

UCL SOP VOLUNTEERING

Give back, better yourself and overcome your fears



Third Edition, Sept 2018

Volunteer Profile: Anushka Ahmad D'Mello



1. Hi Anushka, what subject do you study and what year are you in?

Hi! I'm studying Pharmacy and I am currently entering my third year.

2. Where did you volunteer and for how long?

I volunteered in a charity shop called Scope as a customer assistant for 6 months.

3. Can you tell me a bit more about the charity?

Scope is a charity that campaigns to challenge negative attitudes about disability such that disabled people can be given the same opportunities as everyone else. They also provide direct support and advice for disabled people and their families.

4. What made you decide to start volunteering?

Well initially, I started volunteering because I had never had a job before and I thought it would be a good way to gain some experience.

5. What was the best thing about volunteering?

I really enjoyed volunteering because it allowed me to experience working in an environment with a wide range of people that all have varied interests and personalities. It was definitely a good way to meet new people and aid my social development. It's also a really good feeling knowing that you've helped a charity with a good cause.

6. And what was the most challenging thing about volunteering?

The most challenging aspect of this experience was trying to study and simultaneously accommodate time for this role. Time management is very important in general and if managed well, it's amazing how many extracurricular activities you can get involved in.

7. What advice do you have for people who maybe would like to start volunteering, but are worried that it may interfere with their studies?

There's only so much you can learn in a lecture theatre. By actively learning in a non-academic environment you are able to develop a plethora of skills that can be applied to multiple different situations. For example through this role, I have massively developed my problem solving and situational judgement skills.

It was definitely difficult at first, but you learn to adapt quickly. Once you figure out how to manage your time efficiently, you can begin to reap the rewards that come with helping others.

8. Do you feel like you've made a difference volunteering?

Yes, I think that my role indirectly made a difference. Without volunteers the shop wouldn't be able to function and contribute to the fundraising goals that are integral to the work that Scope does.

If you've been inspired by Anushka's experience, you can find out more about volunteering in charity shops here: <http://studentsunionucl.org/taxonomy/term/5839/all>