Occupational Therapy 1

I believe everyone deserves the best quality of life possible and that being able to complete everyday tasks is a part of this. It is easy to take these tasks for granted and not consider the affect an inability to complete them would have. I want to be an occupational therapist as I believe that, by teaching skills and adapting environments, you can have a positive impact on someone's life. I want the opportunity to make a difference by helping people gain independence and increase in confidence. I want to be part of such a rewarding and diverse career; working closely with people and helping them to progress.

I feel my subjects have given me a good basis for studying at degree level, requiring me to be logical and work to deadlines as well as teaching me research and evaluative skills. History and religious studies have taught me to look beyond the obvious and determine underlying factors. I particularly enjoy learning about ethics in religious studies, looking at people's moral beliefs and why they hold them, and achieved one hundred percent in my AS ethics exam. Health and social care has taught me about cells, tissues and organs as well as how body systems interrelate. The way the body works interests me and I hope to further develop this knowledge.

My health and social care course gave me the opportunity to complete two placements. My first was at Birchwood primary school where I supported children in lessons. The next was in a Caretech home for people with disabilities. I accompanied patients on outings, shadowed carers and assisted with a craft session designed to improve the service user's fine motor skills. I found the session very rewarding and hope to use similar activities in my future career. Both placements taught me to effectively communicate with people of all ages and abilities, as well as how to encourage and support people in tasks which help them be independent. These skills will help me form a better rapport with service users as an occupational therapist.

I organised my own work experience including a week at Southfield special needs school; assisting in lessons, particularly with reading. This gave me an insight into how different disabilities impacted on the lives of the children, for some it affected concentration whilst others were unable to hold a pen properly. I want the opportunity to work with people to overcome such problems. I also volunteered for sixty hours on a ward at my local hospital. I spent time talking to patients as well as completing administrative and housekeeping tasks and assisting with meal service. Many patients had dementia and communicating with them allowed me to use my empathy, patience and compassion as they were often confused and felt vulnerable. I received positive feedback from the ward manager, describing me as 'a very caring and pleasant girl' as well as 'a very good communicator' who 'always wears a smile'.

I work in retail which has given me experience of responsibility in a working environment, as well as using my initiative. I advise customers on the products that best suit their needs, giving me experience of building a rapport with people I have never met before. I use problem solving and an understanding of the customer's situation when dealing with complaints and returns.

I have been having singing lessons for eight years which has taught me dedication and increased my confidence. By scheduling lessons and preparing for music exams, whilst working, volunteering and studying, I have learnt to manage my time effectively and prioritise my commitments. Research has shown the positive effects music has on the brain and so I hope to incorporate my experience of singing into my work as an occupational therapist.

Overall I feel that my hobbies, studies and work experience have provided me with the skills to become a good occupational therapist. My hard working and caring nature will help me learn to support and improve the lives of service users.

Occupational Therapy 2

For as long as I can remember, I have been brought up in a loving environment and encouraged to care for others. I have always been taught, ‘treat others as you want to be treat yourself’, no matter what I do in life. It has only been in the past 8 months that I have truly known what career path I have wanted to pursue.

After working at a special needs summer camp for 9 weeks in Minnesota, I feel my social and caring skills have developed significantly. I realised that I was comfortable working with people with special needs and was able to relate to them on their level which created a trusting bond between me and them.

I have had experience working with people of various ages as a camp counsellor at Camp Friendship, doing different activities and making sure that a disability doesn’t get in the way of success. I led activities such as arts and crafts, horse riding, going on boat rides and tubing.

Even though there are a lot of different jobs that are dedicated to caring for people, as soon as I heard about occupational therapists, I knew it was the course for me. Working with an occupational therapist myself, in my role as a care assistant at Deneside Court,

I can see the hard work that goes into the job and the smiles on people’s faces when they achieve something they never thought they could achieve. No matter what disability a person has, they still have talents, and for their life to be lived to its fullest; those talents should be nurtured in order to achieve their full potential.

I have completed my Junior Sports Leaders Award and my Community Sports Leaders Award which consist of volunteering in the sports sector to deliver sports sessions to the public. I worked closely with two young boys, one who had physical Tourette’s and one who had cerebral palsy.

I planned and delivered activities with the boys which they didn’t think they could achieve and they enjoyed the two hour session, evident by the smiles on their faces throughout the full session. For two years, I volunteered as a football coach for a local school’s girls’ football team.

Throughout the two seasons, the team were unbeaten and I built up lots of self-confidence within that time. In the very near future I hope to have started my Level 1 British Sign Language course to help with my career.

Within the course I am studying now, I have to do a lot of independent research for the different tasks that I have to complete. There are group tasks and individual tasks, so I have to be able to work as part of a team for the group tasks so the work gets completed without arguments and friction.

I always meet deadlines which portray my dedication to the course and I do a lot of research for the different assignments.

Some of the units I have covered in BTEC Sport include anatomy and physiology which taught me about the bones and muscles in the body which can help me with my future career. I have also completed my basic First Aid award and it will benefit me as if someone has an accident, I can assist them in their rehabilitation. I was educated in how to complete risk assessments which I will need to be able to write to become an occupational therapist.

After all of the volunteering I have completed, my communication skills and teamwork skills have dramatically improved. I am a lot more confident speaking in front of people and teaching people how to do different things such as different passes in football.

During my time in school, I was recognised as being responsible, dedicated and passionate to my school work therefore I was elected as Deputy Head girl of Year 11.

Occupational Therapy 3

I have always been interested in a career in the care industry and, after meeting with an experienced occupational therapist, I was sure that occupational therapy is a career suited to my personality and abilities. I am excited by the diverse nature of the work and the effect that meaningful activity can have in helping individuals improve their quality of life and achieve personal goals.

My interest was confirmed by my experience of the work that occupational therapists do. I was able to spend time shadowing individuals from a team of paediatric occupational therapists on several occasions. I was given a valuable insight into the different ways that they work; I have attended case study meetings and an art therapy group in a special school and also playgroups in a hospital setting for children with cerebral palsy. I was also able to observe home visits to children with autism, development coordination disorders and hemiplegia. Most importantly, I have seen and discussed how occupational therapists use exercises, equipment, and their own knowledge to help children to lead as normal a life as possible. As well as this, I am soon to begin volunteering on a stroke ward at a hospital. I hope that becoming familiar with patients and seeing what help is given to them by the occupational therapists who work there will give me an insight into OT in a hospital environment.

I have also gained experience working with elderly people. For the past year I have been employed part time in catering at a nursing home for elderly people, many with severe mental health problems. I have become familiar with a range of specialist equipment for individuals with problems such as arthritis and dysphagia, as well as the opportunity to help with activity groups and with a visiting dog therapist. Through this I have built relationships with residents and learnt how to communicate with older people, many with severe dementia. This has been a challenging but rewarding experience for me.

My communication skills have also developed through a range of activities. I volunteer in a children's nursery each week, as well as in the school's 'buddy reading' scheme where I help a number of Year 7 students with reading difficulties. I also did work experience for a week in a primary school. There I was asked to help the carer of a young girl with learning difficulties who struggled to engage in lessons. I was able to gain her trust and with my guidance she became happier working with others. This experience has given me confidence communicating with children, and I would love the opportunity to work with children and young people in the future.  
Studying Biology, Psychology and Sociology A levels has helped me gain an understanding of people, both physically and on a more psychological level. I enjoy learning how people interact with one another individually and also in wider society. Chemistry has been a challenging but enjoyable subject for me, and in school I have been able to develop my understanding of different sciences, statistics and the importance of research.

I have been a member of Fire Cadets since 2008 where I have learnt a number of skills specific to the fire service, as well as basic first aid, team work skills and the ability to communicate and work under pressure. For my part in a community clean-up scheme run by the Local Police, I was recently awarded a 'Civic Award' from the local council, which was a great honour. Also, having achieved my bronze and silver awards, I am currently working towards my Gold Duke of Edinburgh. The scheme has taught me a lot about independence and the commitment needed to see the scheme through to completion.

I am looking forward to the challenges I will face at university, meeting new people, making a new start and to learning the skills that will eventually take me into an interesting and incredibly rewarding career in occupational therapy.