

Tête-à-tête #13



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1. What does a typical day in office look like for you?

My typical work day involves handling queries from students, parents and agents regularly. The queries often revolve around application procedures, admission eligibilities, benefits of the courses offered at the University and about studying at Bristol.

Time and again different departments at the University make requests on market intelligence, such as programme suitability for the country, institutional feedback and faculty visits that need prompt research followed by thorough coordination and reporting.

Apart from such queries and requests from students and the University, my day is filled with meetings with colleagues from Sannam S4 and interacting with the University contacts, reading up about the latest developments and trends in the Education industry and planning my travel itinerary.

2. Your job entails a lot of travel and juggling different goals. What do you do to cope up with all the challenges?

I have always loved travelling and interacting with people and my job involves both. I travel extensively and also get to interact with people from various regions and age groups. I guess the key to juggling different goals at your job is to 'enjoy' every aspect of it.

3. What is your biggest challenge while dealing with the Indian students?

Due to our high entry requirements, the University caters to a niche group of students who are high achievers and subsequently have a selection of offers from the best institutions in India and internationally. Working within the confines of this small market can sometimes be a challenge.

Also, another key challenge for me all this while was to stay abreast of the global and local developments that take place in the highly dynamic higher education sector. The students that I come across these days, are not only well-informed but also extremely well-researched, making my job even more challenging. The student queries are not restricted to programmes and course structures any more but have become more specific to course modules, accreditations, subsequent testing exemptions, department research, industrial links and expected student experiences at Bristol. To be an effective communicator and to engage with the students more efficiently, I keep

myself updated with all the information related to the courses, its modules, the employment opportunities and student life in Bristol.

4. What is the best part about your job?

Being a part of a student's entire progression journey, is the best part of my job. From meeting the student and interacting with them for the first time, to hearing from them on their successful completion of the degrees and the very enjoyable experience at the University, make my job extremely satisfying.

5. What are the aspects of your job that you like less?

While I love to travel, it does get very hectic during the peak recruitment seasons. The continuous travel does not give me adequate time with my family and this is something I miss the most in my job.

Also, despite continuous efforts towards improving recruitment numbers, there are unforeseen slow-down periods due to the global geopolitical flux. This dynamic nature of the higher education sector is sometimes very frustrating, especially when you are trying your best to recruit students.

6. What do you consider your greatest achievement? You can quote from outside your work too.

I have been a part of a not-for-profit organisation, called the Rahat Charity. As a trustee, I participate in many charitable events which I find extremely rewarding.

Under this initiative a key project has been the adoption of a village Gahar, situated in the hilly area in Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, which is about 30 kms above the city. Initially, the village did not have any sanitation facilities or toilets. Today our team of trustees has managed to build about 30 toilets in the village and we are trying to rehabilitate families who are victims of natural calamities such as landslides in the area. Apart from this, we also support education for the underprivileged and undertake animal rescue and welfare in association with the Wildlife SOS. All these experiences are very fulfilling and I consider it to be my achievement towards social responsibility.

7. Highlight one thing about your University that you cherish the most?

The student services and research infrastructure are the strongholds of the University. The University is known for its quality of education, where almost 98% of students graduate with a distinction. In addition to various Career Services facilities, the University also assigns every student an industry mentor who provides career guidance.

The research infrastructure at the University is also extremely strong. Being a research-oriented University, 87% of the research is counted as world leading. For the same reason, the University receives significant amount of funding from the government as well as private companies which are invested back towards further research, infrastructure, facilities for the students and scholarships. Our University has one of the best labs in the UK. For example, the University houses a 'one of the kind' lab called the Bristol Centre for Nanoscience and Quantum Information (NSQI) housing a Zero Vibration Lab which has been used by scientists at NASA for the Mars InSight space mission. Students become a part of the collaborations and benefit immensely from the experience.

8. What is the one skill that is absolutely necessary for your job?

Communication is the key to my job. I am in constant communication with students, parents, agents and the University. During a fair, I could meet up to 60-70 students in a day and provide them information on benefits of studying in our University, course structures and career prospects. To communicate the same information repeatedly, but with the same enthusiasm, one needs a lot of patience, perseverance and adoration for the work.

9. What are your hobbies?

It is difficult to pursue your hobbies with a job that involves a lot of travel, but during the limited 'free time', I try and focus on playing a lot of sports.

I play basketball and squash during my weekend breaks and have also recently signed up for horse riding sessions. I believe that despite the busy lifestyle that we all lead these days, we need to take out time for what we love the most!