

# HEY YOU, DON'T GO...

**YOU CHOSE CARDIFF FOR STUDY, NOW CHOOSE CARDIFF FOR THE NEXT STAGE IN YOUR LIFE. FOR THE BEST QUALITY OF LIFE OF ANY UK CORE CITY. FOR A MATCH DAY EXPERIENCE LIKE NO OTHER. FOR 46% CHEAPER HOUSING THAN LONDON. FOR MORE GREEN SPACE PER PERSON THAN ANY OTHER CORE CITY. FOR ED SHEERAN, COLDPLAY, BEYONCÉ, AND THE ROLLING STONES. FOR THE BEST WAGES IN WALES. FOR CHIPS AND CURRY SAUCE DOWN CAROLINE STREET. FOR THE COUNTRYSIDE ON YOUR DOORSTEP. FOR CARRYING ON WITH THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE. FOR YOUR FUTURE. FOR CARDIFF.**

If you think you need to move to London to land a swanky job after you graduate then you are dead wrong - from creative industries to chartered accounting, insurance brokerage to policy development you'd be hard pressed to find a job you can't do right here in Cardiff, and your friends are here, and it's cheaper than London and Wales are smashing England in the rugby. Stick around young graduate - this city isn't finished with you yet.

**FOR**  
**CARDIFF**



# SHWMAE,

You've probably realised from our front cover that we want graduates to stay in Cardiff. Why? Well cards on the table its FOR Cardiff's job to want that. It literally says it in our business plan. We represent the businesses of the city centre – we're here to support them and as a business improvement district we're supposed to improve the business opportunities in the district (duh). Graduates are good for that, the more of you lovely people there are in a city, the stronger that city's economy tends to be. You can work hard and improve productivity, you can support the growth of new and innovative industries, and with generally high levels of disposal income and free time you support the city economy by visiting local businesses and keeping cash flowing. We're not saying you're the entire future of the city or anything but we are willing to let you come to your own conclusions on that...

Graduates flock to London every year in search of exciting opportunities and the chance to run into Benedict Cumberbatch in the supermarket, but as property prices rocket, air quality plummets and the odour of the person you're squashed against on the tube becomes ever riper maybe you'll realise that the little voice in your head telling you to stay in a different kind of capital city was onto a winner all along.

If you're a little short of a plan for the future, which let's be honest a large amount of new graduates are, then don't feel the need to run off to the big city just yet. Cardiff can be a great place to start out in and develop your career and we've pulled together some stories of fellow former students showing you how they made it happen right here. Watch this space for more information in the future on things like graduate schemes, internships and development opportunities. We could have printed a load of that information right here in this handy publication but this is print media and let's be honest, it would all have been out of date by first thing yesterday...

[Emily Cotterill, BA \(2013\) English Literature and History](#)  
Projects Manager at FOR Cardiff and person who was daft enough to move away from Cardiff after her degree and lucky enough to move back in 2017.



## CARDIFF IS A GREAT PLACE FOR GRADUATES...

In 2013 Legal & General declared Cardiff the best city for young adults and who exactly are we to argue with them? Cardiff is an affordable choice for city living with the cost of housing and the total cost of living being cheaper than most major UK cities including Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol, and Leeds. In fact the overall cost of living is 46% lower than in London. The city boasts high levels of green space per resident, one of the highest quality of life rankings in the UK and plenty of other marvellous statistics that we could go on about if we honestly believed that people made these kind of choices objectively, rather than based on the way that they feel and we feel that Cardiff is pretty spectacular.

Any Cardiff student knows about the excellent cultural and leisure facilities on offer here including an Olivier Award winning theatre, a white water rafting centre, a massive and absolutely stunning park right in the city centre and, let's be honest, some pretty great pubs and bars as well. There aren't many cities where you can walk from the Castle to the stadium to see Beyoncé in the time it takes you to drink a takeaway coffee. When you land a great job here in the city and start living off of an actual salary instead of a maintenance loan (hallelujah) you'll be able to really enjoy these Cardiff experiences without having to drop by any event with free canapés instead of forking out for dinner – not that the joy of free food wears off once you're earning a living of course!







## **STACEY OLIVER, CAMPAIGN MANAGER AT COWSHED**

### **BA (2010) FRENCH & JAPANESE**

#### **What was your first move when you left university?**

I never really had a plan for what I wanted to do with my degree, I was just very interested in other cultures. When I graduated, I had no comms experience, so started to get as much voluntary work experience as I could whilst working in retail. I got events experience working on Miss Wales, a few weeks here and there in different agencies until I landed a voluntary role at Comic Relief. That then led to me being employed there as a Media Assistant.

#### **Tell us about your current job with Cowshed.**

My varied work experience helped me realise that I wanted my work to have more meaning. I now work for Cowshed, a creative agency in Cardiff as a Campaign Manager. The company is built on an ethos that really resonates with my desire to make a change with the work I do – we only work on campaigns for clients we love and causes we believe in. My favourite part of the job is going out to meet the people our campaigns are supporting. We are small, growing team which means lots of hard graft, but when you're working with people that inspire you to produce campaigns that make a difference, it's really no effort.

#### **How did you get from your first role to where you are now? Have you had to overcome any particular challenges?**

I worked three Comic Relief campaigns which were only six to nine months contracts, so it was quite difficult to find work in the interim. I managed by making a good impression on the people I worked with along the way. My first boss got me a job at an agency in between contracts and my now boss was my last one at Comic Relief.

#### **Why have you stayed in Cardiff? What is there about the city that you enjoy?**

Cardiff has always felt like home to me. They say you have to go to London to get a job in the creative industry, but if you look closely there are lots of agencies doing great things here in Wales. The joys of working in Cardiff are that everything is on your doorstep, you can get to a meeting the other side of the city in next to no time and when things are getting a bit much you can be in the great outdoors in under an hour.

#### **Do you have any advice for soon to be graduates?**

My advice is to put yourself forward. I had no experience going into what I do, and I wasn't a particularly confident twenty something either. But I took every opportunity that was given to me and made the most of it, even the small mundane tasks. You never know who is watching so take every challenge and do it with it enthusiasm. You get out what you put in. Also, don't be afraid to ask questions!

## **USE YOUR RESOURCES**

As a student you have access to services to help you figure out your path after university – make sure you contact the Careers and Employability service if you have any questions, it's their job to help you and they'll be happy to do it.

Careers and Employability provides students with interactive learning resources, specialist guidance and support throughout University via Your Career Journey online. Additionally students can access 1:1 careers advice, employability sessions in schools and employer events on campus. Use your Careers Account on the intranet to get your CV checked, book a careers appointment and browse work experience opportunities, jobs and employer events. For more information follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram for updates or email us at [careers@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:careers@cardiff.ac.uk)







## **SIMON WILLIAMS, RUGBY CAMERAMAN AT LENS360**

### **BSc BUSINESS MANAGEMENT AND MARKETING (2008)**

**What was your first job when you left university? Did you get a job in the field you were expecting to?**

No! I graduated just before the 2008 banking crisis. I was 90% of the way towards getting onto the Lloyds Bank graduate scheme then they stopped calling, Lehman brothers went under and banking didn't seem the best career choice any more!

I'd been working at a small TV company in the summers while at uni so I decided to head in that direction instead. The company I'd been working with had invested money into a Georgian TV company. My first ever job was as their man on the ground in Tbilisi.

I moved to Tbilisi for 3 months in September 2008 (it would have been sooner but the Russian army briefly invaded Georgia.) We were producing a 'Match of the Day' type program for the Georgian football league. The production gallery was set up in the kitchen of the local football stadium, everything

happened about 3 hours later than scheduled and the crew would take vodka shots between takes!

**Tell us about your current role. What do you enjoy about your work? What are the main challenges you face?**

I currently work for a relatively new production company called Lens360. Lens360 produce all the Welsh Rugby Union's video content as well as programmes for S4C, Channel 4 and a few others. We're a fairly small company so everyone contributes to every aspect of production but my main job is as a cameraman and editor.

I covered the 2017 Lions tour for S4C and we either worked or travelled every day for 6 weeks straight. Everything we made had to be good enough to be broadcast on what were probably S4C's most watched programmes that year. It is draining sometimes but the experiences and the friendships you make with people through the shared hard work are more than worth it.

**Do you have any advice for soon to be graduates?**

If you have a really clear goal of what you want to do post uni that's great, go all in to make it happen. But if you don't - don't feel like you have to be stuck doing something strictly linked to your degree either. Try different things and definitely look into careers that incorporate things you enjoy as well as what you studied.

Getting a degree from a good university like Cardiff is a great achievement and something to be proud of. It doesn't mean that at the start of the next stage you'll have any idea what you're doing. You won't automatically be able to just nail your new job any more than you would have been able to write your dissertation in freshers' week. Enjoy that you achieved what you did but then move on to the next thing and start again. No one likes the fresh out of uni know-it-all.

I don't like to promote the idea of unpaid work experience too much because I think too many companies exploit it, but it did help me and a lot of my colleagues get a foot in the door early on. Just don't let anyone take advantage of your eagerness to be involved.



## **THIS IS MASSIVELY IMPORTANT**

Pay attention to Simon, he is steering you right. Getting work experience is great but don't let people take advantage of you - getting experience shouldn't mean doing valuable work with no reward. If something feels wrong or you aren't sure of your rights then ask the careers service for advice.





# A MOMENT FOR MENTAL WELL-BEING



The end of university can be tough, you're surrounded by people who are getting into impressive grad schemes, swanning off on expensive travels, moving in with their partners, and looking like they've got everything covered. It's easy to feel overwhelmed by all of this, especially if you've not met goals that you laid out for yourself or if you truly have no idea what it is that you want to do. It can be hard to believe this and even harder to keep it in mind but it's honestly important to remember that there's no rush.

It's also important to say that if you aren't career minded then that's OK. University is a stepping stone to a certain kind of working life for a lot of people but for other's it's an academic experience, an opportunity to study something you're passionate about for three long years and a chance to test the waters of adult life without having to do all of that annoying stuff like pay council tax and go to meetings with people from HR. If you don't care about climbing the corporate ladder or heading up a non-profit that's going to change the world then that's fine too.

Take your time – if you're flirting with staying in Cardiff but don't want to commit to a tenancy then why not check out the options for staying in halls over summer, remember that it's fine to apply for jobs that aren't graduate jobs. We're full of career based shame in this society but if you want to be a barista with a physics degree then by all means you be a barista with a physics degree – that's as valid a choice as any.

**It's OK not to be OK - if you're struggling with your mental health speak to your GP or search student support and well-being for more information on how the university can offer you support.**

**Call Cardiff Nightline on 02920870555**

**Call Samirtans FREE on 116 123 or for Welsh language services 0808 164 0123**



## GEMMA COLLINS, BUSINESS GROWTH ENABLER AT NATWEST

**BA (1998) English Literature & PgDip (1999) Newspaper Journalism**

**What was your first job when you left university?**

I finished my postgraduate course on the Friday and started my first 'proper' job, as a reporter with the South Wales Argus in Newport, on the Monday. Such was (and is) the reputation of JOMEC that the Argus took me on before I'd even had the results of my journalism course (when I did get them, I passed with a Distinction). I was delighted to get this job – since I was about 12 it had been my dream to work as a newspaper journalist, and throughout university I was determined that I wanted to stay in South Wales when I graduated. So I was very lucky – there aren't that many vacancies in local journalism every year, and I didn't have to move to land my dream job. I got to work exactly where I wanted to be.

**Tell us about your current role. What do you enjoy about your work? What are the main challenges you face?**

I am now NatWest's Business Growth Enabler for Cardiff and the Vale. The role sees me offering support to small and medium businesses, and





running events on all sorts of topics which may help them. Cardiff has a very strong business ecosystem with lots of support available for start-ups and growing businesses. It's great to be a part of that and to be able to connect entrepreneurs to others who can help them.

Lots of help available for start ups you say? Cardiff is a great place to start a business – if that's a path you're considering taking maybe you should get in touch with the Business Growth team at NatWest and also check out the resources available from Business Wales.

**How did you get from your first role to where you are now? Have you had to overcome any particular challenges?**

From the South Wales Argus I worked briefly in Bath, for a promotion, but six months later was offered a job back in Cardiff, as a journalist for the Press Association. So I came home, bought a house and firmly put down my roots. From there, after a couple of years I moved to work for BBC Wales in the News and Current Affairs departments in Llandaff. I was there for five years before going to set up and run a new project in hyperlocal media for the University of Wales, Newport. I was there for almost three years until a fantastic opportunity came up with NatWest to look after their regional PR for Wales and the South West. Then a year ago an internal vacancy came up for the role of Business Growth Enabler for NatWest's Cardiff and South East Wales Business Banking team. I jumped at the chance to focus 100% of my time on my home city.

In terms of challenges, in the media world there's often the expectation that you should move to London to progress your career. That was never of interest to me because I wanted to stay in Cardiff. Instead I took a tactical route, moving to different organisations that did allow me to progress my career and learn new skills, without having to move.

**Why have you stayed in Cardiff? What is there about the city that you enjoy?**

I love the fact that Cardiff is big enough to offer plenty of opportunity, both in terms of career and lifestyle, yet small enough to be friendly and easy to get around. Learning about Cardiff's history helps me feel a real sense of connection to the city. We have such fantastic buildings which tell their own compelling stories, from Cardiff Castle to Insole Court. Even just wandering around the city centre and looking up, above street level, to see the original facades of some of the buildings, can take you to another Cardiff.

I've always enjoyed travelling with work but there's no nicer feeling than the train pulling into Cardiff Central Station, catching a glimpse of St Mary Street and the eclectic mix of old and very modern buildings in that part of town, and knowing you're home.



## **HYWEL BUTCHER, MARKETING MANAGER AT ST DAVID'S DEWI SANT**

### **BA (2005) Journalism, Film and Broadcasting**

**What was your first job when you left university? Did you get a job in the field you were expecting to?**

Once I left university, I secured my first job working at Red Dragon FM, a regional radio station now known as Capital South Wales.

I initially wanted to work in radio, so it was great to get my foot in the door there. I picked up a variety of jobs from reception, to heading up the Street Stars crew who host Capital events throughout South Wales. I then moved my way up into promotions, marketing and sponsorship.

It was at Red Dragon that I first dealt with St David's. They were one of the main accounts I worked on, and it was how I was able to get under the skin of the centre and begin my career there.





**What are you up to currently? What do you enjoy about your work? What are the main challenges you face?**

I'm currently the Marketing Manager of St David's, so no two days are the same. The variety of the role allows me to get involved in all marketing disciplines. From hosting events like the UK's largest Student Night to installing Christmas decorations, there is always plenty going on at St David's that keeps the role interesting and allows me to learn new skills and work with a really exciting and diverse mix of people from across the city and beyond.

While there is a lot to celebrate about St David's – retail does of course come with its challenges. For the shopping centre specifically, there is a challenge in ensuring we're giving our customers new reasons to visit. We're up against online retail and must provide a reason for people to get out of the homes. This is why our event strategy is so important to us.

**How did you get from your first role to where you are now? Have you had to overcome any particular challenges?**

I began at Red Dragon FM as a receptionist and worked my way up to become an Account Manager where I was handling one of the stations largest accounts – St David's.

I then saw a job description for marketing at a multimillion-pound shopping development in Cardiff. Without realising it was for a pre-existing client, I applied for the role and began working at the centre in 2008 as a Marketing Assistant and have worked my way up from there to my current role.

**Why have you stayed in Cardiff? What is there about the city that you enjoy?**

The retail scene here is fantastic and Cardiff has so much to offer from historic castles, to green spaces and great arts and entertainment - it really does have something for everyone and has progressed immensely over the years. You get all the benefits of a big capital city but with the added bonus that it's such a compact and welcoming place.

**Do you have any advice for soon to be graduates?**

Work experience is key. While employers look at qualifications – real life experience is vital and can provide such great insight into how a business works. I would encourage all those looking to get into marketing to try and get into work experience where ever you can.



## **CHRIS DAWSON-MORRIS, STRATEGIC PLANNING LEAD AT CARDIFF AND VALE UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD BA (2006) History**

**What was your first job when you left university?**

I had no idea what I wanted to do when I left university, I just wanted to stay in Cardiff so I took the first job that came along. It wasn't a great company and I only did it for six months before I got an entry level job in the Welsh Government. I did loads of great roles in Government such as working in the legal department supporting the development of Welsh law and negotiating with the UK Government of the devolution of housing policy. I was fortunate to get on the Civil Service Fast Stream through the internal route so able to progress through the tiers pretty rapidly.

**Tell us about your current role.**

I'm now Strategic Planning Lead at Cardiff and the Vale University Health Board. I love this job, it broadly splits into two parts; one developing our organisation's plans for the future, helping front line clinical teams develop their ideas as well as working with the Executives to implement our long term





strategy. The second part of my role is the Programme Lead for the (grandly titled) Shaping Our Future Wellbeing in the Community Programme. This is a programme looking at how we will deliver health services for the growing and changing population in Cardiff and the Vale.

The biggest challenge in this role is how we respond to the population growth in Cardiff, with 45,000 new homes by 2030, that's a lot of new people to provide services for. But it's also a huge opportunity. One of the most exciting elements of the programme I work on is working with colleagues in the local authority and developers to think about what a new district centre for the Plasdwr Garden City development to the East of Cardiff could look like.

### How did you get from your first role to where you are now?

Working for the Welsh Government was a great opportunity for me. It gave me a great grounding in the public sector but also allowed me to work in a wide variety of roles. Before I took up my current role I spent 4 years working on health policy, writing plans for cancer, heart disease, diabetes as well as working with colleagues in the NHS on a range of development projects. I then took a secondment to Velindre NHS Trust, I wanted to cross over from telling the NHS what to do, to seeing if the plans I'd helped to write were actually of any use in the NHS. It was a great learning opportunity and the NHS is fully of really great and enthusiastic people committed to helping people.

### Are you involved in any organisations outside of your day job that you'd like to talk about?

I'm a Board Member for Newydd Housing Association, when working in Welsh Government I was really interested in housing policy and this is a great way to use my experience in Government and the NHS to support an organisation which supports its tenants in so many ways.

I'd also give a shout out to Parkrun, both Saturday morning at Blackweir and Sunday morning Junior Parkrun. I've been taking my daughter to Junior Parkrun for just over a year now, it's a great way to start a Sunday with a committed group of volunteers and loads of enthusiastic kids!

### Do you have any advice for soon to be graduates?

Take an entry level job, my first role in Welsh Government was an entry level admin role, I was then able to apply for internal fast track schemes.

If you are applying for Graduate Schemes everyone wants to work in London so put 'Wales' or Cardiff as your choice for the Civil Service Fast Stream, BBC or schemes with the big 4, sometimes there is a little less competition.

STAY. This city has so much going for it and so much you have yet to explore.



## CARDIFF IS A GREAT PLACE FOR THE FUTURE...

As we learnt earlier from Chris, Cardiff is one of the fastest growing cities in the UK. This rapid development means a wide variety of new jobs coming into the area from employers as diverse as the BBC, Monzo and HMRC, but also new experiences – gone are the days when Cardiff lagged several years behind its larger contemporaries over the border. Over just the past year Cardiff city centre has seen the development of an indoor street food market, a vegan junk food restaurant and a display of giant inflatable daffodils floating around in the sky - clearly there's a lot going on.

There's plenty on the horizon for the city in the future - the city has changed a lot since many of you started your degree courses nearly three years ago and that change is not over yet. Buildings are opening on Central Square, and over on the other side of the train station the Central Quay Development is starting to gather pace. Meanwhile large scale investment from the Cardiff Capital Region is seeing projects like the South Wales Metro (that's a massive improvement to the region's public transport infrastructure to you and me) get off the ground. Cardiff has developed massively and rapidly during your lifetime and the change isn't over yet - stick around, watch the city grow, play your part.





**We're working on projects all over Cardiff city centre from courting graduates to filling the sky with giant inflatable daffodils. Find out more about FOR Cardiff and the work we do by visiting our website or tracking us down on social media.**

[forcardiff.com](http://forcardiff.com)



@FOR\_Cardiff



FOR Cardiff



FOR Cardiff