

# Alumni Profile

## Lydia Eales

Marketing & PR Executive, Oliver Burns



Lydia has amassed diverse and valuable experience within the marketing sector since graduating. Prior to Oliver Burns, she completed an internship working for a fashion PR company before transferring her skills to a digital lifestyle magazine, which provided an excellent grounding in customer care, copy writing and social media best practice. This was supplemented by employment at a leading advertising agency, planning audio-visual advertisements for high profile clients.

### Why did you choose to study English at Royal Holloway?

It was primarily because of its reputation as a leading university within its field. I also fell in love with the beautiful Victorian façade of Founder's and its traditional library, which seemed to me the perfect environment to study the texts of the past!

### What have you been doing, since you graduated?

I did several internships (fashion PR, beauty and an animation company), before gaining

full time employment planning advertising campaigns. I now work for a luxury interior design practice.

### How would you describe your job?

I manage all the company's social media accounts, creating and implementing strategies to promote brand awareness, and increase traffic to our platforms. In addition, I produce all content, from blogs to quotes for press releases, to copy for a newsletter. I love that so much of my role involves writing and it's thrilling to know people are reading it.

### What attracted you to this industry or role?

I was fascinated by the psychology of how a successful marketing campaign can change people's perception of a brand. I was also attracted to the need to combine creativity with business strategies, and the fact you can see the results of your efforts in real time.

### What is the best thing about your job?

The best thing for me is being engaged in varied but always creative tasks every day.

## Industry

- Marketing & Public Relations (PR)

## In a nutshell...

**Degree:**  
English (Single Honours)

**Year of graduation:**  
2013

**Further study:**  
N/A

### Core skills used from degree study:

- Accurate proofreading
- Producing compelling copy
- Managing multiple projects
- Adapting writing style with ease
- Time management
- Conducting research
- Detailed analysis
- Public speaking

**Mantra:**  
"It always seems impossible until it's done." Nelson Mandela

## Useful links

**Chartered Institute of PR**  
[www.cipr.co.uk](http://www.cipr.co.uk)

**Chartered Institute of Marketing**  
[www.cim.co.uk](http://www.cim.co.uk)

Plus, see special interest groups on  
[www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

*"This quote from Susan Sontag: "A writer, I think, is someone that pays attention to the world", speaks to how I write in my job."*

From putting together an inspiration mood, to posting on social media, to arranging flowers to dress a new development, no two days are identical.

**Are there any drawbacks that you wish you'd known about?**

Probably working to tight deadlines and having to produce something of a high quality in very little time!

**What are the main qualities and/or skills that you need in your role?**

You need the ability to wear many hats. As a marketer, one day you are a journalist, the next a data analyst, and the next a graphic designer; you need to be open to learning new skills and trying your hand at lots of different things.

As a PR Executive I am always writing. This quote from Susan Sontag: "A writer, I think, is someone that pays attention to the world", speaks to how I write in my job.

**Did you/do you need any further qualifications to do your job?**

No further qualifications are necessary but some companies may look for a qualification from the Chartered Institute of Marketing or similar. However, I found relevant experience was enough to get an entry level position.

**Do you have any tips for the application and interview process?**

My advice would be to not take criticism personally. I like this quote by Aristotle: 'there is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing and be nothing'. Rejection is part of the process and I found it gave me the impetus to try harder and come back better.

**Where do you want your career to be in five years' time?**

I would like to be working in the same industry but perhaps on a freelance basis for several clients so I am able to focus on some personal ambitions such as writing a novel.

**Of your time at Royal Holloway, what did you find most valuable?**

Building self-discipline. As studying English has limited contact hours, I found I had to find a structure that worked for me and had to set myself timelines to complete tasks within. This helped me to prepare for the workplace.

**If you could have your time again, what would you do the same and what would you do differently?**

I would take all the same modules as I thoroughly enjoyed each class I chose but I would do more on an extracurricular basis as many of these opportunities are unique to being at university such as writing for a campus newspaper or working at the Student Union.

**Was there any one turning point or event for you, that was significant?**

There was no specific turning point, but with each job, I gained a greater sense of what I liked and didn't like professionally and this helped guide me to an industry I feel my skillset is well aligned with.

**What's the best career advice you have been given?**

Treat finding a job like a 9 to 5 job in itself.

**If you could travel back in time to give your younger self some great career advice, what would you say?**

To be open to different career paths, and consider a range of roles as it may surprise you what you enjoy doing.

**Do you have any final words of wisdom, for anyone thinking of following a similar career path to you?**

To not be afraid to start over if your first or second (or even third!) job doesn't feel right. You spend the best part of your life at work so it's so important you enjoy and gain satisfaction from what you are doing. Studying English opens so many doors it can be hard to know what path to choose, so don't feel it's a sign of failure if your first role isn't everything you hoped it would be.

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For more Department of English Alumni Profiles see:

[royalholloway.ac.uk/english/alumniprofiles](http://royalholloway.ac.uk/english/alumniprofiles)

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