

Madalina's

Graduate journey

Madalina Pop is a graduate in the ninth cohort of our Graduate Management programme. Here, she talks about her move to London and how she's been given the freedom to express herself.

I never imagined myself at my young age being in the middle of decision-making processes in one of the most iconic cities in the world, London. And yet, here I am! I've just finished a very productive meeting with the senior manager of Adults Commissioning in London Borough of Newham, with my lovely new team.

I've adapted so quickly to my new environment that you would think I've been working here for a while. The truth is, I've just started my placement three months ago, and honestly, I had no idea what commissioning was even about and how the health and social care public system worked.



My successful settlement is a result of my supportive supervisor, who I'm very lucky to have, alongside Skills for Care who made all this possible. I'm proud to be one of the 19 future influential leaders of the ninth cohort, and I feel grateful every day for the opportunity that has been given to me.

We're all familiar with the 'after graduation anxiety' and with the numerous thoughts a student might have at the end of their studies. I was in that place but managed to overcome that stage by applying to this programme. As a current graduate, I can tell you there really is nothing more rewarding to do after your studies and it's an exciting transition into a lucrative career.

So, why did I choose the public sector? I felt that my inputs would reach a wide range of people and that I could achieve a greater impact here, allowing me access to the steering wheel of decision-making, affording me a sound understanding of the various models of care and how I could make a difference.

I have been given the freedom to express my ideas in high level local projects, and I have learnt more in three months than in one year of university! With this placement I feel that I can help people every day and I can use my fresh ideas to improve people's lives, innovating the public sector to enhance effectiveness of the services provided.

I've always been restless when it came to taking advantage of any opportunity which could develop myself from a personal and professional viewpoint. I can say for certain that this placement feeds my hunger for new experiences and raises my knowledge and skills to a brand-new level.

The NHS leadership and management qualifications you get on the programme help to consolidate your learning, and even though I feel like a student again in some respects I'm grateful for the opportunities to develop my knowledge and experience.

Besides the professional side of work, being in contact with different people from different environments and settings has taught me how to behave and thrive in certain situations.

One of the things I love about working in this field is networking. I believe there's nothing more valuable than exchanging ideas with people. Being exposed to such an environment has given me greater control over my emotional intelligence as I start to recognise more effectively my strengths and areas for improvement.



This programme is different. It's not school, but it's not the usual work environment. It's an environment where I am free to present my input and where I'm valued for it. The horizon of opportunities is very bright as I'm poised to oversee some very interesting projects for 2020 – I'm looking forward to seeing how they will evolve!

I can only praise this programme for the supportive coaching, guidance and encouragement and urge anyone to apply for it.

It may seem a bumpy and impossible road in the beginning, but as usual it's all worth it in the end. No one ever said change was easy, but in my experience, it can make you more mature, responsible and dedicated.

When you finally realise that you're responsible for other people's wellbeing, not just your own, you become educated and your critical thinking starts to act as a constant reminder that you were not placed here just to exist, but to prevail.