



SFA Alumni Profile

Laura Ann Benwell – Marketing Manager / Media Teacher

What do you do in your job?

During my master's degree I went into marketing as a marketing manager for a Vintage Clothing company based in Leeds. This role meant that I actively developed fashion marketing plans and retail campaigns to position the Fashion/Retail Brand within a determined target market. I would think of, create, and schedule social media posts across multiple platforms as well as edit and update the website. My daily duties would include managing photo shoots for products we were marketing, analysing marketing results to make improvements for future campaigns, participate in events and finally create and develop the brand's image and story whilst managing a team of creatives under my management.

However, I recently left marketing to pursue a career as a secondary school teacher in English and Media studies. I am currently on placement now and will qualify June 2023 becoming an ECT.



How did you get to where you are?

I left St Francis once I had completed my GCSE's and had applied and went through the process of gaining entry to Birmingham Ormiston Academy (BOA). I opted for a sixth form college that was focused on creative pathways. I achieved D*D*D* in Broadcast Media Production and 2 AS Levels in English Literature and Geography. As I wanted to fulfil my media pathway, I did drop English and Geography after year 12.

Broadcast Media incl:

- Film, television, video content, animation
- Virtual Production and Motion Capture
- Art Direction (mise-en-scene)
- Experience and social media
- Sound, podcasting and radio
- Graphics and photography

I applied for university to eventually accept an unconditional offer at Leeds Beckett University to study Digital Journalism which is 50% written journalism for print and digital and then the other 50% was photography focused. I graduated with a first-class honours degree and began my master's degree at Birmingham City University in the September following in Future Media marketing which was UX design, Graphics, Marketing and coding where I achieved a merit overall. Finally, I applied for my PGCE late August this year and began swiftly in September back at Leeds Beckett University.

During all this time since college I had been working as a freelance photographer/journalist publishing personal blogs and writing for multi platforms. I also completed a 7-month internship at British Thoughts Magazine based in London as a writer and photographer.

What has been your proudest achievement or what do you enjoy most about your job?

I have two proudest achievements and the first would be shooting live music events at such an early age for well renowned artists such as Liam Gallagher, Wolf Alice, Jake Bugg, George Ezra, Lorde, The Vaccines and many more.

As to my career in marketing, I am just impressed that I became a marketing manager whilst studying my masters full time and helped build a company up to 75 thousand followers in such a small amount of time. My resilience and dedication to my job and masters were impressive if I do say so myself! Hard work and dedication to something you are passionate about really pays off.



What school subjects do you think are the most useful to the job you do?

For me it has always been English (both language and literature) and Media studies. I believe all subjects have helped in a variety of ways like maths has helped with my data analysing but as far as my career goes English and Media for sure. Especially now as I am training to teach exactly those subjects!

What advice would you give to our students to help them in their career journey?

There is so much advice I could give. If I were to go back and tell myself something though it is that your path can change so many times and not to worry or be concerned about it. I did a full 180 and having worked in the industry (which I still love) I am now becoming a teacher. You decide quite young what you want to do but just because you decide that at 16,17,18, it does not mean that is all you can ever be or do!

Also listen to your teachers, go to any career fairs, and get work experience!!! I was working at the Fairlawns hotel up the road from school in year 10 and 11 and it really helped shape my idea of work /life balance.



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