

Alumni Profile

Leah Jones

Senior PR, Social Media & Content Executive, CommsCo



Leah Jones graduated in 2016 and was proactive during her time at university, combining study with multiple part-time jobs. This experience meant that she was able to secure an internship with CommsCo, the company she works for now. After impressing her colleagues, Leah accepted a permanent role beginning the day after she left university.

Why did you choose to study English at Royal Holloway?

I was attracted to the wide range of courses offered by the department. In particular, I was attracted to the Modernist modules.

What have you been doing since you graduated?

I was interning at my current workplace from the February of third year, so I started work as soon as I graduated. I was offered the full-time position in May and started working after finishing at Royal Holloway, in June 2016.

How would you describe your job?

As a public relations agency, we manage the media relations for our clients. This includes liaising with journalists to get them into all forms of media (including TV, newspapers, radio, and online content).

We also create content and manage the social media for our clients, so we write their articles, blogs, and social media.

What attracted you to this industry or role?

I was attracted to PR because I would be using the skills directly from my degree. In addition, PR is a fast-paced industry, and I liked the possibility of doing something different every day.

What is the best thing about your job?

No two days are the same. We have numerous clients and are constantly writing new content, developing new campaigns and liaising with different journalists.

Industry

- Public Relations (PR)

In a nutshell...

Degree:
English (Single Honours)

Year of graduation:
2016

Further study:
N/A

Core skills used from degree study:

- Research
- Detailed analysis
- Interpretation of information
- Writing persuasively
- Computer skills
- Personal development

Mantra:
"A degree is no longer enough, you need experience too."

Useful links

Chartered Institute of PR
www.cipr.co.uk

Chartered Institute of Marketing
www.cim.co.uk

Plus, see special interest groups on
www.linkedin.com

"A degree is no longer enough. You need as much experience as you can get before you graduate."

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

No, nothing in particular.

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

For a career in PR you need confidence to talk to clients and journalists on a daily basis. Alongside this, you also need the ability to write well and be able to tailor your writing for different types of media.

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

There are both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees available in Public Relations, but these are not essential to pursue a career in PR.

For marketing, there is also the option to do a Marketing Diploma. However, this diploma is not essential.

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

For a career in PR you need to have an awareness of the media and different social media platforms. Because of this, you need to be able to discuss which media you read and the social media platforms you use.

It is also desirable to have examples of your writing. You should have these examples ready before the interview, as the interviewer will be keen to see your writing (an example essay isn't suitable to send in).

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

In five years' time, I would like to be leading a team or branch of the company and contributing to the growth of the business.

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

At Royal Holloway I found the possibilities for extracurricular activities most valuable. There are sports, societies, and the ability to write for numerous student newspapers or publications. Employers take extracurricular activities seriously when it comes to hiring students, as proving you participated in more than your degree shows that you are more than just academic.

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

University is one of the only places that you have access to careers services, an abundance of library resources, and lecturers all in one place. If I were to repeat my time at Holloway, I would take more advantage of these services.

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

I started really focussing on employment after the Christmas break. In the third term everyone starts to become stressed about final exams/essays, and the last thing I wanted was to be worrying about employment on top of it all.

So, that was a turning point for me, since I started to focus on employment and applied for the internship at my current company.

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

A degree is no longer enough. You need as much experience as you can get before you graduate.

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

Use the careers service to discuss optimising your CV and gaining interview tips. The careers service is there to help and is often overlooked by students.

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

Work on your writing by writing for lots of different type of media (whether campus/student publications or otherwise), and apply for internships in your final year, if not before.

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