact our wellbeing. In this issue, we're excited to bring you some tips and resources to help you achieve wellness while excelling in your roles!

**Prioritising Mental Health in the Workplace:**  
Having an open dialogue about mental health, and promoting a culture at work that allows for this is vital to improve attitudes, and challenge myths and prejudice. We want you to feel confident talking about your mental health at work, so make use of internal communication channels, encourage mental health champions and get people talking about the importance of good mental health and wellbeing at work! One way to do this might be through having social activities at work for team building or peer support and buddy systems / mentoring. Remember to stay in touch with your line manager and let them know when things might be feeling too much, or, try sharing with a trusted colleague to see if they might be able to give you any support or suggestions.

## Work-Life Balance:

Remember the importance of working sensible hours, taking full lunch breaks and avoiding working at the weekends. In the short term, not doing this might seem manageable, but if it becomes a long term habit to work overtime, not taking full lunch breaks, this can quickly lead to stress and burnout, and consequently lower performance, creativity and morale, so remember to rest and recuperate after busy periods- and take your full annual leave entitlements!

## Desk Yoga for Stress Relief

Combat midday stress with our simple desk yoga routine! Try checking out 'Desk Yoga' on YouTube: many videos have curated sets of easy stretches and breathing exercises that you can do right at your desk. Taking short breaks to move and stretch improves circulation and energy levels. Remember, wellness is an ongoing journey, and small changes can make a big impact- can you think of any ways you promote wellbeing at your work? If so, please email us on [apprenticenetwork@bpp.com](mailto:apprenticenetwork@bpp.com) as we would love to feature your stories! Wishing you all a month filled with positivity and well-being!



# PREVENT TOPIC OF THE MONTH: SHARING AND VIEWING CONTENT ONLINE

This month, we thought we would explore extremist behaviour online and their legal implications. Keeping in touch with people online is a great way of keeping us connected, but it is really important to understand what the law says about what is and isn't illegal online. We know that terrorists often use the internet to radicalise and groom people, encouraging them to support violence or acts of terrorism, often through sharing extremist content or material online.

Did you know that you could be committing a criminal offence if you share terrorist content or terrorist material online? This doesn't stop you from sharing news about acts of terrorism or terrorism events around the world but highlights how important it is to share the news from trustworthy sources. Here are some top bullet points on sharing and viewing content online, as outlined by [goingtoofar.lgfl.org](http://goingtoofar.lgfl.org):

## But don't I have the right to say what I like online?

Free speech is an important part of our democratic society. However, when speech is threatening or abusive it can be illegal, online as well as offline.

## I found that post really offensive, but it isn't illegal. What can I do?

You can report the post directly to the platform or site asking them to remove it. If you know the person who posted it, you could ask them to remove it too. Remember not to share it, but you might want to take a screen shot to use as evidence.

### I forwarded that tweet because I wanted to warn others about it. Will I get in trouble?

Whilst you might have good intentions, forwarding offensive material or conspiracy theories could have damaging and harmful consequences. If it incites hate or violence, you could be committing a criminal offence that may result in you being arrested and prosecuted.

### What's the harm in looking at a video of a terrorist attack or forwarding it to my mates?

By forwarding terrorist content, you could be committing the offence of disseminating terrorist materials, which again could make you liable to arrest and prosecution. By looking at it, you are playing into the terrorist's hands because this is exactly what they want.

### I was just looking at those memes, they're quite funny - It doesn't mean I'm an extremist or breaking the law!

You may not be breaking the law but be mindful that it is a common tactic by extremist groups to put out content that seems harmless, by using humour and relating it to current events. It may not appear implicitly violent but is designed to plant a seed and incite strong feelings in people or normalise hateful behaviour.

Take a look at the [goingtoofar.lgfl.org.uk](http://goingtoofar.lgfl.org.uk) website for more information and resources. If you would like to check your internet filter, to see if it blocks inappropriate content, you can do so by visiting [swgfl.org.uk/services/test-filtering](http://swgfl.org.uk/services/test-filtering).

# EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION: DIGITAL POVERTY

For our EDI topic this month, we are doing a feature on Digital Poverty, and the fantastic work some of BPP's Apprentices are doing to help end Digital Poverty.

Digital Poverty is the inability to interact with the online world fully, when, where and how an individual needs to ([digitalpovertyalliance.org](http://digitalpovertyalliance.org)). Digital Poverty Alliance outlines that you are far less likely to have access to the online world if you are living on a lower income, and this means, increasingly so, not having access to the fundamentals of life. 1 in 5 children home schooling during the pandemic did not have access to an appropriate device like a laptop, 26% of young people do not have access to a laptop or similar device, and 53% of people offline can't afford an average monthly broadband bill. From social security, to healthcare, education and training, to finding work and applying for jobs – critical services are more and more online. So digital inclusion is no longer something that's 'nice to have' – it's an essential. And being cut off from digital isn't just an inconvenience – it compounds and exacerbates poverty.

Hear from one of our apprentices, Grace Tondeur on why they are trying to end Digital Poverty.

### Can you let us know why highlighting and helping end digital poverty is important to you?

- Helping end digital poverty is important to me, because we live in such a digital age that its unavoidable and very much a basic need.
- Given it's importance in every day life and work, I don't think anyone should be without essential digital skills and technology. Yet the number speak for themselves as 3.8m adults don't have access to technology and 10m adults don't have essential digital skills.

### What is the most significant thing you want people to know about ending digital poverty?

- That everyone can help end digital poverty, whether that's sharing your skills or donating old equipment.

### What pledge have you made to do with ending digital poverty?

- I have pledged to go into schools and get kids more aware about the different roles that are available now, the skills that are needed to do them and the routes to those roles.
- Digital poverty is causing skills gaps, making it harder to fill roles, but how can we expect the next generation to fill those roles if they don't know what they are or how to achieve them.

### How can this help with apprenticeships?

- There are so many different apprenticeship routes out there, often with digital skills embedded into them.
- If kids are more aware of what roles there are available and that apprenticeships are a great way of achieving that goal it would mean a more sustainable talent pipeline.



## MAKE A PLEDGE

The Digital Poverty Alliance logo is located in the top right corner of the slide. Below it, the text "MAKE A PLEDGE" is displayed in large, bold, green letters. To the right of the text, there is an illustration of several hands of different skin tones reaching up towards a document. One hand is holding a pencil and pointing at the document, which has a checkmark in the top right corner.

# CLUBS AND SOCIETIES



The BPP Nigerian Society is a culturally based society that was officially inaugurated on January 3, 2023. The Society is open to all Nigerian students studying at BPP University in the United Kingdom.

The objectives of the Society are as follows:

- To serve as an avenue to promote social and academic interest among Nigerian students in BPP
- To help facilitate easy onboarding for Nigerian students arriving at BPP
- To help promote BPP as an educational destination for prospective Nigerian students
- To serve as a forum to share ideas, and carry out activities in line with 1 above.

Currently, we have an executive committee that manages the affairs of the society, including campus coordinators for all BPP university campuses where there are Nigerian students. Joining the Society is free. We have a WhatsApp group that all intending members can join by contacting [k.agada@my bpp.com](mailto:k.agada@my bpp.com) or by asking any Nigerian student in their campus.

Kelvin-Ken Agada  
President, BPP Nigerian Society



FOR STUDENTS AND APPRENTICES

The BPP Islamic Society aims to empower Muslim apprentices and BPP students to champion their faith and to create a community for Muslims.

Though often overlooked, faith tends to be the most important aspect of a Muslim's life. BPP ISOC intends to create a space to recognise the important role faith plays in our lives and to provide a safe space for Muslims to be proudly Muslim, rather than having to compromise at work or university.

**To join**, all you need to do is fill out a quick form <https://forms.gle/UU4cWpGE8iW6E5zs8>.

This will give you access to a close sisterhood/brotherhood and our events. Our annual events include an Icebreaker, Charity Week, Eid events and more!



# SOCIAL IMPACT AT BPP

THE NEW NAME FOR THE BPP PRO BONO CENTRE

## Social Impact at BPP.



2024 marks the 20th anniversary of the Pro Bono Centre at BPP. Over the last twenty years, our students have helped to advise, educate and empower thousands of people from diverse communities across the country. This is something we are incredibly proud of.

Originally based in the law school, the reference to 'pro bono' was an obvious connection to the free legal advice services we offer. Nearly twenty years on, pro bono is still part of what we do, but it is not everything we do, nor does the term resonate with everyone who can work with us.

Our extensive public legal education and legal advice services are now complemented by widening participation initiatives, such as the BPP Experience project and the award-winning Reverse Mentoring Scheme. Our law school

student volunteers are now joined by learners from the School of Tech, Estio and Firebrand, who have been making an impact as part of the BPP Apprenticeship Influencer scheme. Business School students are joining us on project management and digital marketing internships that will enhance accessibility to our services for our clients and volunteers.

What we have become is a destination for social impact volunteering that resonates with students and learners across schools, programmes and across industries. In Social Impact the message is clear: learn from a different perspective, make a difference.

This is an exciting time for Social Impact at BPP. We look forward to the next 20 years of supporting students to succeed at BPP.

## Work experience like no other.

Volunteer with the Social Impact team and take your learning experience at BPP to the next level.

Support positive change in the community while developing the knowledge and skills to boost your professional career.

### Looking for QWE?

If you're a Social Impact volunteer on one of our SQE programmes, you could also be eligible to apply for a QWE trainee role with the Social Impact team.

### Social Impact.

**Learn from a  
different perspective.**

**Make a difference.**

For more information,  
contact [socialimpact@bpp.com](mailto:socialimpact@bpp.com)



# REVERSE MENTORING AT BPP



The perception that the legal profession is dominated by white, middle class, males is a hefty stereotype, but one that continues to influence the next generation of lawyers and their confidence in the legal sector's approach to ED&I.

BPP's Reverse Mentoring Scheme is a response to this issue. Launched in 2022, the Scheme sensitises senior leaders to ED&I issues through the lived experience of BPP law students from diverse backgrounds. Flipping the traditional mentoring concept, students mentor law firms through a review of the firm's approach to ED&I. This includes website, social media presence, recruitment and progression policies, as well as employee perceptions of what ED&I means to a firm. Participants are encouraged to keep an open mind and to have honest, authentic conversations.

Using the fresh, alternative insights offered by BPP students, the Scheme breaks down barriers and drives change in the ED&I space. Bringing together people who might not otherwise connect, it promotes a culture of inclusion. For many of the students involved, the Scheme offers their first opportunity to step into a law firm, or indeed any professional setting. This can be a daunting prospect, not least because they will be telling a senior professional what they need to do

differently. But therein lies the win. Access to the profession increases. Future lawyers influence and lead change. Underrepresented individuals gain a voice.

This incredibly enriching and empowering opportunity for all stakeholders is offered by BPP to firms, free of charge.

Collaboration is key to the success of the Scheme, which is reliant on the three-way partnership between BPP, participating law firms and the student mentors. BPP recruits, trains and partners the law firm mentees and student mentors, ensuring they are clear as to the Scheme's aims and objectives.

## Support

To support quality engagement between mentors and their law firms, students are coached by BPP around how to have open, honest, conversations and how to work effectively in a professional setting. In turn, law firms encourage a collaborative approach with student mentors through regular touchpoint meetings.

Law firm trust and investment in the Scheme is demonstrated by the access given to student mentors to policies, internal processes, even strategic information, which enables the mentor to offer properly informed feedback. Common themes are shared at a wrap up event hosted by BPP.

Katherine, former student mentor, confirms her experience of this approach:

*"The Scheme provided an excellent opportunity to influence change, to network and to work collaboratively. Student mentors met with senior solicitors and marketing executives within the firm on several occasions. Mentors were very pleased to have the*

*opportunity to work alongside the firm and interact with members of the legal profession."*

Students acknowledge the benefit too, as student mentor Brie explains:

*"Why did we want to take part? The importance of diversity and inclusion; we feel strongly about the continued promotion of EDI within the legal profession. The Scheme was new, possibly unique, and offered us the opportunity to work alongside law firms. This was very attractive. The Scheme would also be a beneficial addition to our CVs."*

## Impact

Every firm that responded to the participant survey agreed that its future DE&I strategy had been impacted by the Scheme. Rebecca Pallott, Partner at Mills and Reeve, explains:

*"We found the process of reverse mentoring rewarding and valuable to our business. We are working hard to create a diverse and inclusive work force, but we do not have all the answers. The students helped us to identify areas for improvement which we hadn't thought about. We have already acted upon the suggestions of some of the students..."*

The Scheme's law firms met 89% of the ED&I objectives set with their mentors. This translated to numerous positive ED&I actions, including: addressing unconscious barriers for clients and prospective employees, a refresh of company values, hosting events to celebrate religious festivals and a review of recruitment content through the lens of Early Careers. One firm even appointed a Head of ED&I.

100% of the firms who completed feedback said they would recommend the Scheme to other organisations, the experience clearly being positive:

*"DAC Beachcroft are taking part in this scheme....after just one session with our mentors, we are buzzing! Fantastic opportunity for our firm and for our mentors!"*

For students, contributing to this change is hugely satisfying, as is the rare opportunity

to have open, frank conversations with senior stakeholders in a law firm:

*"It was important to us that we gave mentors access to the most senior people...our group of mentees included a Partner...and a senior lawyer who sits on our Diversity, Inclusion and Wellbeing Steering Group..."*

[Mills and Reeve]

For the employability sector, the Scheme not only represents a force for change, but a collaborative way to enhance skills, develop confidence and improve accessibility.

What was not anticipated was how the Scheme would become a blueprint for a national initiative.

Within a year, the Scheme has been rolled out across the country, working with 125 students with 29 law firms. This scalability has enabled BPP to keep ED&I at the forefront of law firm culture and to widen access to the legal profession, not only for BPP students, but for all future lawyers.

Consequently, the Scheme continues to drive cultural change, promote diversity and create a transparent environment within which to recruit and retain Millennial talent. Significantly, it has also instilled a sense of confidence in the legal profession, as a sector committed to ED&I.

The Reverse Mentoring Scheme is delivered by BPP's Social Impact team in collaboration with the Law School. If you are a current BPP student and would like to become a student mentor for our next Reverse Mentoring Scheme cohort, please contact the [lucywildig@bpp.com](mailto:lucywildig@bpp.com) or [emmablackstone@bpp.com](mailto:emmablackstone@bpp.com) to register your interest.



# REFLECTING ON A SUCCESSFUL PLASTIC FREE JULY CAMPAIGN AT BPP STUDENTS ASSOCIATION



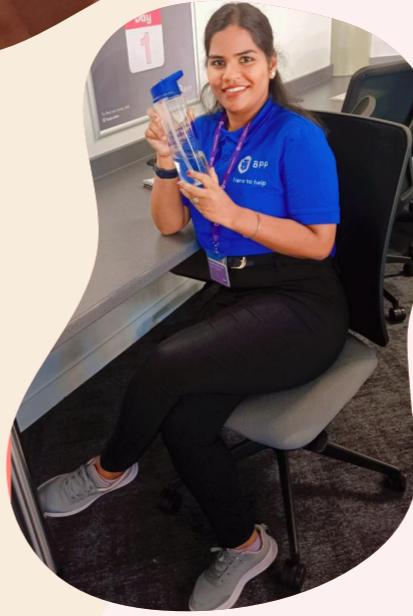
This July, BPP Students' Association launched their first Plastic Free July campaign, encouraging university Apprentices, Students, and Staff to pledge to be as plastic free as possible. We believe that small changes, such as swapping a disposable coffee cup for a reusable coffee cup, or opting for a re-useable shopping bag, can have a big impact.

The Plastic Free July campaign at has proven to be a great success, driven by the enthusiasm of BPPs student community. With over 60 pledges to be plastic-free, the campaign has begun a collective movement towards a more sustainable future.

The campaign's impact goes beyond the campus, with many of our pledges committed to encourage their family and friends to go

plastic free. The popular pledgers were to commit to the use of reusable coffee cups and water bottles. These choices reflect a growing awareness of the role individual actions play in reducing plastic waste. The campaign's success demonstrates that small changes can amass into a powerful force for change.

As we reflect on the achievements of the Plastic Free July campaign at BPP Students Association, it becomes clear that this is just the beginning. The campaign's momentum can serve as a springboard for further sustainable initiatives within the Students' Association and the wider community. The commitments made during this campaign have the potential to shape long-term habits and cultivate a generation of environmentally conscious advocates.



# SAY MY NAME

**WRITTEN BY CHARLOTTE WANENDEYA  
HEAD OF LAW, LONDON HOLBORN**



**Pronouns:** She/Her/Hers  
**Say My Name:** "Shaa-Lutte Wah-Nen-Day-Ah"  
**Hear My Name:** <https://namedrop.io/charlottewanenyea>

**What is the Say My Name campaign?**  
The Say My Name Campaign is an initiative that advocates for the proper pronunciation and recognition of people's names. At BPP, we understand that a person's name is an integral part of their identity, culture and heritage. Yet, mispronunciations and misunderstandings are all too common, leading to feelings of frustration, exclusion and even erasure. BPP's Say My Name campaign seeks to



raise awareness about this issue and create a more inclusive work and learning space by encouraging respectful name usage. Shockingly, research shows that in some cases, students have only heard their name said by their university for the first time at their Graduation Ceremony. The Say My Name campaign hopes to bring this forward into the classroom and beyond - it is important both for our student community as well as for our staff.

**Can you share the inspiration behind the Say My Name Campaign? What personal experiences or observations led you to launch this initiative at BPP?**

I have always been passionate about diversity and inclusion, and acutely aware of the importance of sense of belonging. My own dual heritage (English/French) is probably the very start of this. Next, my lived experience of raising my two mixed heritage daughters (English/French/Ugandan) showed me firsthand how they often felt excluded on their educational journey, from their names being mis-pronounced to a sense of not belonging and being overlooked altogether.

I have worked in university education for almost 30 years now and have always put

inclusion at the very heart of my teaching practice. I have been involved in various pieces of research into diversity and inclusion; I have followed with passion the wealth of research in this area, and I have conducted my own scholarly research into the impact of sense of belonging on retention and attainment levels in education. I think this also translates into motivation in the workplace. I was also inspired by a seminal conference I attended at Warwick University, where they presented its extensive research on importance of use of name in the classroom. Simply put, if we feel we belong, we perform better. The first rule of creating a sense of belonging is to ensure we use each other's names. How can I be included and feel a sense of belonging if you do not use my name (correctly)?



**The Say My Name Campaign has a strong emphasis on the importance of correct name pronunciation and recognition. Can you elaborate on why you believe this issue is so significant for BPP?**

I would make two key points here. First, it is clear that the people most affected by mispronunciation of their name or never having their name used are from an ethnic minority. This feeds into the issue of attainment and retention in a university setting, and the disturbing so-called attainment gap. This is hugely significant for BPP because, as I say above, use of name is the first step in showing interest in a person and in creating rapport. This leads to sense of belonging and then in turn to inclusion which leads to motivation and better performance. It's a no-brainer for me.

Second, the Say My Name initiative, promoting respectful use of name, embodies BPP's values and all that BPP stands for in terms of diversity and inclusion. As well as our values of

"Everybody Matters" and "Trust and Respect", this initiative also recognises that we are "Stronger Together": that more diverse teams perform better and make better decisions. This is crucial both in the workplace and in the classroom.

**Looking ahead, what are your aspirations for the Say My Name Campaign? How do you hope to see the campaign evolve and make an even greater impact in the future?**

I really want all students and staff to be aware of the Say My Name campaign and gradually and naturally incorporate use of name into their everyday. I have already heard quite a few testimonies from students I talk to saying that BPP is the first educational institution they have been to where they have had a tutor say their name and make an effort to say it correctly. These students have spoken to me about the positive impact this has had on them and how this simple act immediately made them feel included and more motivated. Others have told me that it gave them the confidence to use their given name - rich with meaning - with pride, rather than having to use a nickname in class to make it easier for the tutor or fellow students. These are powerful testimonies indeed! And this to me is success already!

It's not easy spreading the word, but I think it's important this becomes part of BPP's culture. Whilst it's partly grassroots and word of mouth, there is also a strong strategy in place. Training is being rolled out, covering the impact of mispronouncing names; strategies for actively listening and learning correct name pronunciations; cultural sensitivity and awareness and practical techniques for remembering and correctly pronouncing diverse names. Finally, and most importantly, the Students' Association has been working extremely hard on the Say My Name campaign to make a meaningful impact through a carefully planned road map, including a series of videos of BPP students and learners pronouncing their names and the meanings behind them, along with why they feel this campaign is important. You can watch these videos on the Virtual Campus or on the BPP Students' Association Instagram.

# THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM



The Customer Experience team was created by BPP to positively enhance our student's journey from start to finish. We have brought forward many new initiatives and unique contributions to student life. These include the introduction of our on-campus Student Support Hubs, Centre Experience Managers, and the creation of our University Customer Support team to initially support all University students on programme. We hope to bring our students a more streamline, engaging and beneficial experience through evolving various areas of BPP.

## The Customer Experience team

The leading focus for our Customer Experience team has been the drive towards a single service model to support all students on programme. This aims to bring an increase in support available to students by drawing on knowledge from all parts of BPP into a centralised customer support team. The main benefit of this transition is that our staff will be well equipped with knowledge from all areas of the business. Having this increased support, means there will be more job roles

that will become available. This will encourage employment opportunities for students and staff. A way we have already implemented this is by updating our new phone lines system which will ensure that students phone queries are being answered to the best of our ability by more staff and in a shorter amount of time.

## Face-to-Face Customer Service

An increase in the number of students we have enrolled has led us to introduce our Student Support Hubs at multiple locations. BPP has invested heavily in its property portfolio with spacious break out areas, upgraded computers for students use and support services readily available. Our students will now be able to have all their queries answered in a face-to-face environment through friendly and relatable staff. These support desks have now become available across our Manchester campus and all of our London campuses with the exception of our Waterloo campus which will have their own towards the end of the year. Students will have face to face customer service options throughout their entire journey. For international students, this will start from

when they first get off the plane. Our new Student Support Officers will now be located at a BPP welcome desk at Heathrow airport. This welcome desk has been helping international students with directions and general way finding around London, offering support on accommodation and the next steps to ensuring enrolment is smooth. The team will also be providing UK SIM cards as well as goodies and making our students feel comfortable when arriving in the UK. Once students have arrived in centre, they will be greeted by our Student Ambassadors, current students who will be able to get new students set up on the hub and help them access your emails and get them registered on their programme.



## Future Events for students

BPP students are encouraged to make new connections and join communities or groups throughout their university experience. This can be achieved through either taking part in our events or joining one of our societies. We have been hosting events for our students ranging from Welcome breakfasts, quizzes, Eid celebrations to games tournaments. All upcoming future events run by the Customer Experience team and the Students' Association can be found on The Virtual Campus. These contributions to student life would not be possible without the introduction of our Centre Experience Managers that have now provided us with the ability to have staff on campus actively making differences to our student's journey. Centre Experience Managers have been doing a fantastic job with providing us with various student events, newsletters, along with implementing our new student ambassadors and new centre orientations.



## Simplifying how we do things

We understand that for many students their education journey can be daunting and overwhelming. This is why we have been striving towards simplifying the customer experience through supplying students with self-service options on the Hub. Students will now be able to have their letters automatically generated to their emails through submitting a letter request on the Hub. Additionally, they will now be able to update their personal details on the self-serve section on the Hub. The aim of these new features is to help make our students experience more efficient so they can focus on their education, and we are excited about future self-serve opportunities we will be rolling out.



# MY JOURNEY AS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT



I'm Ryan from Bangladesh. I came to London to pursue higher education, arriving exactly this month last year. This one year might sound like just a short time to anyone else but it felt never-ending to me.

I was always the kind of person who did not think of going anywhere without his family. I was very upset to leave my family behind and live in London without them. The decision to go abroad was never entirely mine. My brother always wanted this for me and because of this his dream became my own.

Before I received my Visa, I was full of excitement. When it finally arrived, my whole mood shifted. I was full of sorrow. Even worse, my flight was in just 9 days. I could not eat I was so nervous. I felt mentally broken. I even started to tell my parents that I didn't want to go. But it was too late.

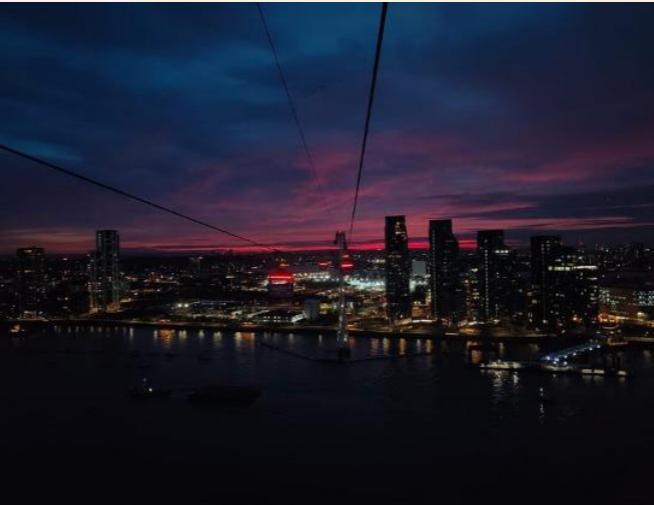
When we arrived at the airport, my whole family came with me. They were all crying but I was not. At that moment, I was still and not thinking of anything.

I stayed at my cousin's house for the first three months after arriving in the UK. The main emotional breakdown started then. It was not

only that I left my country behind, but for the first ten days my cousin and his family were not at home. I had to live in a whole three floor building all by myself. I thought, why did I come? I cannot count how many days I thought of giving up and booking a flight back to Bangladesh. But, despite all this, one thought stayed with me: Many people don't ever get a chance like this in their life. I also thought about my family and the sacrifices they made for me to be here. Due to this, I decided to persevere.



This whole story might seem sad, but you know after sorrow, happiness comes. I met a friend here a couple days after I started at BPP. I was introduced to him by one of my friends in Bangladesh through Facebook. The ironic thing is although my friend in Bangladesh introduced us, he had never actually met this new person before! Sounds weird, right? We still laugh about this today! Anyway, by making this new friend, my mood improved. We started to explore the UK, everywhere from London Bridge to outside London. Although I was feeling better, the sadness was not gone



instantly. On the outside, I was laughing but inside I was still haunted by homesickness. This feeling lasted around 5 months. It varies from person to person. It may take weeks or months for some, and for others maybe nothing at all. I started feeling whole heartedly better after my first visit to my family in Bangladesh six and a half months after I first arrived. I stayed with them for one month. That trip was like a cure for my homesickness. During my visit, I realized how we take time or moments with our family for granted. This realization brought me closer to my family and enjoy my time with them even more.



When I returned to London, I had a fresh mind and was filled with positive energy. I was more active at my work. I could focus more on my studies. I started to see my life in London with a whole new perspective. I was enjoying everything. I was traveling, taking care of myself and eating.

Oh, I forgot to mention that I realised I am a good chef. I am not only saying this because

I have to eat my own food – my flatmate agrees! This new talent is all thanks to my eldest brother who is a chef in a five-star hotel, my mother and two sisters-in-law. I cook Bangla, and even Chinese cuisine every now and then. Cooking has been another source of self-care for me. It gives you a sense of accomplishment. So, I would recommend to anyone who is feeling down to start cooking even if you don't know how. You will learn it eventually.



Well, that pretty much sums up my story. Now I am happy. I am doing a lot better now. I hope my journey has shown you that even when times are tough, they will always get better, if you persevere.

# GETTING A PART-TIME JOB

KATIE MATTHEWS  
BPP CAREER CONSULTANT



Are you looking to earn money while studying at BPP? Most students discover that getting a part-time job is an essential part of student life. It's not always as easy as it sounds so we've put together a brief guide to help you succeed!

## What kind of work can you do?

Typical roles include: barista, sales assistant, waiting staff, care worker, NHS 111 operator, cleaner, tutor, warehouse operator, office administrator, receptionist and telesales/ customer service.

You may also be able to find a job related to your studies and future career path. Examples include: bookkeeper or accounts payable, salesperson, paralegal and HR administrator. Remember that you will be competing with the wider population and not just with other students, so you may need to flexible and compromise.

If you are an international student, you must comply with the visa restrictions on your passport, which includes not working for yourself and there are some professions from which you are exempt. For full details please see UKCISA website or visit the BPP International Advice Team.

We recommend that you always prioritise your studies so think carefully about how many

hours you can realistically work alongside your studies.

## What are the benefits of part-time work?

### 1. Earn money.

You need to pay the bills and have a social life! It's important to note the national minimum wage is there to ensure you are paid fairly. See this link for how much you can expect to earn according to your age - <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>

### 2. Gain transferrable skills.

Impress employers at a graduate interview with all the examples of skills you have gained in your part-time job! These might include teamwork, leadership, problem solving and interpersonal skills.

### 3. Get experience with interviews.

Typically you will need to pass an interview or assessment centre and this is great practice for graduate schemes, internships and training contracts.

### 4. Learn more about British culture if you are an international student.

## How do you find a part-time job?

- Use websites such as: Indeed, <https://www.savethestudent.org/part-time-student-jobs>, <https://www.adzuna.co.uk/>, <https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/>, <https://www.goingglobal.com/jobs>, <https://bppfutures bppuniversity.ac.uk/students/jobs>, <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-job> and <https://www.agencycentral.co.uk/> where you can find details of recruitment agencies to work for.

- Contact employers directly. Send your CV and cover letter to employers directly.

These should be tailored and can be sent speculatively.

- Attend careers and job fairs. Shopping centres often hold job fairs in cities e.g. the London Jobs Show and Manchester Jobs Show. Remember to bring a few copies of your CV along and dress smartly! Preparing an elevator pitch (30 second introduction to you and what you are looking for) can also help boost your confidence when networking.

- Social media and newspapers. Search on LinkedIn and Facebook for jobs and your local newspaper online

## How is a CV different with a part-time job?

- Not too different, but it can be shorter. Keep it brief and include the key skills, experience and qualities required for the job you are applying for and ensure that you still highlight any key achievements.

- Some employers prefer to use application forms and not have a CV or cover letter. Often you need to register online and perhaps undertake initial tests.

- You will need to tailor your personal profile to ensure you share why you are seeking part-time work and hours available, for example, "Mondays and Fridays 5pm to 10pm and weekends."

## What about a cover letter?

- For office jobs and speculative applications by email, it is advisable to have one, but for other jobs you may not need one. Do tailor it to each individual job vacancy.
- See resources for how to write CVs and cover letters on the BPPFutures website.
- Ask a BPP Careers Consultant to check your CV, cover letter and or application form. You can use 'Ask a Question' or book an appointment. Email [careers@bpp.com](mailto:careers@bpp.com) for any queries.

## Who can help you?

- Friends, family, tutors and anyone in your network. Tell everyone what you are looking

for and they can ask around for you!

- BPP Careers team. BPP Careers are a national team who are available 9.00am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday, to support you with your job search, both in person and online. We can help you develop job search strategies, write a CV and cover letter, complete application forms as well as prepare for an interview. We are professionally qualified, experienced and can support with all aspects of your career planning.

- To book an appointment or submit a CV or application document for review use BPPFutures <https://bppfutures bppuniversity.ac.uk/students>

Finally, we wish you luck in your part-time job search and look forward to working with you! It is a competitive market but temporary staff will be needed in many sectors (especially in the runup to Christmas). Best of luck!

## BPP Careers

BPP Careers is here to help you every step of the way towards your future career, including finding a part-time job. You can contact us anytime for help with your CV and applications, or even just for a chat to explore your options. Visit BPP Futures for amazing resources, to book a Careers appointment, or to get some virtual work experience with 'Forage'. BPP Law Student Amelia Crossley says "I felt that I received as much support as possible from the careers team, from application advice to 1-1 appointments. I signed up to multiple online careers events on BPP Futures and I also utilised the practice tests available on BPP Futures which helped me to prepare for assessments. My advice is to keep on going and do not be disheartened if you are not successful in your first round of applications. Arrange regular meetings with the careers team with drafts of your applications to stay on target."

# THINKING OF STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS?

STEVE BLOOMER  
BPP CAREERS MANAGER



Have you dreamt of being your own boss? Or maybe you have already started a business and are well on your way to building your empire? Whatever stage you are at, BPP Careers is here to help you make your dream a reality.

## Your business concept

What would your pitch to a bank, investors or potential new customers be? A good starting point is to write down a **Business Overview**, covering what **your business is all about**, **your services or products** and what makes your business special.

## Your skillset – do you have what it takes?

There's no denying it - running a business is tough; and with one in five new companies folding in the first year, you have to have the **resilience** to overcome any setbacks. You need to stay calm and have strong **problem-**

**solving** abilities. Finally, business relies on personal transactions and so it is important to have strong **relationship-building** skills. People do business with people, so it will be you who makes the customer experience memorable.

## The Market

The next stage is understanding whether there are any competitors and doing your **market research**. If appropriate, purchase competitors' products, and **make notes** of the pricing, how they are presented and packaged. This will give you more of an insight to competitors' products.



**Research your customer base** and identify the type of customer who would buy your service or product. Ask people about whether they would buy your product, what a fair price would be, and why they would choose you over your competitors. A warning here – you may get an inflated view on the demand for your business. People want to please and whereas they say they would buy, it doesn't mean they will. The key is to get a **good cross section of your profile group** and be sure to **ask open questions** that don't lead to the answers you want to hear. Encourage people to be honest and critical and tell you what would stop them buying from you as well.



## Costing and pricing

How much you charge for your product or services depends on a number of factors, including how much **competitors charge** and how much **customers are willing to pay**. Your next step is to create an accurate **list of costs** that you're likely to incur. Depending on the nature of your business, these can include:

- Raw materials
- Suppliers' costs
- Rent
- Energy
- Insurance
- Advertising and marketing
- Wages

Once these have been calculated, it is wise to work out the **average cost per product**. For example, if your business is making cakes, then this would be the average cost per cake you make. You can then compare against the price your customers said they would be willing to pay and see which number is higher. If your costs are higher, you either need to find ways to reduce them or take the tough

decision to admit that your business is not viable. It can be heart-breaking to get to that stage and realise that your business will not work, but it is a sensible decision to take before you end up being loaded with debt.

If your average cost per product is lower than the price your market research has said customers will pay, then you have a viable business and can start to work out a price. The difference between your price and the average cost per product is called your **profit margin**. So if your cake costs £90 to make and £100 to sell, you have a 10% profit margin. Knowing this is crucial for two reasons:

1. It allows you to know how many products you need to sell in order to create a **sustainable income**. Using simple figures, if you need to earn £1,000 a month, you will need to sell 100 cakes every month at that price.

2. It gives you a chance to see what flexibility you have if demand or costs change. If your profit margin is higher, you can absorb more costs and cope with less demand.



## Type of self employment

### 1. Sole Trader

Most small businesses start up this way and is suitable for businesses that want to stay small, as there is less tax and accounting procedures. As a sole trader, your business and personal liabilities are not separated. In other words, if you are sued or cannot pay your bills, it is you who personally will be liable. You must tell HM Revenue and Customs within 6 months of setting up and submit "**Self Assessment**" form to file your accounts.

### 2. Ordinary Business Partnership

Similar to a sole trader, except it can have more than one business owner. It is subject to the same limitations as a Sole Trader in that you cannot employ staff.

### 3. Limited Company

An option often taken by those that want to grow their business and employ others. It must have a separate business bank account and unlike a sole trader, business and personal liabilities are separate. So any profit is the company profit, and not your own. As a director, you can pay yourself a salary or a **Director's Dividend**. Limited Companies are listed on [Companies House](#).

### 4. Franchise

When you buy the rights to use the name and branding of a well-known company and the business operations and any profits remain with your company. Many retail and hospitality operations use this model.

### 5. Limited Liability Partnerships

When a number of business owners (**partners**) retain the profits of the company, but also have employees.

### 6. Unincorporated Partnerships

Usually nonprofit making, such as charities or voluntary groups.

You can find much more information on the implications and procedures of being a [Sole Trader](#) and a [Limited Company](#) by visiting [www.gov.uk](#).

Being self-employed is not for the faint-hearted and requires a lot of preparation and adaptability to be successful. For further information and to book an appointment with a BPP Careers Consultant, visit [BPP Futures](#). Best of luck!



# SETTING UP YOUR OWN BUSINESS

JESSICA THOMAS  
OWNER AND FOUNDER OF FOR THE BUSY COOKS



Jessica Thomas, is currently studying the Law Foundations Master's course at BPP and is also founder and owner of "For The Busy Cooks" - an online brownie bar.

## What was my inspiration for starting up?

I decided to set up my business in the summer of 2020. Having just returned from Spain, where they have a great café culture and I loved the brownies I experienced! I came home during lockdown and wanted to send things to friends across the country, but I couldn't find something sweet that fit through a letterbox. I realised there was a gap in the market and decided to create 'For The Busy Cooks'!

## When I Registered as Self Employed, there was so much to consider.

Firstly, I set up as Sole Trader on HMRC. This is

a really easy process, they have both an app or alternatively you can do your tax returns online. There's lots of information available to help you with this process, including: YouTube, articles, books and the government website! [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). One thing to be aware of when you're registering as a Sole Trader is that everything will be in your name. So if you've taken out any business loans, you will be personally liable in repaying them back.

## I had to do a lot research to start with.

The first thing I did was spend three months just researching as there's so much paperwork to get on top of. This included the local council's website to figure out how to get myself signed up with the Food Standards Agency, which is essential for any food related business.

I then needed to think about how I would actually ship the product to customers! I'd done all of the research, taste testing, had people try it and say they loved it, but that would all be for nothing, if the products wouldn't hold up in transit. I figured out a triple sealing method where we individually wrap each brownie with eco-friendly wrapping and then wrapped again in a box, which is then put into a sealable bag, so it's wrapped at three stages. To test it worked, I did a few trial runs and posted to myself and friends. I also didn't



initially realise that if you want to ship food to Europe for example, there are a whole host of different rules that you need to think about, especially now with Brexit. The next step was to get my head around the technical things of setting up your own website, registering a domain and linking the domain to your website.

## Like all business, we continue to have challenges to face.

The biggest challenge I continue to face is adapting to the current cost of living climate. The cost of food has gone up so much, and we don't want to pass on that increased cost to our customers because they'll just go somewhere else. I have had to figure out a way to absorb the cost, buying things in bulk including packaging has been a good way to do this. As even though you're paying more at the outset, the cost per unit actually decreases with the more you buy.

Another challenge I am facing is how to diversify. We are doing this by getting more of products into brick and mortar stores, as we're not yet ready to take on the cost of having our own outlet. This is where it is important to be creative, we have started selling to cafes, restaurants, bars, cinemas, florists etc. I would say the key thing to setting up a business is once you've got the basic product up and running, expand it slightly so you have a few more options for consumers.



## Despite that, I love being a business owner.

I love managing my own time and having the flexibility of choosing what stockist I want to engage with, how I market myself on social media and developing relationships with my customers. I love it when customers message me and send photos with them and my brownies! It's just so nice to know that someone out there has worked hard for that money and has chosen to give some to you in return for the product. It is just an incredible feeling.

## Business is going well.

We are now at the stage where we are self-sufficient and where the business can fund itself. I took a little bit of a break when I went back to continue my undergrad, but the beginning of this year was when we really pushed forward. We've been getting more orders and in the next month or so we're going to reach out to more cafes, restaurants, bars, cinemas across the UK. So by the end of this year, we're hoping to have between 3 to 5 stockists and more orders.

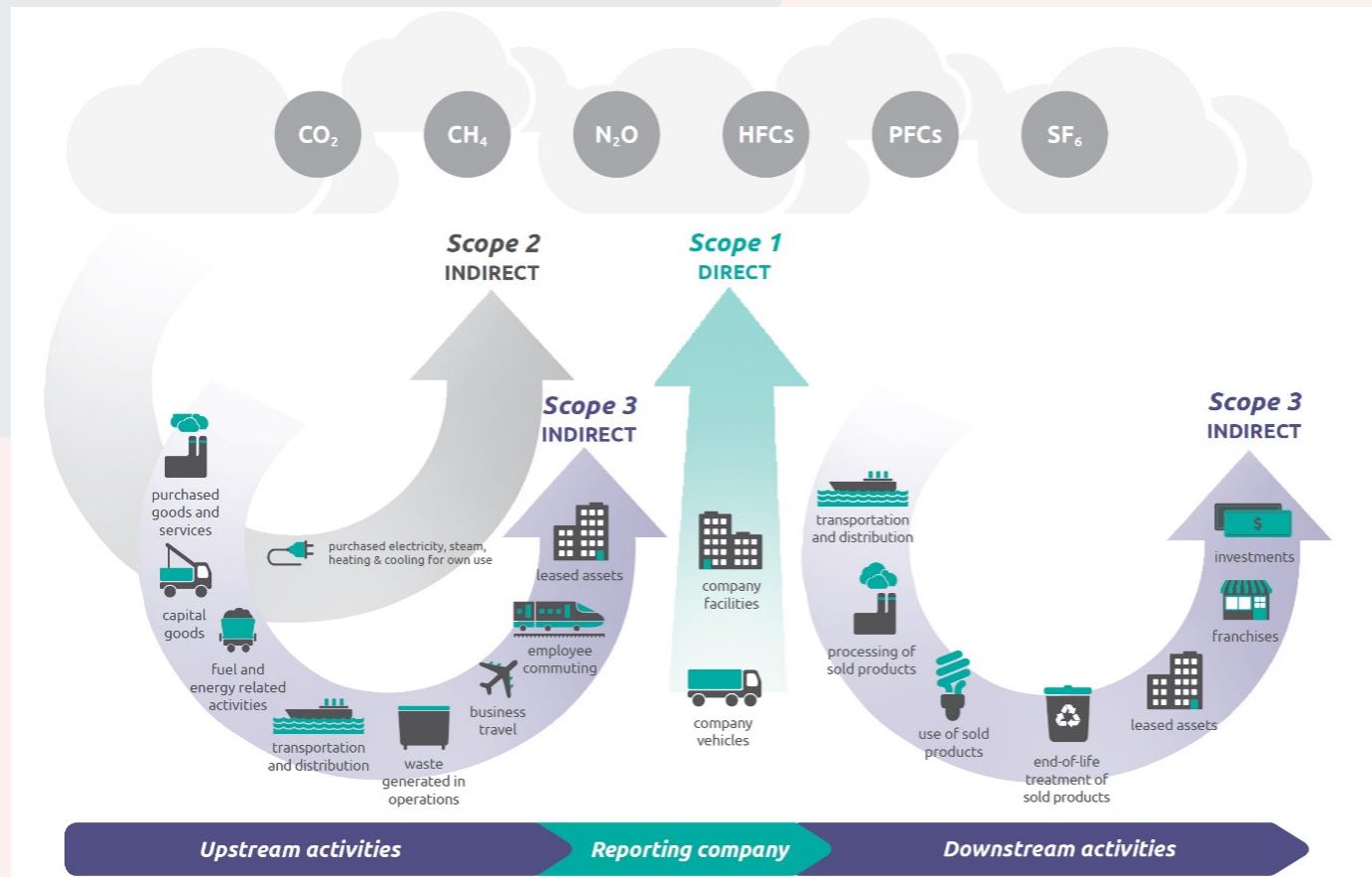
## Don't wait for perfection – just start!

Remember, it probably is not going to be perfect at the beginning. When I look back, I'm horrified by some of the mistakes I made! For example for packaging and Instagram posts but you learn and develop along the way. Too many people are held back by perfectionism, meaning their business never even gets off the ground. So my advice, if you have an idea for a business and have done your research - just start! It could be the beginning of the best adventure of your life!

If you would like to know more about Jessica's business, you can visit her website – [shopforthebusycooks.com](http://shopforthebusycooks.com), or listen to the full interview [here](#).

# DECARBONISING OUR SUPPLY CHAIN

**WHEN IT COMES TO ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT, WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER.**



Source: [WRI/WBCSD Corporate Value Chain \(Scope 3\) Accounting and Reporting Standard \[PDF\]](#), page 5.

Climate awareness makes good business sense. We've known this for a while.

Businesses are showing customers that they share their values, fulfilling regulatory requirements to disclose emissions, abiding by legislation to avoid court time, fines and reputational damage, shielding themselves from energy price volatility or capitalising on the rich opportunities provided by a sustainability-focused market. In short, businesses operating today, are devoting significant resource to putting environmental front and centre.

As a result, you may have seen companies

declare a commitment to net zero, but what does this mean in practical terms? Many companies start locally, looking at their operational emissions. This could mean optimising building performance – introducing energy from renewable sources, installing insulation or secondary glazing to minimise heat loss and solar gain in buildings, or using timers to ensure that heating and lighting is not kept on when the building is not in use. A company could inspire change within its workforce, for example: by asking individuals to turn off their laptops and other electronic equipment at the end of the day. Additionally, it could cut carbon in its fleet, switching to electric vehicles or - better yet - get rid of its

fleet altogether. For most companies, public transport is just the ticket for business travel.

When we talk of emissions, we often speak of them in terms of three categories: Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3. When it comes to the changes we make within our building – e.g. to improve energy efficiency – we talk of cutting down how much of our footprint is attributable to gas and electricity consumption. Gas and electricity fall within Scope 1 and Scope 2, respectively. Emissions from company vehicles also fall within Scope 1.

That being said, for many businesses, BPP included, the supply chain has a big impact. According to Deloitte, Scope 3 emissions account for more than 70 percent of many businesses' carbon footprint. This means that when it comes to pledging to net zero, we simply cannot leave our supply chain out of the equation.

At BPP, we are working hard to better understand, report on and mitigate our Scope 3 emissions. Here are some lessons we've learnt, as we've boosted our own understanding.

## 1. Start by mapping out the most important factors within the supply chain

You can't report on everything in your first year. It's important to focus on the most important areas at first, and make a commitment to broaden your reporting as the years go on.

At BPP, we have realised that the majority of our Scope 3 emissions come from business travel, waste, commuting and transportation – so we are currently focusing on these factors.



## 2. Build relationships with your existing suppliers

Every business is seeing increased pressure to decarbonise its goods and services. If suppliers don't have the information you need immediately, make plans together so that data can be gathered moving forward.

At BPP we've started these conversations, and see this as a collaborative journey



## 3. Ensure environmental considerations are a top priority when choosing suppliers

Tell potential suppliers from the outset that sustainability is important to you, and prioritise suppliers who can exhibit aligned ESG values. Ensure that your expectations for climate reporting and sustainability projects are included within contracts or KPIs.

When choosing new suppliers, we ask companies how they monitor and mitigate their impact on the environment.





#### 4. Embed sustainability within your company's policies

Introduce sustainable travel policies that prioritise public transport, and identify 'milestones' where sustainability within the supply chain can be assessed – e.g. when entering into contracts, or developing projects.

Our policies make green behaviours habitual, and we're proud to have sustainability ambassadors involved in project planning.



#### 5. Keep learning

We're all on an accountability journey. While there are plenty of resources available to support businesses, our understandings of carbon impact are advancing each day. There's plenty of research ongoing about the impact of cloud commuting. Stay alert: this is an area of corporate responsibility that will not stand still.

##### Further information:

- The Greenhouse Gas Protocol  
Provides standards, tools and courses to support organisations seeking to map their carbon impact  
<https://ghgprotocol.org/>
- WWF Carbon Calculator  
A free tool for understanding your personal carbon footprint  
<https://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>
- CDP Supports thousands of companies, cities, states and regions to measure and manage their risks and opportunities on climate change, water security and deforestation.  
<https://www.cdp.net/en/info/about-us/what-we-do>



# BPP GRADUATIONS – CELEBRATING YOUR SUCCESS

Your graduation ceremony is the crowning moment of your learner journey and is a chance to celebrate your success with your classmates, friends, family and tutors.

## When will I graduate?

Following your induction, classes, coursework and assessments – much hard work and many cups of coffee later! - you will receive your results, your award will be ratified, and you will be invited to your graduation ceremony. Your invitation will generally be 10-12 weeks before your ceremony.

The following diagram helps explain this process:



Recent graduations have been held in the Spring, however based on student feedback we are starting to hold ceremonies in November as well.

These upcoming November ceremonies will be in London on:

- **Tuesday 14th November and**
- **Wednesday 15th November**

There will be ceremonies both in London and in Manchester in Spring 2024.

You can find general graduation information on our [Graduations page](#) and specific ceremony eligibility is [here](#).



London ceremonies are at [Central Hall Westminster](#) – a stunning baroque-style building directly opposite Westminster Abbey, near the Supreme Court (special for our Law graduates!) and the Parliament buildings. Its beautiful, curved staircase was built to resemble the Paris Opera House and the Great Hall features Europe's largest self-supporting domed ceiling.



## Where will I graduate?

As the next generation of Law, Business, Nursing and Technology professionals, you deserve only the best for your special day!

You will be invited to a ceremony in London or Manchester, generally based on where you have studied.



Manchester ceremonies are held at [Bridgewater Hall](#) – one of the world's leading concert halls, in the centre of Manchester at a waterfront location. This iconic venue opened in 1996 and was designed to provide the best possible space for live music and events: acoustics are incredible and its massive pipe organ has 5,500 pipes. Bridgewater Hall hosts over 250 concerts each year and is home to the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra. For more information about our upcoming ceremonies visit our [Graduations page](#).



## Graduand or graduate?

Many people don't know the difference between these two terms! Once your award has been confirmed by Academic Council, you are a 'Graduand'. You become a Graduate' after your graduation ceremony.

## At the ceremony

Once you accept your graduation invitation, we will tell you how to invite some family or friends as well as how to hire your graduation gown and book professional photography. You need to wear a gown, hood and hat to

cross the stage: these are specific to BPP and to your particular degree – you can see them below:



Master's Degree



Postgraduate Diploma or Certificate



Bachelor's Degree



Graduate Diploma or Certificate



Advanced Diploma

You will be able to collect them on the day and a team of people will make sure they fit properly.

Many tutors attend the ceremony and they will be wearing the gowns from their universities and degrees – it's fascinating to see all of the colours and styles!

As you cross the stage, the ceremony officiator will greet you: you can shake hands, nod or namaste... Whilst it is a formal event, it truly is a celebration and everyone claps (or whistles or cheers!) for each graduand.

After the ceremony there is a drinks reception where you can celebrate with your guests, tutors and senior BPP Academics.



## Do I receive my certificate at graduation?

Your award certificates are not given out at graduation but are posted separately. For more information see our Awards [page](#).



## What people have said about BPP ceremonies?

- "Thank you to the team for a wonderful event"
- "You guys are the absolute best. Keep it up and thank you for the opportunity. I will forever be grateful to you"
- "Everything was perfect"
- "It was great experience which I got from that day"
- "It was very easy to get everything I needed on the day and the process was seamless."
- "The registration staff were very helpful and the whole vibe of the day was great."
- "I thought the process to get everyone on stage for the ceremony was very well organised. The staff helpers were really friendly and helpful and all looked genuinely happy for all the grads at the ceremony.'



# LIBRARY TRAINING



## Bookshelf

by VitalSource®

### Library Training

Did you know your BPP library service teaches information literacy (also known as library or research skills)? Not only does improving research skills help improve your grades in essays but prepares you for your career. In your first roles after graduating, you will be expected to conduct thorough research projects. Every term the library offers a programme of training relevant to your subject – either go to the library website and the subject specific section or check BPP Futures and its regular updates.

### Core texts

This year we're starting our programme with a special workshop on core texts. Your modules may offer you a core text. Not just a reference on a list but your own electronic copy! This is likely to be on a platform called VitalSource. At midday on October 5th a guest speaker

will give a presentation on how to use your core text to search effectively, make notes and reference easily. You will find the seminar link on the library webpage and BPP Futures.

### Technology Students

We're calling on you! Help us evaluate a new digital resource. IEEE is the professional home for the engineering and technology community worldwide and their Xplore digital library provides a wealth of resources which will be available to us from September 2023 on a trial basis. We need you to look at usability and usefulness for your studies. Your feedback could earn you a £25 Amazon token. See the library webpages for more details.

Enjoy your time at BPP and we look forward to helping you achieve all you can.

<https://bpp.libguides.com/>



# BPP LIBRARY SAFE SPACE STATEMENT



## Definition of a 'Library safe space':

- An accessible, comfortable, and secure Library environment where Library users of all diverse backgrounds and perspectives feel welcome

BPP Library & Information Services (hereafter referred to as 'the Library') are dedicated to ensuring that our physical and online learning environments are safe and inclusive spaces for Library users.

## We commit to:

- Promoting the importance of the Library as a physical and online 'safe space' with a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, prejudice, and intolerance, where all BPP Library users are able to explore and access Library resources and achieve their learning goals
- Ensuring all staff adhere to BPP safeguarding policies and reporting procedures
- Prioritising the wellbeing of users through safeguarding, the work of the Learning Support and Inclusion departments, and the presence of trained First Aiders and Mental

Health First Aiders within the physical Library spaces

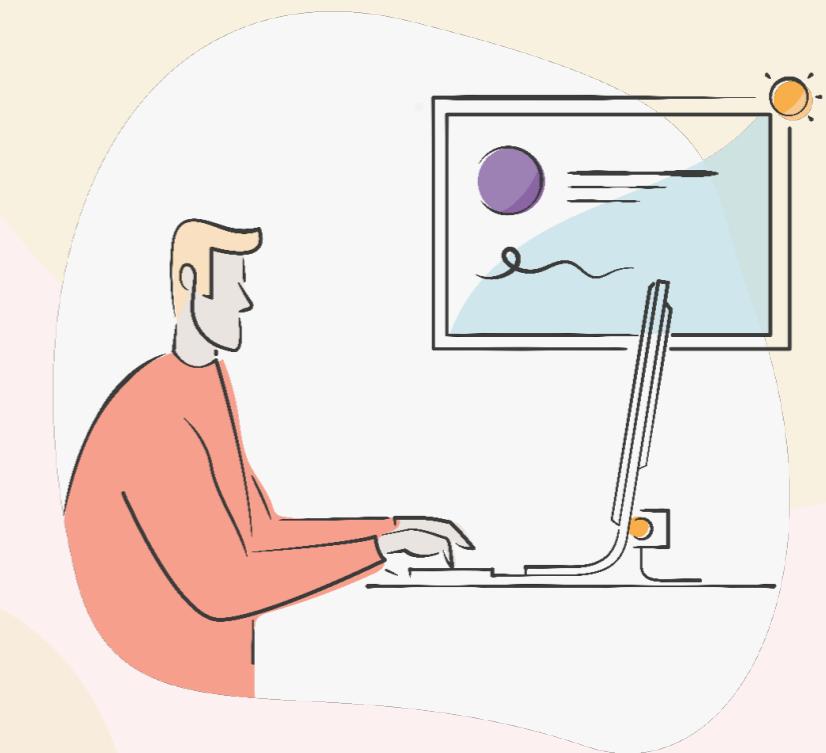
- Encouraging student engagement and involvement with the Library's wide range of EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) campaigns, displays, online reading lists, digital exhibitions and social media initiatives
- Using the preferred names and pronouns of students, staff, and colleagues, and ensuring names are pronounced correctly, in alignment with the principles of the ongoing BPP '[Say My Name](#)' campaign.
- Ensuring gender neutral bathrooms are correctly signposted
- Ensuring all physical Library spaces are accessible for users with disabilities and learning differences, and that online material reflects our commitment to accessibility
- Working with the [BPP Learning Support](#) and Inclusion departments to ensure students with learning differences are supported within the Library space
- Providing access to a range of assistive

technologies and software within the Library space

- Working with the BPP Students' Association to ensure that a wide range of EDI campaigns, events and initiatives are represented within the Library space
- Working with the Facilities team to ensure that our sites are physically safe and accessible for all users

**Within the '[Great Reads](#)' collection of fiction and non fiction (at Holborn and Manchester), and the [Book Crossing Zone](#) (at Manchester) we commit to:**

- Ensuring our collections celebrate the many cultures and backgrounds of our users,
- Facilitating student access to diverse literature, and showcasing underrepresented and marginalised perspectives in our Library collections, including LGBTQ+ works
- Representing students' own values, interests, and favourite texts through encouraging student book recommendations
- Including online and printed content warnings within 'Great Reads' works that explore sensitive or challenging issues and/or topics



## Library users are required to:

- Adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) at all times and interact with each other and staff members with courtesy, professionalism, and respect
- Adhere to the Library's 'Silent Study' policy
- Wear your student lanyard (with your student ID) at all times in the Library
- Respect students' right to engage with EDI campaigns, displays, and spaces of reflection set up within the Library space
- Report any incidents or concerns to a member of the Library Team, the Customer Services Team at Reception (on the Ground Floor) and the Inclusion department at [Inclusion@bpp.com](mailto:Inclusion@bpp.com)
- Speak to a Library First Aider at the Library Issue Desk and notify the Customer Services Team (Reception) if you feel ill or are injured.
- Call 999 to report any emergencies or criminal incidents to the Emergency Services helpline.

# VIRTUAL CAMPUS AMBASSADORS



# BPP

This summer, here at BPP Students' Association we are excited to announce that we have recruited 'Virtual Campus Ambassadors' (VCAs) to help students on our Virtual Campus social media platform. With the introduction of our VCAs, we have seen more engagement on the platform with more posts, comments and new members joining us!

Alongside their role helping students virtually, the VCAs are also present at a lot of our in-person events to help students connect with the VC platform. They have assisted at Welcome Lunches and other Students' Association events, and will also be hosting their own events in future (so keep a look out!).

You may have already seen our VCAs posting away but to formally introduce them, we'd like to announce the following student's as our hardworking VCAs:



**Name:** Jane Oyebola Akinmulire  
**Preferred Name:** Jane  
**Location:** Manchester

I earned my BSc in Electrical and Electronics Engineering from KWARA State University, Nigeria. I am currently pursuing MSc in Management with Data Analytics at BPP University, Manchester Campus.

My interests include dancing, movies with a particular fondness for Kdrama series, traveling, and cooking. I am a very sociable and vibrant person.

I am very happy and excited to be a member of the BPP Virtual Campus Ambassadors, as I get to actively contribute to building a vibrant virtual campus community at BPP University.



**Name:** Iftaker Ahmed  
**Location:** London

I am currently doing BSc in Accounting and Finance at BPP University. Alongside being a Virtual Campus Ambassador, I am also a Student Voice Representative. Aside from studies, I am working as a Bookkeeping Assistant in Nelson College London and Uddin Nagar Limited. I'm also currently undertaking an internship at NCL Tours.

There are many reasons why I joined as a VCA. Firstly, I want to build my network and I think the VC will be a great platform for me to connect with everyone. Secondly, English is not my first language but I believe being a VCA will allow me the opportunity to talk to many students and attend events. Which will in turn help me improve my communication skills and build confidence. Finally, I want to gain and exchange knowledge and ideas.



**Name:** Muhammad Ali  
**Location:** London

My name is Muhammad Ali, I come from an Accounts and Finance background and am currently studying MSc Management with Project Management at BPP Portsoken Campus. I am excited to introduce myself as a VCA for BPP University. I have passion with connecting with fellow students and promoting a vibrant campus culture.

As a Virtual Campus Ambassador, I am responsible for bridging the gap between the university and the student body. I'm always excited to meet new people and like to actively participate in online discussions, events etc.

My key responsibilities as a VCA are; promoting the Virtual Campus (which is an amazing social media app for BPP students!), social media management, community building, student advocacy, event promotion and content creation. As a VCA, I am dedicated to this opportunity and wish to contribute to BPP Student Associations' mission of providing an exceptional student experience to those attend this university.



**Name:** MD Shamsul Islam Ryan  
**Location:** London

Hello, my name is MD Shamsul Islam Ryan. I'm in my second year, on the BSc Honours Accounting and Finance course at BPP University.

I have always aspired to learn new things and take on difficult tasks. Being a VCA, I have to take on various tasks such as; maintaining an online presence, engaging with students, addressing their queries and providing timely and relevant information.

I want to help build the Virtual Campus community by creating a sense of belonging amongst students online by organising virtual events, webinars, workshops and online networking.



**Name:** Omozojie Victor  
**Location:** Manchester

Hello everyone, my name is Omozojie Victor. I am a Nigerian student currently studying MSc Management with Data Analytics at BPP university in Manchester.

I would say I am initially a calm and reserved individual till I get comfortable in a space. My hobbies include playing games, travelling and having fun!

I signed up to become a VCA because I have a passion for proffering solutions and helping people resolving issues they may have. Being a member of the team puts me in a position to lend a helping hand to students whilst also being the go between the school and students.





**Name:** Damilola Babalola  
**Location:** Manchester

Hello, please call me Dami!

They say a picture paints a thousand words, and from mine, I bet you can tell I'm happy to be writing these words. Being a VCA means I get to contribute to the overall growth of the Virtual Campus and that gives me great satisfaction.

The main goal of being a VCA is to create a community both separate and integrated with all things BPP. As such, I hope to leave my footprint by being part of a team that onboards innovative strategies and creates an environment that invites fun, mutual connections and learning.

Hope to see you around, cheers!



**Name:** Michael Owoka  
**Location:** Manchester

Hello, my name is Michael Owoka and I am from Lagos, Nigeria. I graduated from Covenant University with a BSc in Accounting and am now pursuing my MSc in Management with Data Analytics at BPP University.

I have a diverse range of interests. I enjoy playing football, playing video games and listening to music. I would say I am very friendly person and make people feel comfortable when I first meet them, which is a good trait to have as a VCA! I am glad to have joined the BPP team by becoming a VCA.



**Name:** Toygibah Hamzah Olabode  
**Location:** Manchester

Hi, my name is Toygibah Hamzah Olabode and I am currently enrolled in the MSc. Management with Data Analytics programme at BPP University, specifically at the Manchester campus. I obtained my undergraduate degree, a Bachelor of Science in Economics, from University of Lagos in Nigeria.

I find great satisfaction in facilitating the growth and development of individuals. I have a strong appreciation for creativity and enjoy watching epic movies. Additionally, I thoroughly enjoy engaging with individuals and expanding my network. I possess a strong ability to effectively utilize available resources and demonstrate a diligent work ethic.

I am pleased to be a member of the BPP Virtual Campus Ambassadors programme, where I can contribute to the enhancement of the Virtual community and the overall well-being of students.



Remember, you can reach out to any of our VCAs for help on the VC platform - you can tell they are VCAs by the green badges next to their names! You'll always see them posting and commenting away on the main feed! Especially on the 'Competitions' group page, where they are in charge of overseeing the competitions each week.

Also, keep in mind if you ever need help on how to navigate the VC, you can check out our helpful video on the BPPStudents website under the sub-tab – 'How to: BPP Platforms'.

(Above you can see Ifti and Ryan assisting at induction, alongside Falak and Rosie from the Students' Association Communications Team).

# DEFYING DYSPRAXIA: MY JOURNEY

ALEX KOCAN



Dyspraxia, also known as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD), is a condition concerning a person's co-ordination and movement, as causing difficulties with learning new skills and struggles with short-term memory. This is an issue that begins at birth, though it is not always picked up in childhood. I was diagnosed at the age of 21, while at University of Derby, when my issues were becoming so debilitating that I could not cope anymore. But let's go back to childhood for a moment. I grew up thinking I was stupid - causing lifelong anxiety, low self-esteem. I would say it was impossible to believe you are intelligent if you cannot tie your own shoelaces, by the age of ten. Struggling to tie shoelaces is caused by poor hand, eye co-ordination and is a task I had to learn to do once my feet were too big to wear Velcro fastening. My shoelace knots were far from glamourous, they were big knots, constantly coming undone and getting so knotted up that I had to get my parents to sort them out,

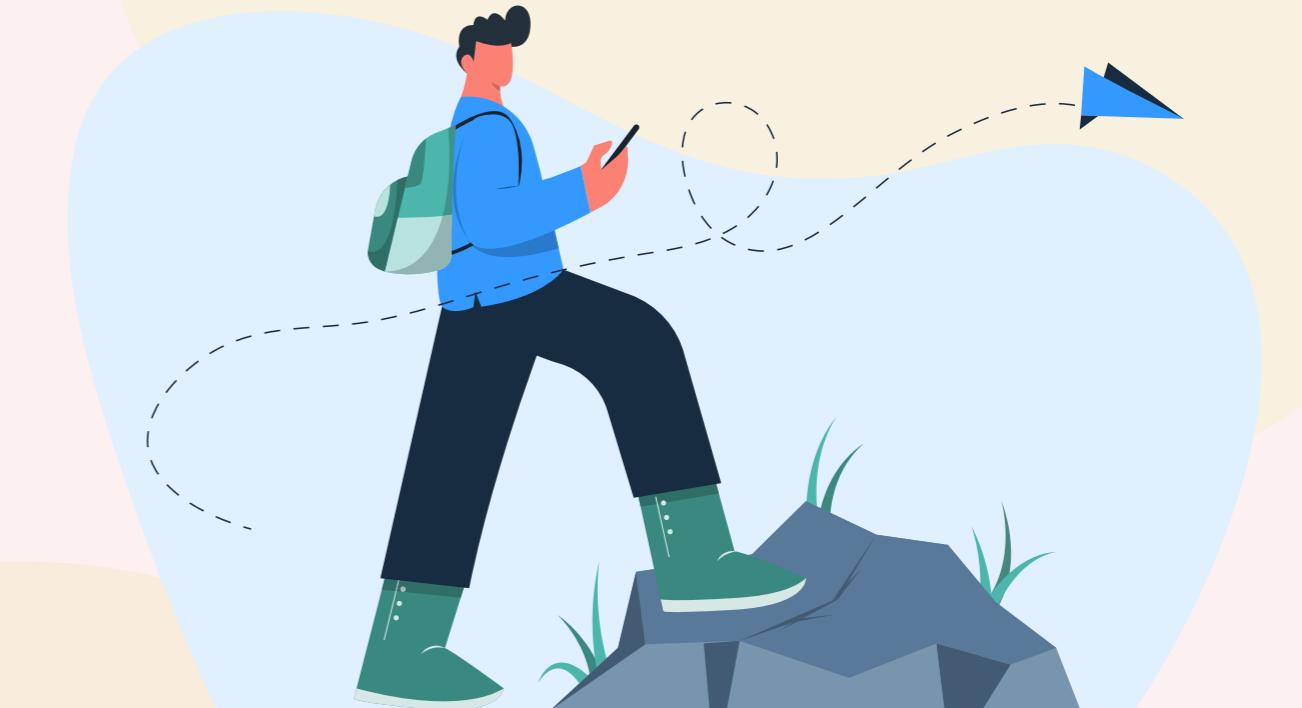
or always dragging along the floor; god bless slip-ons.

Poor co-ordination and balance affected me learning tasks such as riding a skateboard and a bike. It took a long time for me to learn how to ride a bike - my stabilisers were bending under my weight, as I got bigger. My dad tried for a long time to teach me, but it was my cousin who taught me to balance, to the point where I was able to turn corners using no hands at all. Compared to how my daughter learned how to ride a bike, the process my learning was daunting and exhausting.

Those with dyspraxia often have poor fine motor skills, affecting their precision and intricacy, affecting skills such as handwriting. My handwriting has always been poor - often described as a spider walking across the page. Even in adulthood my poor penmanship was commented upon. I was told by my manager that I had to improve my writing, as it looked unprofessional.

Learning to read also took a long time. I never had an issue with spelling - I was always achieving full marks on my spelling test. I had an issue with my eyes not tracking across a straight line, without missing words, or dropping down to the line below, which makes learning to read difficult. My tracking has improved over the years, and with it my ability to read has improved. The educational psychologist, on my second assessment, at the age of 39, said it I was impossible for this issue to resolve, though mine has.

I was initially assessed by an Educational Psychologist at Derby Dyslexia Institute. In 2001 I was diagnosed as having dyslexia, though after standardisation of psychological assessments in the early 2000s it was



reclassified as dyspraxia. The tests were a mixture of general knowledge, puzzles, and memory tests. My IQ was classed as slightly above average and there was a considerable gap between my poor short term and good long-term memory. I have a great memory for music trivia, the history of comedy - I have a good sense of humour. I also have a good memory for people and places. It is something I've often referred to - I can recognise someone I pass in the street as an older sister who picked someone up from my primary school that I didn't even know - I remember their names, where they lived, who their friends were, but, regardless of how many times I am reminded, I cannot remember how to use the washing machine. I think the biggest problem I had was that I was slower at everything. No body ever called me stupid, but I certainly felt it. Feeling this way has lead to anxiety and anxiety related issues, such as Social Anxiety Disorder and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Though I have documented all my issues above I worked on all these issues. I learned to read, I learned to write, spell, count, write assignments. I love to research, write and edit articles. I love learning and hope, one day, to be involved in it in some way, in relation to nursing.

I have worked in healthcare for 14 years - first as a carer, in a nursing home, and a volunteer

befriender. I then worked in a hospital for many years as a healthcare assistant (completing my Care Certificate and NVQ 2 and 3 in Health and Social Care at the same time). I completed my Nursing Associate course and gained a distinction; not bad for someone who couldn't read more than one word at a time until in their mid 30s. I am now on a Nursing Associate to Registered Nurse conversion course. The course is 18 months long - I now have 6 months left. I am currently working on my dissertation, and I have positive feedback from my personal tutor.

Being organised is something I struggle with still. I am forever looking for ways to be organised - diaries, calendars, trying to keep everything in the same place to stop me mislaying things. I am working from home at present and being organised is difficult at times. I don't have an office, not even a desk, so I have to work where I can. A tip for life - if you are always losing things and are disorganised always put something back where you found it, even if you lose concentration.

Writing this piece has made me realise how much I have developed over the years - I am proud of my achievements, some of them are things that others would not even recognise as occurring, learning to read for example.

# BPP UNIVERSITY LONDON STUDENT LIFE: A PERSONAL JOURNEY (PORTSOKEN CAMPUS)

**EHIGIE FREDY AJAYI**  
**MSC MANAGEMENT WITH PROJECT MANAGEMENT**



As a student at BPP University, I began a transformative chapter in my life by stepping onto the bustling streets of London. So far, the trip has been filled with academic challenges, personal growth, and remarkable encounters. In this article, I will give you a look into my life as a student at BPP University London, highlighting the unique opportunities, supportive environment, and bright spirit of the city that has moulded my educational journey.

## A World of Opportunities

As a student at BPP University London, I was immersed in a world of opportunities. The university's varied selection of programs and courses allows students to explore their interests and realize their full potential. BPP University delivers a complete education that gives us the information and abilities required

to excel in our chosen industries, whether it be law, business, health, or technology.

## Interactive Study

One of the most notable aspects of studying at BPP University is the emphasis on interactive learning. Traditional lectures are supplemented with sophisticated technologies, online library resources, and practical exercises. This strategy promotes active engagement, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving. Engaging in real-world scenarios and case studies has broadened my learning and ensured that I am well-prepared for the difficulties of our respective sectors.

## Optimal Conditions for Learning

BPP University is more than simply a school; it's a community that encourages our intellectual and social development. In addition to being subject matter experts, lecturers and tutors are also mentors who sincerely care about our progress. Beyond the classroom, they offer direction, criticism, and insightful advice. We can develop deep connections with both students and lecturers because of the intimate setting of the small class sizes.



## London as a Living Classroom

Being a student at BPP University London entails turning the city into a living classroom. The historic sites, cultural institutions, and various neighbourhoods provide limitless chances for discovery and enrichment. The liveliness of the city fuels my educational path, from completing research at renowned libraries to attending industry events and networking meetings.

## Managing Academics and Personal Life

Although academics play a big role in a student's experience, BPP University understands the need for balance. The university encourages us to join organizations, societies, and extracurricular activities that interest us. These extracurricular pursuits not only give students a much-needed vacation from their schoolwork but also encourage personal development, leadership potential, and a sense of community.

## The World's Perspective

As a student at BPP University, I have been exposed to the diverse cultures and viewpoints that make up London. I have learned more about various cultures, philosophies, and ways of thinking when I interact with classmates from different backgrounds. I have gained the knowledge and abilities necessary to interact successfully on a worldwide scale because of this exposure, which also prepares me for the globalized nature of the workforce.

## Connections with Industries

Strong ties to businesses and organizations in the industry distinguish BPP University. This priceless network opens doors to networking, internship, and job placement opportunities that can influence student's professional trajectories.

## Changing with the Times

A BPP University student's path also involves learning to adjust to change, a skill that is especially important in the rapidly changing world of today. The university gives us the adaptability and resilience necessary to succeed in a constantly shifting environment, whether it be switching to online study in difficult times or adopting new technologies.

## Milestones and memories

Memorable events and key achievements have punctuated my time at BPP University London. Each accomplishment, from participating in tough class activities to turning in my summative evaluation, which I am passionate about, has aided in my academic and personal development. Long after I graduate, I will cherish the relationships I made along the road and the memories I made during late-night study sessions and enjoyable get-togethers.

## Viewing the Future

I am proud of myself and eager for what lies ahead as I near the conclusion of my adventure at BPP University London (Portsoken campus). My future is bright because of the abilities, information, and experiences I've received here. I have no doubt that the groundwork I created at BPP University will serve me well no matter if I decide to continue my education, enter the workforce, or take on a new challenge.

## To Sum Up

Being a student at BPP University London involves more than just going to class; it also involves embracing a complete educational experience that includes academic excellence, personal growth, and a strong connection to the dynamic city that surrounds us. BPP University equips us to make significant contributions to both our chosen disciplines and the larger world through participatory learning, a caring community, and exposure to many viewpoints. I am appreciative of the possibilities, difficulties, and personal development that have shaped my time as a student at BPP University London as I look back on my journey.



# A STUDENT'S JOURNEY: NURTURING GROWTH AS A UNIVERSITY AMBASSADOR

RAZIN SHAIKH



Hello, my name is Razin and I am currently pursuing my masters in Healthcare Leadership at BPP university. I am a student ambassador too.

As a passionate student ambassador at BPP university, my journey has been a fascinating blend of personal growth, community connection, and the pursuit of excellence. In this article, I share my unique experience as a fellow student, offering insights into the invaluable role of student ambassadors and how it has enriched my university adventure.

## The Catalyst for Involvement: Becoming a Student Ambassador

When I first stepped onto the vibrant campus of BPP, I was eager to immerse myself in all aspects of university life. The role of a student ambassador immediately caught my attention – a chance to not only contribute to the university community but also to learn and grow personally.

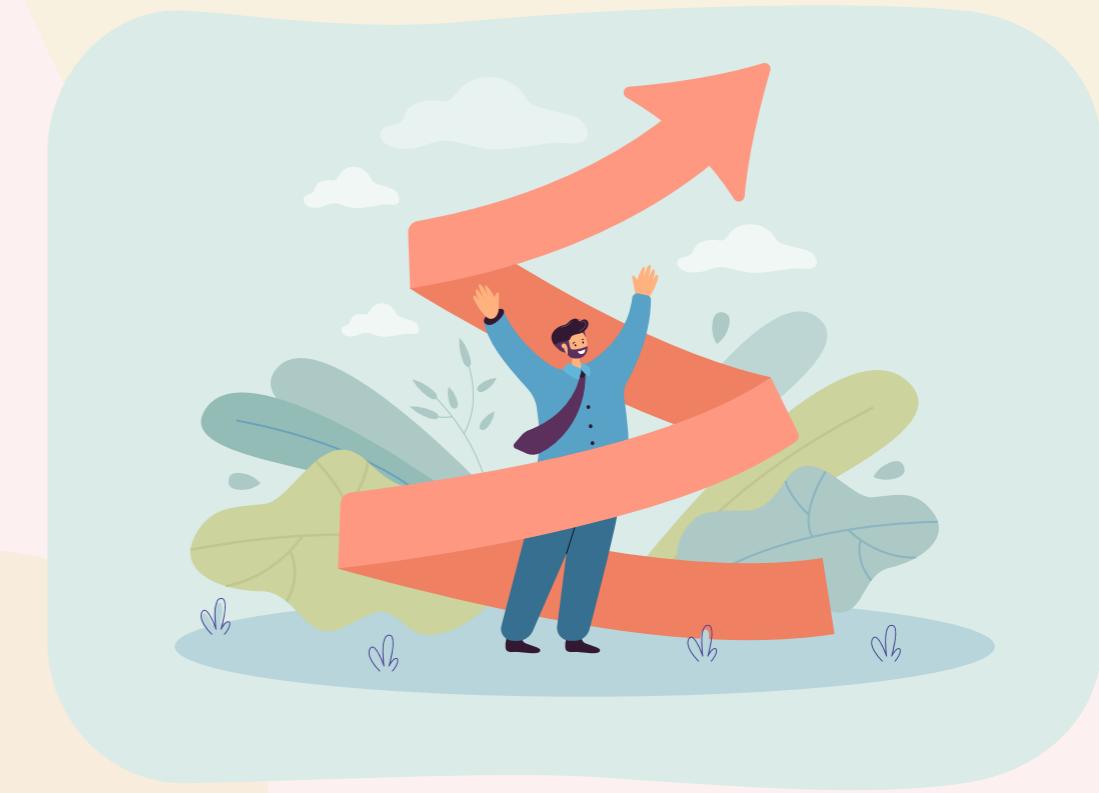
As a student ambassador, I find myself at the

intersection of guidance and camaraderie. Assisting fellow students with enrolment, event organization, and offering advice, I have the privilege of being part of their transformative journey. This role has not only deepened my connection to the university but also honed essential skills that will undoubtedly serve me well beyond graduation.

## Fostering Unity through Events and Outreach

One of the most fulfilling aspects of my role is being involved in the creation and execution of campus events. From orientation sessions that ease the transition for incoming students to lively cultural fairs that celebrate diversity, these events cultivate a sense of belonging that is the heart of BPP's spirit.

Beyond the buzz of events, my fellow student ambassadors and I engage in meaningful outreach efforts. Whether it's sharing insights with prospective students during campus tours or with different campus centres to offer valuable resources, our goal is to ensure that every student feels supported and empowered throughout their academic journey.



## Balancing Roles: Student, Ambassador, and Lifelong Learner

Navigating the dual roles of a student and an ambassador has been a rewarding challenge. It has taught me the art of time management, effective communication, and the importance of maintaining a balanced lifestyle. Juggling coursework, ambassador responsibilities, and personal pursuits has made me more resilient, adaptable, and motivated to excel in all aspects of my life.

My journey as a student ambassador has also been a continuous lesson in leadership and collaboration. Working alongside fellow ambassadors and university staff has exposed me to diverse perspectives, encouraging me to think creatively and critically. These interactions have enhanced my interpersonal skills and broadened my horizons.

To my fellow students, I encourage you to consider the unique opportunity of becoming a student ambassador. This role not only allows you to give back to your university but also facilitates personal growth in ways you might never expect. As ambassadors, we shape the narrative of our university, fostering a culture of support, unity, and excellence.

Whether you're helping a new student navigate their first semester or contributing to the planning of an unforgettable event, your impact as a student ambassador resonates deeply within the university community. Embrace the ambassador within you, and let your journey be a testament to the transformative power of shared experiences, collaboration, and the pursuit of knowledge.

To sum it up, my dual role as a student ambassador and a student at BPP university has been a remarkable adventure, enriched with learning, connection, and growth. From the hustle and bustle of event planning to the quiet moments of mentorship, each experience has shaped me into a more confident, compassionate, and capable individual.

As you embark on your own university journey, remember that you have the power to be an ambassador in your own right – an advocate for positive change, a source of support, and a catalyst for unity. Embrace the opportunities that come your way and let your university experience become a canvas on which you paint a vibrant and impactful story.

# FROM APPRENTICE TO WELLBEING ADVOCATE: NAVIGATING CORPORATE WATERS AND CULTIVATING MINDFUL SUCCESS

BELLA MUDRICKI  
KPMG

Starting my degree apprenticeship in October 2019, thrust me into the corporate world. However, this wasn't my first exposure to such an environment. Growing up, my dad held a corporate role, affording me the opportunity to spend days in his office during the summer holidays. In my own little office, I could pretend to be the boss and feel like the 'real deal'. Perhaps this prepared me for a position at KPMG. After all it was my dad who introduced me to degree apprenticeships, particularly at KPMG, and encouraged my application. These apprenticeships boasted various benefits, including a funded degree, an impressive salary, and invaluable work experience. My dad, a consistent source of inspiration, imparted discipline, and work ethic, steering me toward an office-based career.

My personal experiences have really shaped me into the person I am today and brought me to the fortunate position that I am in. These experiences are what drive me to keep going, to be strong and resilient. After losing my mum in 2015, I had no choice but to grow up and become more independent. The need to make her proud became my ultimate driving force. Within a year, I excelled in my GCSEs and maintained this momentum throughout college, ultimately leading me to apply for my current apprenticeship. My mum's catch phrase was always 'as long as you've tried your best, that's all you can do'. To this day that remains my reassurance through difficult times.



Before KPMG, I had my heart set on a different apprenticeship. The location of which was just around the corner from KPMG Manchester (where I am based now). I had gotten this opportunity through my friend's mum, and I was going to be the first-degree apprentice that the business had ever trained. I was so excited and relieved at how easy this process had been compared to the usual stressful applications and unknown.

One day while at college, I received an email to say that the contact I had been working with from the firm had left, and therefore they could no longer offer me a role. I was absolutely heartbroken. I remember calling my dad from the college toilets crying. He reassured me that another opportunity would soon come knocking ... and so it did! Not long after, KPMG reached out to inform me that I'd gotten through to the next round of the application process. I knew that I was going to put my heart and soul into this (even though I felt like I had no idea what I was doing). It just shows you that the saying 'as one door closes, another door opens' must be true!

Anyway, fast forward almost 4 years and here I am, just about to finish my apprenticeship and feeling extremely proud of where I am.

I have been part of wellbeing teams at KPMG from what seems like right at the beginning of my time there. Being a part of these groups gives me a sense of comfort and through this, I have really developed a passion for supporting wellbeing in the workplace. Given the significant time we spend at work - day in, day out—I strongly believe in cultivating a welcoming and enjoyable atmosphere.

Out of this passion for wellbeing, in February 2020, I launched my own meditation initiative – Meditation Mondays – which has garnered the participation of over 1,000 employees globally, even spanning places like Saudi Arabia, Guatemala, Australia, and Florida! Initially starting this with the expectation that 10 people might sign up, so this is still amazing to me.

Meditation Mondays, essentially a 10-week course, involves sending participants an email invitation every Monday morning, complete with a written narrative centred on that week's theme and a meditation practice for personal use.

This initiative has opened doors to a whole range of amazing opportunities including hosting internal and external meditation sessions collaborating on other meditation projects and receiving invitations to speak about my experiences. The most exciting is the prospect of hosting my own ten-week series, featuring a different guest each week. In these sessions, we will delve into the themes of Meditation Mondays, accompanied by live meditation and breathwork.



We're in the 'Golden Age' of neuroscience right now, and that means there's more evidence than ever to support the benefits of meditation. Meditating regularly gives way to a whole host of improvements such as:

- Better emotional regulation
- Decreased levels of stress and anxiety
- Better focus
- More creativity
- Decreases the risk of Alzheimer's and dementia
- Lowers heart rate and blood pressure
- Lowers levels of cortisol - which is a key player in our body's stress response
- Improves the health of our DNA
- Technically keeps you younger for longer as it limits the level of cortical thinning that we experience when we age. This is essentially where we lose neurons in the cortex (a natural ageing process)... meaning that your brain actually stays younger for longer.
- Promotes a better sense of calm and ease, as you are training your brain to communicate with itself better, meaning that you are strengthening the paths in your brain.

Of course, the more you do it at a longer duration, the more benefit this is going to have! However, even just 5 minutes a day - 5 MINUTES - is proven to be beneficial... Meditation has really helped me through my ups and downs in both my work and personal life, and I hope I have been able to encourage you to try it out yourself! Alongside meditation, I love journaling, practicing gratitude and attending weekly spiritual development classes!

These practices really help me to see the bigger picture, ground myself, and generally approach life optimistically – I encourage you to try something new and see if it helps you!

# THERE IS NO NON-BINARY “LOOK.”

XUE QIN (THEY/THEM)



As some may know, 0s and 1s are binary numbers. Non-binary numbers are everything outside of that scope— 2s, 3s, 4s, and everything beyond and in between.

Think of gender in the same way. There is no “one way” to be non-binary, and no “one way” to be trans.

There is no non-binary “look.”

Non-binary people are not strictly androgynous, and do not owe anyone androgyny. This may be why we are fairly invisible.

I first realised that I was struggling with my gender identity when I was frustrated by almost every instance of being called by my gender assigned at birth. It evoked a feeling of “wrongness,” but I could never quite articulate why. Even beyond that, as a teenager heavily immersed in musical theatre, I had taken every chance to push for gender-neutral casting,

for the chance to play characters across all genders.

A very short Q&A: If you identify more with characteristics associated with a certain binary gender, why not just call yourself that?

Because I’m not.

My queerness and non-binary identity are defined by a lack—in this case, a lack of belonging to the gender binary. While I am mildly attached to the concept of having a gender, I do not, and have never, fell cleanly into the categories defined as “man” or “woman.”

Like many other non-binary and trans people, I experience gender dysphoria. For me, there are different degrees of gender dysphoria. Most times, it is a subtle, pervasive discomfort. When I am misgendered, it is like putting on ill-fitting clothes: annoying, but I can cope with it. Another analogy I find to be commonly used is being persistently called the wrong name.\*

\* Nota bene: It might be that I simply have a higher tolerance for being called the wrong name, given the rareness of my actual name. I have no experience of being deadnamed as I still use my birth name—my name is not perceived as gendered in the Anglosphere, and so I find no need to change it. The particular characters my name is written with are gendered, however, but that is another conversation entirely.

Being called by the correct pronouns simply brings a sense of relief, of rightness.

Why, then, do I not insist on correcting people on my pronouns? The answer is quite simple: you can never tell what the reaction is going to be. You can never tell if you’ll be discriminated against in the hiring process for daring to list your preferred pronouns, and more importantly, you can never predict the reactions of your family and friends.

This is a snippet of a conversation that I overheard at Pride, of all places:  
*“... and when my daughter wanted to introduce her partner to me, I asked, ‘How’s*

*she doing?” My daughter said “They’re doing fine,” quite pointedly, and at this point I was getting pissed off, she’s quite clearly a girl...”*

If this is how my family may react if I came out, I’d rather stay closeted. I’d rather place my safety above my comfort. Please note: I am very lucky in that the dysphoria I experience is generally mild. I cannot speak for other people in this regard.

This does not have to be the status quo. Non-binary people have existed in numerous cultures since time immemorial. The most common and easiest forms of acceptance today, I would argue, is the use of singular “they” in both formal and informal contexts; and abiding by someone’s wishes if they correct you on their pronouns. Yet, until non-binary genders are commonly recognised, acceptance will always stand in the way of visibility.

In the meantime, we will continue to exist in the background.

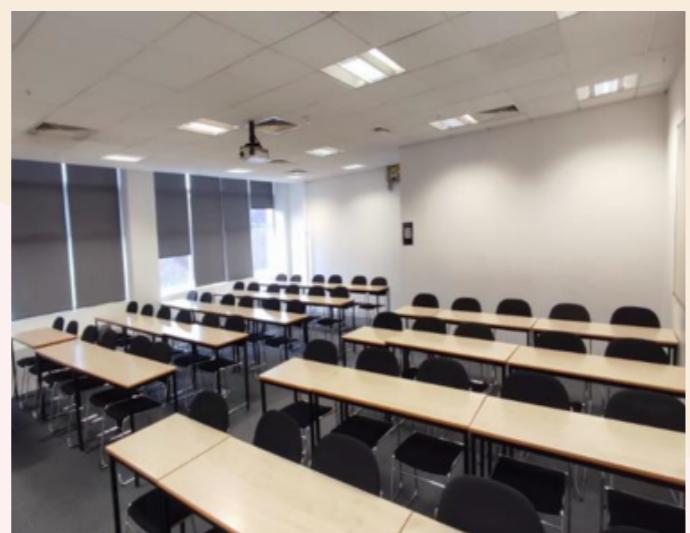
# SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN THE UK: AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

PAUL OLUWADAMIOLA OGUNDELE



conducted by HESA (2020), UK universities have made remarkable progress in reducing their carbon emissions through the implementation of energy-efficient lighting systems, insulation, and the adoption of renewable energy sources.

*"As an international student, I was truly amazed by the dedication of UK universities to energy efficiency. The buildings are equipped with motion sensor lighting and energy-saving appliances, creating a sustainable campus environment."* - Paul Ogundele



## 2. Waste Management and Recycling:

Waste management is of significant concern in the UK, with a focus on reducing landfill waste and promoting recycling. Recycling bins are readily available in public spaces, universities, and residences, making it convenient for students to responsibly dispose of their waste. Engaging in waste segregation and recycling programs as an international student allows for the development of sustainable habits that can be carried back to one's home country,

contributing to the global effort to minimize waste and preserve natural resources. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA, 2020) has reported an upward trend in recycling rates in the UK, with 45.1% of household waste being recycled in 2019.

*"Compared to my home country, the availability and utilization of recycling facilities were limited. Since coming to the UK, I have quickly adapted to the organized recycling practices promoted by the university and have become more mindful of reducing waste."* - Dapo, International Student.



## 3. Sustainable Transportation:

Transportation is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In response, the UK promotes sustainable transportation systems like cycling, walking, and public transport. As an international student, I have appreciated the extensive network of public transportation options available throughout the country. Efficient buses, trains, trams, and underground services make it easy to navigate and explore without relying on private vehicles. Universities further encourage sustainable transportation habits through car-sharing programs, which reduce traffic congestion, emissions, and transportation costs. The "Green Travel Pledge" campaign launched by the National Union of Students (NUS) encourages students to opt for environmentally friendly alternatives like cycling, walking, or using public transportation (NUS, 2019).

*"The extensive public transportation network in the UK has made getting around and exploring the country incredibly convenient*

*for me. Private vehicles have become rarely necessary, enabling me to minimize my carbon footprint and contribute to a cleaner environment."* - Ahmed, International Student.



## 4. Sustainable Food Practices:

The UK has seen a rise in interest in sustainable and ethical food practices. Many universities offer sustainable meal options that prioritize locally sourced, organic, and fair-trade produce. This not only supports local farmers and reduces the carbon footprint associated with food transportation but also educates international students about sustainable food choices. Additionally, universities often foster gardening initiatives, allowing students to cultivate their own food and promote sustainable agricultural practices. Collaborating with universities and restaurants, the Sustainable Restaurants Association (SRA, 2018), actively promotes sustainable food choices, waste reduction, and support for local farmers.

*"Having the option of choosing sustainable food on campus has not only benefitted the environment but has also made me more conscious about making responsible decisions regarding food consumption and its impact on our planet."* - Maria, International Student.



## 5. Green Spaces and Biodiversity:

The UK's commitment to preserving biodiversity is evident through its abundant green spaces and parks. These areas serve as a testament to the country's dedication to maintaining a healthy environment (WWF-UK, 2020). International students can actively engage with nature by exploring these green spaces, participating in conservation projects, or joining community-led tree-planting initiatives. Experiencing the beauty and benefits of these natural environments instils a sense of environmental stewardship and responsibility towards preserving biodiversity.



As an international student in the UK, I consider myself fortunate to witness and actively participate in sustainable practices. These experiences have expanded my understanding of sustainability and empowered me to become an agent of change in my home country. By incorporating these sustainable practices into our daily lives, we can collectively build a greener future that transcends borders.

It is important to note that sustainable practices in the UK extend beyond the examples mentioned above. The country continues to invest in research, innovation, and policy development to address pressing environmental issues. As international students, let us embrace these sustainable practices, learn from them, and work together towards a sustainable and prosperous future on a global scale.

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# COMPETING IN THE ROLEX FASTNET RACE 2023

EWA CIELEPA



The Rolex Fastnet Race promises to be a challenging and exciting adventure. One of the most important international offshore yacht races, the tournament is held every two years. The event draws a diverse group of sailors, including both seasoned professionals and enthusiastic beginners, who are all looking to test their skills and experience the thrill of sailing in one of the most difficult offshore events.

The race starts in Cowes, Isle of Wight, and ends in Cherbourg, France, covering roughly 700 nautical miles. Sailors would navigate their boats carefully while travelling towards Fastnet Rock, which is located off the coast of Ireland. Depending on variables including boat size, speed, and current weather conditions, the race can last anywhere between two and six days.

To compete in the race, at least 50% of the crew must have completed at least 300 nautical miles of offshore sailing in the 12 months before the competition's start. The crew normally completes three qualifying races in order to meet the requirement:

- The Myth of the Malham Race
- The Morgan Cup Race
- and St. Malo Race,

all prestigious sailing events that are

organised by the Royal Ocean Racing Club.

The crew was made up of strangers from different backgrounds who had never met before. Our skipper, Afanasy, from Bridge Sailing Team, has vast marine navigational experience. Despite being a Russian native, he has spent a considerable chunk of his life travelling across the world. Antoine is from France, Charles is from South Africa, Iain is from the United Kingdom, and I originally came from Poland.

At the end of May, we began the Myth of Malham, our first race. On the first day, the weather was perfect, and there was just enough breeze to keep us moving as we sailed from Cowes to the Eddystone Lighthouse. However, overnight, the wind entirely died, leaving us static for several hours. We were split into two groups. While one team rested, another crew was in charge of steering the boat. The skipper stayed up all night to make sure we were secure and on the right path during our three-hour nightly watches. The skipper was satisfied with our ability to guide the boat as we advanced as a team, and he was able to get some rest. The following day, we passed the Eddystone lighthouse before returning to Cowes, where the race would end. We confronted the proper sailing challenge as the weather suddenly became stormier and windier. Our devotion and stamina were put to the test as a result of the strong wind with gusts up to 35 knots and larger waves, which provided us with a great experience of how challenging and dangerous sailing may be. The following morning, we were all quite exhausted and debating our life choices after some of us had been seasick. On the choppy sea, we were dozing off while still standing. But none of us thought about giving up, so we all went on to the next race.



The following two races exposed us to various sea conditions and tested our maritime expertise. From heavy winds, rain, and cold to no wind at all and heat, we learned how to use different sails for varied weather conditions and look for even the smallest gasps of wind to try to go forward. We all became excellent friends, laughed a lot, spoke a lot, and teased each other to get better at sailing.

Day one of the main race greeted us with heavy rain and wind. We were aware right away that it would be difficult to even get past The Needles. We started the race in good spirits despite facing off against about 500 boats in the extremely congested strait. We quickly knew how difficult the race would be for us given the wind, which could reach 45 mph. We felt as though we were about to fall off the boat since the boats were up to 45 degrees tilted. When we were executing sail tacks and jibes, Afanasy took over the steering. The smallest error could result in the boat flipping over or being struck by another competitor.

Sadly, two hours into the race, still in the Solent, we noticed a significant tear in a main sail, and we immediately realised that our adventure was over. We sailed back to the Haslar Marina in the hopes that the sail could be fixed and we could try to go to the Fastnet Rock while it was no longer competing in the race. When it turned out to be impossible, as a team, we decided to sail to Cherbourg to welcome the winners and take part in the award ceremony.

I thought it was an amazing experience all around. We finished all three qualifying races even though we weren't able to advance very far in the main race, and we sailed over 1000 nautical miles.

On the first day of the race, about 100 boats pulled out. The lifeboat reported 28 events requiring assistance: one boat sank, forcing the crew to board a liferaft; several boats suffered major damage; and some pulled out due to bad weather forecasts. Luckily, everyone returned safely to the local ports. Unlike the previous editions, there were no fatalities that day.

It made all of us feel quite accomplished. Few people would even attempt to participate in such a competitive event, much less a group of strangers who ended up working together brilliantly and becoming friends. In many respects, our participation put us to the test, and we all passed it with the highest grade. We all experienced difficult times, and we helped one another. We acquired knowledge that we may apply in the future, and we made wonderful memories that we will cherish forever. No matter how challenging the goal may be, we have learned to never give up. Since I'm determined to visit the Fastnet Rock someday, I can't wait for the upcoming Rolex Fastnet Race.



# Interested in setting up a Club or Society?

We will help you every step of the way

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