

## Charlotte BSc Nutrition (Ind)

I spent my third year in Munich, Germany, in Mondelez International in the Regulatory department for chocolate. When I got my acceptance, I was really happy, looking forward to learn about the food industry, chocolate, and about how it is to have a full-time job. And after the rather chaotic life I had lead in second year, I was looking forward to dealing with professional people and doing a real job and being paid for it. In this respect, my expectations were definitely fulfilled.

In the beginning, it was really hard for me to work 9-5 days, every day of the week, week after week, and sitting at a desk all this time too! Now, while I still don't like it, I feel I have gotten used to it and have developed a certain perseverance when it comes to working long hours, which I think will become a big advantage for my final year.

In the social aspect however, my expectations weren't quite as fulfilled. Previously, I have spent a lot of time abroad, during my gap year and even my studies in Leeds are "abroad" for me, coming originally from Norway! I considered myself 'good at' working/studying abroad and I had had nothing but good experiences, and now plenty of friends from all over Europe. But coming to a small student community with students from all over the world with extremely different backgrounds wasn't as easy as I thought it would be. I felt like we had little in common and were in different circumstances in life. Also, students came and left frequently, so we didn't always have a lot of time together. Now, slowly approaching the end of my placement, I feel like I do have friends, but only superficial ones and I have a feeling they won't last.

But! I'll stop complaining now - it isn't all that bad. I think that I will come from this placement year with plenty of valuable experiences which will help me along in my final year. You learn more from the hard times than the good times, I think! I have also found myself doing things I never thought I'd do - or at least not at such a young age! I went to a business dinner with one of our bosses (super-scary, but it all went fine in the end), I participated in conference calls as the only person from our department, giving advice to colleagues from all over Europe, and I helped prepare the labelling for some products that will soon be on the supermarket shelves in Germany. I know that this placement will be an advantage for me in the future - despite this working place not being the right thing for me. I'm thinking of it as ticking off one item on the list of potential careers for me and betting on other experiences in the future!