MA POLITICS MA POLITICAL SCIENCE MA POLITICAL ECONOMY



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THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

POLITICS MA POLITICS MA POLITICAL SCIENCE







GRADUATE PROFILE

NAME: Amy Dwyer **COURSE:** MA Politics

YEAR OF GRADUATION: 2021

ROLE: Policy Advisor

EMPLOYER: Department for Transport

INTERVIEW

After graduating, Amy secured a place on the Civil Service Summer Diversity Internship Programme where she was placed into the Department for Transport to work on its electric vehicle policy. I spent a lot of time in different chats with people across the Department of Transport, trying to figure out what different roles people can do. It was mainly just getting to grips with policy, how it works, engaging with stakeholders, etc.

She then applied for a policy role in government.

I think ultimately, it came from some of the stuff I'd done outside of uni, such as work experience and internships, because I think that gave me a bit of an edge in interviews and a bit more setting of what the actual roles were. During my Master's I was chair of the Education Network, and we produced a policy pamphlet with 20 different policy essays. I was just trying to take the initiative.

Amy got interested in politics through her Bachelor's degree and knew that she wanted to work in a policy role when she was studying her Master's. She recalls the foundational skills she learned which gave her the grounding she needed to start thinking about a career in policy.

I know no one likes to speak in seminars but actually doing that, once you get used to it, it's not that bad. A couple of things at uni really helped – The Politics of Policy Making course unit taught me a lot and I did The Policy Boot Camp (which was voluntary) and that was really good. I also attended research seminars on European politics and got other people to go along as they were so good – so relevant to what I was interested in. I thought this was a really good way to broaden my knowledge.

Amy's foundational skills, learned at university, have enabled her to understand the need for strong evidence, to question and critically evaluate everything that she is given, to be focused on the policy area she is tasked with and to ask for help when she needs it.

It was quite a big jump from university to Civil Service style writing. But the

quality of writing - my degree definitely helped with that. The presentations and communication I did in my degree, and especially through extra-curricular activities, definitely helped a lot. I've been involved in some high-profile stakeholder engagement, presenting policies to foreign government delegations, which has been really exciting. I've also recently got involved with the Gender Equality Network, which is great. I work with statisticians, analysts and economists. There's lots of different opportunities to do different bits of work which is great. It also helped that I understood how government works – the background in policy for example has helped a lot because a lot of people in the Civil Service don't necessarily have that background. It was good to come in knowing a bit about select committees and how Parliament works – that background knowledge really does help!



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