

A Parents' Perspective

Julia Allen : A parent case study



“University has made a massive difference to my daughter's life.”

Pre-University Experiences

My daughter studied both her GCSEs and A-Levels at Silverdale School, Sheffield. She did well at school – achieving very good grades at GCSE and A-level. When she first started at school, like any parent, I was concerned, I wanted her to be happy and make friends and for her to fulfil her potential and enjoy what she studied.

My daughter knew exactly what she wanted to do after sixth form - she wanted to go to university and she made her own decisions on choosing her course. I helped by assisting in finding the information for her.

I always wanted my daughter to go to university as I knew that she was bright and could get a good degree. I also thought she might regret it if she didn't go, but there was no pressure on her.

University

My initial concern when my daughter started university was for her settling in and making friends. To help overcome these concerns I made sure I was there if she needed to talk or put anything past me.

Financially we paid for her accommodation costs during her time at university and helped out a few times when she ran into difficulties. Despite this, at the end of her course she had an overdraft to pay off in addition to the standard student loan.

Being the parent of a university student was worrying when it came to finance as she did have a problem managing her own finances for the first time. I shared her pleasure when her results were good and felt the disappointments if something hadn't gone so well.

Experiences Since Graduating

On her graduation day we were very proud of her. She is currently still studying, having done two masters degrees in Sheffield and now taking a doctorate at Nottingham university. She eventually hopes to go into a research post.

From my experience as a mature student, the benefits of going to university were the satisfaction of being able to achieve a degree qualification, a gain in confidence and enjoyment from studying my chosen subjects. Secondary to me were career aspirations, but my hopes for my daughter are that she will get a better job as a result of her degree qualifications.

University has made a massive difference to my daughter's life. She enjoys studying and it has given her tremendous confidence in her own abilities and she has gained a wide array of skills.