

Loretta Hawkins

Radiographer

HSC Year: 2001 ATAR: 91.4
Dux



Training

- Bachelor of Business (Majoring in Sport Management) – Griffith University (Gold Coast)
- Master of Medical Imaging Science – Curtin University (Perth)

Jobs

During undergraduate degree (3.5 years):

- Anatomical Sciences Tutor (Griffith University, Gold Coast)
- Check-out chick at supermarket

After undergraduate degree:

- Gold Coast Regional Development Coordinator (Tennis Queensland, Gold Coast) – 2.5years
- Business Support Officer & International Policy Officer (UK Sport, London) – 2 years

During postgraduate degree (2 years):

- Clerical Assistant – Medical Imaging Dept (WA Country Health Service, Perth)

After postgraduate degree (currently):

- Radiographer – The Mount Hospital (Perth Radiological Clinic, Perth)

What are you doing now?

I have just completed my second degree and have commenced working as a Graduate Radiographer at The Mount Hospital. I work for a private organisation that services inpatients and outpatients. To start with I will be working in general radiography where we x-ray patients with simple aches/pains/fractures; as well as during theatre, and in intensive care. Over the next year I will learn to use the CT Scanner and also to perform mammography. Following on from this I can move into other areas including MRI or Ultrasound. In the future I hope to utilise skills from both of my degrees; either by moving into a senior management role or by cutting back part of the time I spend on radiography and starting my own business.

Relevant Experiences since leaving school

- My most notable experiences since leaving school are travel-related. I worked full-time in London for two years for UK Sport. This is the organisation that funds all of the Olympic Sporting Organisations and the UK Olympic athletes. While living in London I managed to visit over 20 different countries. I've ridden a horse across the Icelandic countryside, I've stayed the night in an igloo in Switzerland, I've been on a WWI tour along the Belgian-French border, snowboarded in Bulgaria and the list goes on. Oh and I've also been to Wimbledon, Roland Garros (French Open) and the US Open.
- During my time working for Tennis Queensland I worked on the tournament that is now known as the Brisbane International. It used to be a women-only event and held on the Gold Coast. It was here that I got to work with players such as Sam Stosur, Li Na, Martina Hingis, and Ana Ivanovic.

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Interesting Experiences

- As part of my sport management degree I had to complete 200 hours of work experience. I did some of my hours by working with Tennis Australia for a week in Sydney at a Davis Cup tournament (Australia versus Austria). Lleyton Hewitt, Todd Woodbridge and Wayne Arthurs all played at this tournament. It was an amazing, up-close and personal experience.
- Following on from this I managed to complete the rest of my work experience with Tennis Queensland. I was very fortunate that at the end of my degree a position arose within Tennis Queensland and I was interviewed and subsequently employed. Working on the Gold Coast is very unique. I was able to slip down the beach in my lunch breaks and jump out onto a court for a hit of tennis straight after work.
- When I was completing my business degree we had to complete a communications unit. Some international students really struggled with this. I offered to help proof-read some assignments for one of the Japanese students in my class, just to help her out. We ended up becoming good friends and a year or so later I went to Japan with her for 3 weeks and stayed with her family and friends. University can open up a whole new world that you just can't imagine exists when you're in school. I actually went to a restaurant in Tokyo which was underground. I was the first 'westerner' to eat at this restaurant.

Other comments /Memories from Chatham High Days

I still keep in touch with a lot of friends from school. Every time we meet up we all say how we wish we could just have a week back at school hanging out together. We had a really tight-knit year group and we have all shared a lot of ups and downs together (both during and since leaving school).

I'll never forget year 7 peer support camp, year 9 history camp, year 10 snowies trip and formal and of course the year 12 formal. Make the most of these occasions. Don't worry about how much an outfit cost and who looks better, just really absorb the event and spend the time with your closest friends having fun.

Tips for our students

- *Whilst completing HSC*
 - Start early; I started studying hard for my HSC in year 11 and granted I may have gone a little over the top but by the time year 12 came around I was much more relaxed and had established a really steady routine

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- If you have a job, keep working during your final years at school. I worked at McDonalds; it was not only a source of income but it was a social activity. I worked with students from all of the other schools in the region. You can make friends for life from your school-age job - about 6 years after leaving school I ended up living with one of my work friends for 6 months. Not to mention places like McDonalds are really good training and looks great on your resume.
- Make use of any funding available for tutoring. I did well in every subject except English (the only compulsory subject...typical huh!). I came to realise it was holding me back but the school had said there was some funding for tutoring if anyone required it. I was eligible for the funding and an English teacher from another school took me on board once a week and helped me to increase my grades dramatically.
- Keep exercising/playing sport; it's an awesome release. I did a bit of kick-boxing during year 11 and 12 and it's amazing how much better it made me feel.
- *Going to University*
 - One of the hardest things I've found in life is choosing a career path. I still haven't found something I want to do forever. Really make the most of work experience opportunities and don't be shy to try things outside of the Taree area. Work with your careers adviser to look for opportunities in fields you're interested in. Even if it's year 11 or 12. It's important you know what you're getting into. Also have a think about what your degree actually qualifies you to do. I started out doing a Bachelor of Exercise Science/Bachelor of Business. Ask yourself... what is an exercise scientist? Have you met one? What do they do? Are there many jobs out there? Very few of my co-students finished the exercise science degree because it didn't immediately qualify you for anything. You needed to do more study or further qualifications to feel employable. It sounded interesting but realistically job prospects were low. Just keep that in mind and research your interest areas.
 - Don't just choose something because it's at the closest university to home. If you and your family are open to living a bit further apart look interstate even, and apply through QTAC for instance if there is a degree more suited to you there.
 - Try to be a bit self-sufficient. I learned to stand on my own two feet pretty quickly when I moved to the Gold Coast. Cooking, cleaning, working, washing etc. If you are back home on your folks doorstep every other weekend you won't get the true "battling university student" experience nor will you actually be as well-prepared for "life" particularly if you want to travel the world.

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- I don't drink so I never wasted much money there ... needless to say I never once had to stoop so low as to eat 2-minute noodles ... I actually ate really healthily and I think it helped me.
- There's plenty of opportunities to socialise when you're at uni; there's sporting groups, drama clubs, music clubs, Church groups ... keep your eye out for whatever your interests may be and I'm sure you'll find something to suit.
- Turn up to lectures, listen and take notes. I've seen a lot of people skip lectures and try to catch up later and I'm convinced it creates more work for them in the long run. Lecturers write exams based on what they say in lectures. You may have a copy of the notes but you'd be surprised how much lecturer's skip over in their notes and subsequently don't examine that material, or by what they add in that isn't in the notes. Also, I always summarise my lecture material about a week after the lecture – these make great study notes for final exams.
- *Getting a job*
 - Every little bit of experience counts. The more related to your degree the better but quite simply most of us don't have money coming out our ears and so we have to take what we can get. There are often career fairs at the uni where different companies come to find employees. I got a supermarket job at a career fair. Also if you do well in a subject keep an ear out and ask lecturing staff about tutoring opportunities. I got a High Distinction in Anatomical Sciences and as a result was eligible to tutor that class the next semester (at \$26/hour it's not bad coin!)
 - Go out of your way to find work in your area of interest. I wanted to work in tennis, so I volunteered at the Mondial Australian Women's Hardcourts. From there I spoke to a guy from head office in Brisbane and lined up more work experience. I had to drive 1.5 hours to Brisbane once a week but it got me a job when I finished uni.
- **Other Tips**
 - Enjoy school. It's a really simple and structured time of your life. You get a designated morning tea AND lunch break, for starters, which is not that common in the real world!
 - Make the effort now. I worked really hard at school and at uni but in my jobs since uni I feel like I naturally have a high standard of work that people seem to appreciate but that doesn't feel like it actually takes near as much effort nowadays.
 - Work-Life Balance is a term you may hear thrown around as you move into working life. Grab onto it from word go. It's basically making sure that work doesn't run your

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life... "Work to live don't live to work". I managed my boss's calendar in London and one of my proudest achievements was rearranging his schedule so that he could actually be home in time to put his kids to bed twice a week, and could fit two to three gym sessions into his lunch breaks within a week. Prior to this he was never home in time for the kid's bed-time and he was lucky to get to the gym once a week. Don't work yourself so hard that you lose your health or sanity!!!!

It's about balancing your work with your mind, body and soul... (corny I know).