

adult success stories



Melissa Stanford

Melissa worked full time whilst completing her Access courses in the evenings and has now progressed to university to study Business Management.



Initially I decided to return to education in 2006 when my son had just started infant school. I was 24 and working full time, and as my income was relied upon, I thought it best to return on a part time basis to ease myself back. The long term plan eventually was to go onto university, but to study what I just didn't know at this time.

I had left secondary before sitting any GCSEs and as such had nothing in the way of recognisable qualifications to help me reach my goal. I looked around the local area at the courses available at nearby colleges and decided to enrol on an access course studying Human Biology at Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form college. My line of thinking was if I enjoyed the course then I would enrol the following year on a further 2 courses which would then give me the platform I needed to continue on to university.

After successful completion of the Human Biology HEFC course, in 2007 I enrolled on an English Literature course at the QE and a Quantitative Methods at Gateshead College (due to the QM course timings not being convenient at the QE). I still didn't know exactly where I wanted the courses to take me, but I was looking into degrees studying Economics and Politics as my first choice.

The majority of the courses that interested me were only available to full time students and it became apparent very quickly that this wasn't financially feasible.

In 2008, although I had acquired the 3 HEFCs to move on to university study, I lost my way a little and took a break from studying.

2009 was more positive, I gave myself a kick-start and decided to finish what I had started. I found a part-time Business Management Degree at the University of Leeds which I was very keen on and was offered a place on the 2010 intake should I successfully complete a maths GCSE (grade C or above). I enrolled at Stockton Riverside College and in June 2010 achieved a grade GCSE grade A in maths.

This September I will be in my second year of 5 on the Business Management degree at Leeds. It's been hard work getting here and I imagine it will only get harder, but I'm willing to put in the time and the effort to hopefully achieve what I once thought of as unobtainable.

