

Amy (BA Sociology & Social Policy Ind)

I am spending my 3rd year on work placement, working in a Kindergarten in Finland and so far it has been an amazing, unique and valuable experience. I had always wanted to do a year abroad either studying or working, but unfortunately, most opportunities were not viable to me due to cost. I had become happy with the idea of working in Leeds or Manchester, but when I saw this opportunity I couldn't say no! Taking the Careers Centre module CSER 8000 meant I was able to find not only a job suiting my personality perfectly, but the position also provides accommodation, a salary and I still get my student loan. On top of all this, I am eligible for the generous 'Erasmus' work grant, provided through the Careers Centre, as the year is part of my degree. This means that I am able to partake in this unique opportunity, whilst also being afforded the luxury of travelling for weekend breaks around Finland, travelling home for Christmas and I have just returned from an amazing, once in a lifetime holiday in Finnish Lapland.

I love my job here and it has undoubtedly developed many skills. For example, I am given responsibility of regular planning of activities for the children and I am the main authority on this. This not only gives me a refreshing sense of freedom, but develops planning skills as well as creativity. I have even been asked to write a curriculum for the Kindergarten to be used in future years by other English representatives - a fantastic skill to have behind me, both for my own final year organisation and for my CV. Amongst other things, I have led an after-school English club with a member of staff to assist me and spoken at conventions. I now have many interesting experiences and examples to share with future prospective employers, which right now just feels like an added bonus! Although I have had previous full time work experience, I feel my confidence has grown tremendously here. I have been welcome and cared for in a new culture and now know that I can adapt to a variety of situations and responsibilities.

The Careers Centre couldn't have been more helpful throughout the entire process and were in fact the body which brought this opportunity to my attention. The Careers Centre assisted with my application, happily answered any questions regarding paperwork, funding etc, as well as remaining an excellent support system throughout my time here. The Careers Centre have provided me with a personal placement tutor, who I maintain regular contact with, sending her monthly updates and summaries of my work and life. They maintain a friendly and helpful relationship throughout and it's definitely something you should take advantage of. I am so glad I did and have gained so many interesting travelling, working and life experiences that are invaluable in so many ways.

