

STUDENT LIFE



AUTUMN 2024

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WELCOME TO THE AUTUMN EDITION OF THE STUDENT LIFE MAGAZINE!

We're excited to bring you a range of fantastic articles written by BPP staff, students, and alumni! We hope you enjoy reading the magazine as much as we enjoyed putting it together!

These past few months have been a busy time for the Association as we work to make our students' experience the best it can be! Our team continues to grow, with members based in both London and Manchester. We're excited to welcome new students this academic term, and rest assured, we have a range of exciting student events planned for Autumn and Winter.

Remember, that BPP Students' Association is here to support you during your studies and ensure you make the most of your student experience. Everything we do is student focussed and student led! The Association offers advice on a variety of academic and welfare topics, amplifies the student voice, helps to represent the student body, host events, and supports clubs and societies.

There are three key teams; Independent Advice, Student Voice, and Student Engagement. You can find out more about BPP Students' Association by visiting our website or by emailing Represent@bpp.com.

On the next page, you'll find snapshots of our Students' Association team over the past few months, including at Graduation, Inductions, Student-Led Events, and even participating in the recent General Election (remember to always exercise your right to vote!).

We hope to see you around campus, please do reach out if you ever need us!

BPP Students' Association Team

If you'd like to contribute to the next edition or have any feedback regarding this issue, please contact the Student Communications team at Engage@bpp.com.



IN CONVERSATION WITH BPP UNIVERSITY DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR, TIM JONES

INTERVIEWED BY CHARLIE ROSE, STUDENT VOICE REPRESENTATIVE



Professor Tim Jones joined BPP University this year, he brings with him his wealth of experience in working in Higher Education. In this interview he shares more about his background, his aspirations for the university, how he wants to go about enhancing the student experience and even lets us know what his favourite colour is! Read on to find out more about one of our senior leadership team members here at BPP university.

This interview took place in August 2024.

I thought we would start with some quick-fire questions just to get to know you a little bit better and as it is still roughly 1000 degrees outside, I thought we'd start with a summer themed question and that is what is your dream holiday destination?

My dream holiday destination is probably the south of France, because it's super chilled and quite easy to get to. I can drive there and bundle my two rather large poodles in the back of the car so they can come with me, and I

particularly like going to Nice because I know a very nice little place where I can have a great pizza and a beer, and it's not super expensive.

Do you have any travel plans for the rest of the year?

I am hoping to go away to Prague in October with family because we have never been, just for a long weekend as I've heard it's really beautiful, but nothing else this year planned so I am all done for my holidays apart from that.

Oh well definitely check out Charles Bridge, it's beautiful and if you walk across there is the best ice cream place at the end!

What is your favourite thing to do on a weekend?

Relax, really. I don't think I have one favourite thing, although I do go to the barber every single Saturday. I've been going there for 17 years, and they are family friends, so I've known them since they were quite young

gentlemen and we've grown up together. So, I tend to go there, not because I need a haircut every Saturday, but I go there for a social.

It's the question that everyone hates but can you tell us a fun fact about yourself?

I don't know if I have a fun fact, but my first job, when I was 17, which I do think is quite fun was working at Bristol Zoo. I used to do the feeding time talks for the elephants, seals and for some of the other animals there. I used to walk round with a microphone strapped to my head and talk through all things to do with large and small Zoo animals. It was quite a fun job.

What is your favourite colour?

My favourite colour is blue, any shade of blue.

What is your favourite chocolate?

Probably a mint aero.

Now on to the more serious questions!

How do you plan on maintaining excellence in BPP's academic experience, especially for our online courses?

You have highlighted something really important here because BPP does already have outstanding student experience. I was reviewing some of our student experience metrics from the past year and we have almost 80% overall student satisfaction in the NSS, I'd like to see that going up towards 90 and then 95%. In the PTES, looking at our rankings against the sector, we're 1st in lots of areas, including overall satisfaction for full time students and 26-30-year-old students, and engagement



with on campus students and overseas students. So just a whole sweep of firsts which everybody at BPP should be really, really proud of.

In terms of what am I going to do to maintain these, well it's building from a position of strength, so it is all about building on the good work that already been done, listening to what students are saying, particularly in the qualitative feedback around where are some of the areas where we can make further tweaks and enhancements to make things even better.

BPP has invested millions of pounds into its IT infrastructure over the past couple of years, and that's obviously made it a far better experience for students when they're learning online, but again there's always improvements to be made.

I'm very big on talking with our students, listening to what they've got to say and equally important is asking them what they think the solutions are to the problems that they're raising, because I've often found that when somebodies got a problem, they almost know what the solution is themselves, they just don't really want to share it, or they're worried about sharing it, so really listening to what our students are saying. Then working out what we can tangibly take forwards to enhance that experience.

So, building on that slightly, how do you plan to maintain communication with the student body to ensure they know you are listening to their feedback?

So, I've already started a little bit of this work. I have a regular touch point with the Student President, to have a direct conversation with them around the things which are most pressing to students. I've been recorded for the Students' Association podcast, so students get to learn a bit about me and who I am, with a focus on careers, and my career. I gave some practical tips around that because I think it's really important that people like me give back to our students and help to impart our knowledge.

Sessions like today, and being interviewed, I'm really happy to be doing this and having you ask me questions so that students get to know

me.

I'm also visiting all the centres as much as I possibly can and just chatting to students when I'm actually in the centre, introducing myself. I've popped into a couple of classes in Bristol today and just said who I am and what I'm here for, what I'm passionate about.

Genuinely, students shouldn't feel afraid to approach me, and to tell me what is working really well. I also want to know all of the good things we're doing, as well as where we can make improvements and the solutions they have, and I'm really happy to sit down with a group of students in a centre, have a cup of coffee and just chat things through.

I'm around, I'm trying to be as visible as I possibly can, and I'm always really happy to talk to our students.

I'm also working closely with people like Ellie and the whole SA team, attending events they host in centres so I can see students, and I'm trying to do as much as I possibly can.

I do think BPP do this really well, and the senior management is really accessible.

That's really good and it's something that I want to do more of. I love spending time with our students, and listening to what they've got to say, and thinking about the problems of the day and how we can meet those challenges.

It's probably the bit of my job I don't get quite enough time to do but I would like to do much more of it, so again I would say to any student that wants to come and have a chat with me.

BPP has a few new courses coming online soon, which ones are you most excited for?

So, I think I'm most excited about our new BSc in Applied Management, which is an undergraduate course, because it means we are bringing a slightly different student demographic and population back into the university.

It comes with a number of considerations around how you put on a really high-quality undergraduate course. It's also exciting because it means I work with colleagues across

the University and the wider BPP group to make it as successful as it possibly can be and to ensure students have a fantastic time with us.

It also means those students may then think about staying on and doing a PG course with us.

That's the other thing I'm excited about at the moment, is how do we help our students navigate the number of careers they will have in their future, because most people will have more than one, and how do we become the go to place for graduates to unlock the next stage of their career. We want to be that place that graduates come back to.

When I did my undergraduate degree BPP was sold as the only place to do the BTC, we were just told if you wanted to be a Barrister then you did your undergrad and then went to BPP.

I hope this is still the case, and that you had a good experience when you were here with us!

I think it is! I mean I had some teething problems with my course but that's usual with such a short course, I think. I would still recommend BPP!

Next question - What are you most excited for in terms of the student experience?

What I am most excited for, is looking at the results of surveys that we've had in over the past couple of years, looking at where the trends are in the data, and now really working with colleagues and doubling down our efforts to make sure we address the areas that students are consistently telling us we can enhance.

My overall goal - I want 100% student satisfaction across the board in every single survey, because I genuinely believe BPP is an outstanding place to be a student, and I want our students to feel that as well.

I want those little changes to be made where we can tweak things so every student can say hand on heart they've had an amazing time here, and really be proud about where they've studied. That to me is what 'good' looks like and what I'm really excited about, so it's working with those colleagues to move forward in those

areas to make that significant difference and that's the kind of work I'm doing at the moment.

Building on that a little bit do you have just a couple of specific plans for the areas that you oversee that you could share with us?

So, one of things I'm working on at the moment with our Careers team is looking at enhancing the careers on offer for students, especially for part time opportunities, because there's a lot of press at the moment around the cost of learning crisis. We want our students to be able to balance part-time work with study. Part time work is fantastic, but I want our students to have access to really high-quality part time work, we need to work out how do we help our students do that. We are looking at additional skills, additional qualifications, and building some of those things in.

I'm also working with the Students' Association looking at our offer in that space and also our Centre Experience team. I'm looking at what they're both doing, and if we can put on more events in our centres to make them even more vibrant. I also want our centres to be a place where students can come in, hang out, do their work, feel comfortable and know they can stick around, and they have that sense of cohesion. I think that can be lost sometimes particularly with postgraduate learners because people are really really busy, so we're looking at those aspects.

I didn't realise BPP was working on part time work, that's great to hear. We have had students who haven't received timetables but they needed them to organise part time work, so it's good know the narrative is becoming how can we help you balance both.

We need to aim for high quality part time work, and also work which aligns to some of their studies, so they're actually able to use some of the skills they're developing through their course.

Also, a part time job can translate to a full time job, or a next step in that particular business so it's thinking about how all of those things align.

There's many angles to student experience and student engagement, and that's the other bit that I didn't really talk about, in terms of how



do we engage more with our students so that they feel they have an even greater community at the university.

What did you enjoy most about your student experience?

I studied in a post-92 university at the University of Plymouth. What I most enjoyed was developing lifelong friendship groups. I loved being by the coast, I deliberately chose a university that was by the coast. I also loved the autonomy and freedom to learn at my own pace, which is a bit different to school, and that additional study that I was able to do to read around the subject. And genuinely falling in love with the subject, I studied Psychology, I'm a psychologist by background, I've been a psychologist all of my professional life and I will never not be one, and that passion was very much borne out of my undergraduate degree.

As a final question, is there anything you would do differently in your career, looking back, in terms of your student experience and how that impacted your career?

I probably would have joined more clubs and societies when I was at university, because I think that would have built my confidence earlier on, whilst I had a small closeknit group of friends I didn't really expand beyond that or broaden my horizons, and actually there was loads of things available and I didn't really take up the opportunity. I look back and I regret that, I should have capitalised on this and done things outside my comfort zone. That's the one regret I have.

It's funny you say that, as I would have joined less, I did far too much!

Thank you for today! It was lovely getting to know you.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- MUSIC
- SPORTS
- SOCIALISING
- SHARING CULTURE
- DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

IF SO, WE HAVE A RANGE OF CLUBS AND SOCIETIES DEDICATED TO ALL OF THE ABOVE, AND MORE!



FIND OUT MORE ON OUR WEBSITE: BPPSTUDENTS.COM OR VIA THE QR CODE ON THE RIGHT.



CLUBS AND SOCIETIES AT BPP STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION



My name is Alec Micklethwait and, as of February 2024, I am the BPP Student's Association Clubs and Societies Officer. This new position was created as a result of feedback gathered from the Student Voice team. The feedback stated that students were keen for more activity from the Clubs and Societies space at BPP university. As a result, I started working in this role and now have organised numerous events, many of which have stemmed from new societies that started this year!

I am now BPP students designated point of contact for all things relating to clubs and societies. My role is to empower students to express themselves, develop their skills and maximise the quality of their student experience. Below is a brief overview of how I assist students and the processes involved in setting up a club or society.

Establishing New Societies

In order to establish a new society, students will reach out to me and we will discuss their ideas. They will receive the relevant forms and we will proceed once these are sent to me.

Organising Events

I'm the go-to contact for event planning. Students contact me with their proposal, we'll meet to discuss, they'll fill out paperwork, and then organise the event with BPP Student's Association support.

Help with Engagement

An additional part of my role is to assist presidents in promoting their club or society to the student body. I'm available to help presidents in getting students involved in their clubs or societies and maintaining engagement through the academic year. This can include social media activity, online/in-person promotion and networking opportunities.

General support

I'm here for any questions or concerns students may have, whether it be clubs and societies related or general Student's Association related questions. Please remember that on our [website](#), there are many relevant support service resources. Everyone experiences stress and we all need to support each other when we need it.

Overall, I will be working very hard to expand and develop our clubs and societies sector, and our BPP students are all a crucial part of achieving that goal.

Below you can find out more about clubs and societies that are currently running at BPP Students' Association. Alongside this accounts from members of the Drama Club, Enactus and Gujarati Society.



**Aal E Haider
President, BPP Drama Club**

I am Aal E Haider, the president of BPP Drama Club writing about my journey of leading a club that served loved and affection through the love of drama.

My journey as an international student, hasn't been easy. Coming to a new country, experiencing different things, getting to know people from diverse cultures and adjusting culturally has been a tough yet interesting drive for me.

However, BPP has been a miracle in disguise. I made friends from different countries and got along with them without any discrimination. I think that every one of us is on a different path called life. We find solace in the company of those who share our hobbies, interests, and sense of humour.

Frequently, those same individuals will accompany us on a segment of the journey, whether it a day, a year, or a lifetime. My road of life had led me to the love of drama, acting, music and performing. At a very early stage of my life, I realized that I am born for art, I have been an avid viewer of theatre plays, movies and dance performances which urged me to be on the stage. Therefore, this hidden passion got wings when I attended

some workshops and participated in theatre in my home country, Pakistan. When I reached London, the hub of theatres, I decided to build a community where people could share their mutual love of drama and art, not restricted by their cultures or traditions.

Therefore, I started a club at BPP to combine the cultures and traditions through the love of art. I remember when I pitched my idea to BPP Students' Association, they welcomed me with open arms and encouraged me to make it the best. However, it was difficult for me to build a community in a place where people have no time for themselves but the Student Association helped me to promote the society and managed the events themselves, which was indeed a great help for my club.

As the leader of the Drama club, I gave members the freedom to pitch their ideas and lead on events. Our club believes that every person is talented, and that there should be a place for everyone who loves and serves art. We have successfully hosted two very popular events and are looking forward to hosting more in future.

My mission is to make BPP Drama Club known as a community which unites people through the love of drama and art regardless of any differences we may have as people. We have hosted parties, iftars, hollies and many culturally different events. Now we are heading towards creating and taking part in plays which have a multi-cultural cast, where everyone can openly represent themselves. I urge BPP students to come and join us to showcase their talents to society, alongside this, enjoy our blockbuster events and live freely. We believe we are more than a club, we are here to relieve students of their stresses and allow people to express themselves freely.





As a social media and welfare officer, I am dedicated to enhancing community spirit and ensuring that every student feels valued and included. Together, we celebrate our heritage through festivals, share our traditions through engaging activities, and foster a sense of belonging within the university community.

Recently, we celebrated one such event, Garba, which is a traditional Gujarati dance. Where all Gujarati students come together and dance the traditional 'Garba' together. The Garba event was a huge success and



everyone had fantastic time, dancing, and enjoying the food and music. Working as a social media and welfare officer, I have learned a lot. I have also interacted with many different staff members at BPP University. Undertaking this role, has provided me with the experience to work at different places. For this role, I also used to run our Instagram page, Gujarati society BPP, where I posted about the different events that the Gujarati society ran.

I am proud to share and promote this rich cultural heritage through the Gujarati Society at BPP University, celebrating our traditions and fostering a sense of unity and cultural pride.

Anisha Patel
Social Media Officer, Gujarati Society

Hello, I am Anisha Patel. Currently a student at BPP University and serving as the Social Media and Welfare Officer of the Gujarati Society. I am privileged to be part of a university that fosters cultural diversity and provides opportunities for students to engage in various cultural events and festivals.

BPP University's inclusive platform not only encourages participation but also promotes understanding and appreciation of different traditions. It's inspiring to witness how these events bring together students from diverse backgrounds, creating a vibrant tapestry of cultural exchange and unity.

Our society celebrates the culture of Gujarat, which is vibrant and celebrated for its rich history and traditions. Gujarat is a melting pot of religions including Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, and Buddhism. Gujarati culture encompasses arts, beliefs, customs, languages, technology, and values. From colourful festivals, intriguing arts and crafts to folk dances and delectable Gujarati cuisine, these elements form a significant social fabric for the people of Gujarat. The traditions and beliefs enrich the culture, creating a blend of values and moral principles. By running our Gujarati society, we are able to celebrate our rich culture and ensure that we remain connected with our homeland.



Saba Zareem,
Former Team Leader, Enactus

Serving as the Team Leader of Enactus at BPP has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my academic journey. This role not only challenged me to grow as a leader but also gave me the opportunity to drive significant social impact through our team's entrepreneurial initiatives. As Team Leader, my primary mission was to rouse our team around a shared vision of innovation and community engagement.

One of the most ambitious projects I led was Nourishing Bloom, which focused on improving sanitation and hygiene in underserved communities. This project involved the creation and implementation of cost-effective, eco-friendly sanitation products that addressed both health and environmental concerns. My responsibilities included overseeing project development, coordinating with stakeholders, and ensuring that our solutions were both innovative and feasible.

Leading the team through this project was a complex yet immensely fulfilling process. We faced numerous challenges, from logistical hurdles to resource constraints, all of which required effective leadership and teamwork to overcome. Under my leadership, Nourishing Bloom made substantial progress in improving hygiene practices within the target communities, positively impacting countless lives.

A particularly proud moment from my tenure as Vice President of Enactus stands out, where I had the honour of leading our team to a Global Championship in a competition sponsored by Colgate-Palmolive. Competing against 21 universities globally, our project's innovation and impact earned us the top prize, along with a £3000 award to further our initiatives.

Winning this championship was a testament to our team's hard work and the robust strategies we implemented. It highlighted my ability to drive a project from conception to global recognition, an achievement that greatly enhanced my leadership credentials and contributed to the overall success of our Enactus team. This accolade, earned during my time as Vice President and Project Leader, was a defining moment in my university career and reinforced the importance of strategic vision and execution in achieving excellence.



Our success was further amplified by the recognition I received as one of the top 5 Vice Presidents of Enactus for the year 2022/2023, a reflection of my contributions and leadership within the team. This acknowledgment was both humbling and inspiring, motivating me to continue striving for excellence in all my endeavours.

Additionally, my VPE mentor, Colin Patton from Enterprise mobility, was awarded Best Mentor for his outstanding guidance and support. His mentorship was instrumental in our success, providing critical insights and fostering a supportive environment that allowed us to excel. His award was a testament to his dedication and the profound impact of



enactus™

effective mentorship on student-led initiatives. Throughout my journey, the support from the BPP University Student Association was invaluable. Alec and Ellie were key figures in providing organizational support and facilitating resources that were crucial for our activities. Their dedication to enriching student life and supporting societies like ours made a significant difference in our ability to achieve our goals.

The University Advisor for Enactus, Mr Adisha, provided steadfast mentorship and invaluable insights that guided our projects and helped navigate challenges. His commitment to our development and success was a driving force behind our achievements.

Equally important was the guidance from the Careers team, led by Tyler. His expertise in career planning and professional development provided me and my team with the tools and confidence to translate our Enactus experiences into career success. Tyler's support was instrumental in helping us align our academic and extracurricular activities with our professional aspirations.

The journey as Team Leader was not without its challenges, but it was these very challenges that provided the most valuable lessons. I learned the importance of resilience, effective

communication, and the ability to inspire and guide a team towards common goals. Balancing the demands of the project with academic responsibilities required adept time management and strategic planning. The skills I developed during this period have been directly applicable in my current role at CBM Accounting, where I continue to apply the principles of leadership and innovation learned through Enactus.

In summary, my role as Team Leader of the Enactus team at BPP has been a pivotal chapter in my university journey. It was an experience marked by learning, achievement, and impactful leadership. The opportunity to lead meaningful projects, drive a successful global championship as Vice President, and be recognized for my contributions has significantly shaped my career trajectory and inspired me to pursue a path of impactful, entrepreneurial action.

I am grateful to BPP University and the Enactus team for providing a platform to drive change and develop my leadership skills. Special thanks to Alec, Ellie, Professor Adisha, and Tyler for their unwavering support and guidance. As I move forward, I am committed to applying the lessons learned to future endeavours, striving to make a positive difference in the world.



STUDENT VOICE TEAM



SABIYA MAHMOOD



ELLEN WILSON



BRAD MOSTERT

The Student Voice Team has seen growth over recent months, now having two Student Voice Officers, Sabiya Mahmood and Brad Mostert, as well as a Student Independent Voice Manager, Ellen Wilson. The team work closely together to ensure that the student voice is represented across all schools of learning and locations within BPP.

Feedback is collected through a wide range of mechanisms. This includes focus groups, SSLC meetings, the online [feedback form](#) and personal interactions with students. Working alongside Student Voice Reps (SVRs), focus groups are conducted twice a month, spanning a range of topics with the aim of shedding light on issues and successes. From each meeting, actions are logged and shared with students as progress is made and resolutions are found.

Moreover, SSLC meetings allow academic leaders to meet regularly with their students to discuss feedback specific to each course of study. Similar to the focus groups, actions are logged and any updates are shared with students. In addition, the Student Voice Team meet with the SSLC reps of each school on a monthly rotating basis to establish strong relationships and give opportunity to discuss any feedback and remind students of the

services the Student Voice team and Students' Association can offer.

Alongside this, the Student Voice team also facilitate a student led podcast titled 'Speak Up'. The episodes are hosted by SVR Daniel Scrase, where he discusses various topics with a range of different hosts. Recent topics have included LGBTQIA+ and Social Impact. You can find the podcast on Spotify via our [website](#), under the 'Student Voice' heading.

If you are interested in working alongside the team and becoming a Student Voice Representative, please do not hesitate to reach out and email: represent@bpp.com

For further information about Student Voice, please check out our website: www.bppstudents.com



Afaq Ahmad Khan
Student Voice Representative

SVR rep Afaq Ahmad lets us know what his role entails and how SVR's can help their fellow students.

I'm Afaq Ahmad Khan, an SVR at the Manchester campus. I'm currently studying MSc Management w Project Management, and my journey has been fulfilling and transformative. I am deeply committed to enhancing the student experience and ensuring every student's voice is heard and valued. In this role, the student and their needs

are not just a priority, they are the focus. I address academic concerns and facilitate effective communication between students and BPP Students' Association.

Collaboration is not just a part of my role, it's the heart of it. By working closely with Students' Association, we ensure that student interests shape the very decisions that affect us all.

To all students, my message is clear: your voice matters. Our ears are open, our voices are strong, and our commitment to student voice is unwavering. We're here to listen, represent student needs, and work together to create positive change.

As your representative, I am here to empower you, advocate for you, and ensure your concerns are heard. Get involved, share your ideas, and help us create a supportive and inclusive environment. Together, we have made a difference by implementing student-led initiatives such as the podcasts and the SWS. Your voice matters, and it can bring about positive change.



Student Voice Representatives 2024-2025

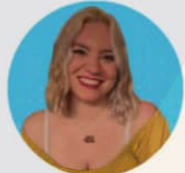
Law School Representatives:



Asha Adutwim
Legal Practice Course/ LLM



Nuno Dentampol
Legal Practice Course/ LLM



Charlie Rose Taylor
Barrister Training Course / LLM



Eleanore Everhart
LLM SQE 1&2



Vishal Rathee
LLM International Business & Commercial Law



Dhillon Shenoy
PGDL Law Conversion Course



Hannah Davison
LLM SQE 1&2



Iona Murfitt
LLM SQE



Najut Ali
PLS BTC LLM



Thomas Rymer
LLM Law Conversion SQE 1



Business School Representatives:



Iftaker Ahmed
BSc Accounting & Finance



Touseef Sheraz
BSc Accounting & Finance with Digital Business



Surakshya Kandel
BSc Accounting & Finance with Digital Business



Alija Gurung
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Ashaolu Oluwatosin Abiodun
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Muhammad Sheharyar
MSc Management with Project Management



Omozojie Victor Ojemolon
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Mehrin Ruaid
MSc Management with Project Management



Syeda Faiqa Zainab
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AUM Khairul Bashar Molla
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Ibe Chinaza Kalu
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Toyiybah Hamzah Olabode
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Nursing School Representatives:



Dhimple Patel
BSc Hons Nursing Child Apprentice



Indrani Sharma
MSc Healthcare & Leadership



Oluwafunlola Fatoye (Lola)
MSc Healthcare Leadership



Nayab Shahid
MSc Healthcare & Leadership

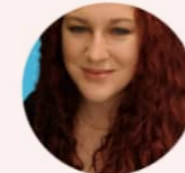


Gemma Jeffrey
FDNA Nursing Associate Apprenticeship



Kelly Whiting
Registered Nursing Degree Apprentice

School of Technology Representatives:



Rebecca Grice
BSc Data Science



Zarah Khan
Digital & Technology Solutions professional



Hannah Reiss
Data Science

The Students' Association recruit Student Voice Representatives (SVR) each year and work directly with them on improving the student experience at BPP. The SVRs are recruited from across the various programmes to ensure a wide variety of views are considered.

If you would like to become a rep, visit our website BPPStudents.com or scan the below QR code for further information.





 **BPP University
Students'
Association**

Speak Up!

PODCAST

- Monthly Episodes
- Bonus Episodes
- Competitions
- Exclusive Merchandise

SCAN ME





APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARDS 2024

We wanted to share with you the fantastic winners from the BPP Apprentice of the Year Awards 2024. We held our live ceremony on the 23rd May and it was a massive success! – We are already looking forward to next year where the nominations will open again in February.

We also wanted to say a huge congratulations to anyone who was nominated for the awards this year. We loved hearing about all the incredible achievements you have been making and reading all the inspirational successes and accomplishments. It was harder than ever to shortlist for these awards as the nominations this year were so incredible!

Please see below for some words from our amazing winners, as well as the fantastic apprentices who were shortlisted for this year!



RESILIENCE AWARD:

This award recognises individuals who have been making incredible achievements in their apprenticeship, employment, and personal lives, despite challenges that this past year might have brought.

Shortlisted: Aimee Feltham, University Hospital Southampton Trust.
Kelly Whiting, Great Ormond Street Hospital



Runner Up:
Ashanti Monica Carter, Grant Thornton UK LLP:

“It was a humbling experience to be shortlisted for this award, on the back end of a very challenging last year or so. I am honoured to have be considered amongst such inspiring individuals! “



1st Place Winner:
Millie Beardsley, Minster Law
“It feels amazing to be awarded BPP Apprentice of the Year for Resilience. It’s a representation of all my hard work and dedication over the last decade, in both my personal and academic life. I’m excited to qualify in 2025 and continue my legal journey as a Catastrophic Injury Solicitor helping those who need it most! “



SUSTAINABILITY AWARD:

This award is for individuals who have shown initiatives within the workplace and in their own lives to consider environmental, social and ethical sustainability, raising awareness of the importance of sustainability within their sector.

Shortlisted: Emily Rowley , KPMG



Runner Up:

Runner Up: Alisha Hellard-Smith, Mitie:

“Not only showing incredible resilience in her apprenticeship, Alisha has also shown exceptional commitment to integrating sustainability within her company.”



1st Place Winner:

Dominic Plummer, NatWest:

“Dominic has been described as devising an education and change campaign to bring cultural, structural and behaviour change for sustainability within his company, described as ‘game changing’.”



SUZANNE FINCH APPRENTICE CHAMPION AWARD:

This award is dedicated to one of our wonderful coaches, Suzanne Finch, who sadly passed away in 2021. Suzanne advocated for the power of Apprenticeships (and Education) and was a true patron in helping others succeed. This annual award continues to recognise those who champion Apprenticeships in the way Suzanne always did.

Shortlisted:

Dhimple Patel, Great Ormond Street Hospital.
Freya McMurray, Withers LLP.

Jordan Lewis, Harrisons Solicitors LLP.
Rebecca Humphreys, NatWest



Runner Up:

Jessica Duff, Newcastle Building Society

Jessica has been passionate about championing apprenticeship both in and out of her workplace, advocating for apprenticeship as a valuable pathway for personal and professional growth.



1st Place Winners:

Charity Lockie, Weightmans LLP:

“I am honoured to have been recognised as Apprentice Champion of the Year; an award that is made even more fulfilling as it bears and continues the name of a special and esteemed apprenticeship advocate. I am thankful to BPP and my employer Weightmans for providing support to me as an apprentice at the firm and in carrying out my ambassador roles. I take great pride in my efforts to promote the power of apprenticeships to both prospective applicants and employers because of the multifaceted impact they have on your career and in a business, and this award incentivises me even further to keep on championing apprenticeships whenever and wherever I can.”



INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY CHAMPION:

This award is to highlight those who have made outstanding contributions to the promotion of inclusion and diversity both in and out of their workplace.

Shortlisted: Dhimle Patel, Great Ormond Street Hospital



Runner Up:

Dan Gumbrell, Hastings Direct:

“Winning second place in the diversity and inclusion award at BPP feels incredibly rewarding. After putting in so much effort and dedication into my CIPD studies over the past year, being recognized like this is very empowering. As someone who is registered blind I feel fortunate to have been given the opportunity from BPP and my workplace, I’ve been able to contribute to some amazing Diversity and inclusion projects and drive meaningful change in the industry.”



1st Place Winners:

Alisha Hellard-Smith, Mitie:

“I was truly honoured and pleasantly surprised to receive the Inclusion and Diversity Champion Award at the BPP Apprentice of the Year Awards 2024. It means a lot to me, especially considering the amazing nominees I was up against. Inclusion and diversity have always been important values for me, so it’s truly heartwarming to be recognised for my efforts in this area. I feel fortunate to work for a company that shares the same beliefs and supports my commitment to making a positive impact on the world. I want to extend a big congratulations to my fellow award recipient, Bamishe, and a special mention to all the incredible individuals who were nominated and acknowledged during the ceremony. I truly believe that great things lie ahead for each of you! Let’s continue to work together to create a more inclusive and welcoming world for everyone, one small act at a time. Thank you for all your support and let’s keep making a difference!”



1st Place Winners:

Bamishe Alao, Willis Towers Watson:

“I’m so grateful to have been recognised for my DEI work. Throughout my apprenticeship programme I have worked with social mobility charities, and market-wide associations to attract diverse talent into the insurance sector. I will continue to be a champion for diversity and inclusion within the workplace throughout my career, I really want to help maintain a strong pipeline of young talent into insurance. I’m so grateful to work in an industry that is doing such incredible work to attract young candidates from diverse backgrounds. I hope to continue to this work both internally and externally with market associations such as BIBA.”



APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR:

This award aims to celebrate those who have made outstanding achievements and developed skills for life both in their workplace, and in their apprenticeship in the past year.

LEVEL 2-3:

Shortlisted: Marcella Dale, DWF



Runner Up:

Runner Up: Jade Liggitt, National Highways Limited:

I feel overjoyed that I am a runner up for the Apprentice of the Year Award (Level 2-3). Being the first Paralegal Apprentice in my organisation, I am proud to represent them and evidence my success. I am incredibly passionate about apprenticeships, particularly as a route into a Legal career. I have gained so much from my apprenticeship, I have built a strong network and acquired skills for life. I am excited to continue my journey as a Legal Apprentice!"



1st Place Winner:

Sumbal Arshad, Blick Rothenberg:

I feel honoured to have been shortlisted and chosen for the BPP Apprentice of the Year award 2024. It has been an insightful journey being an apprentice as I got to learn on the job whilst studying for my qualification along with it. I have met a lot of influential people on this journey and they have all played a vital role in building my confidence and helping me through my career path. I would also like to congratulate all those that were shortlisted and chosen for the 2024 awards and I wish you all the very best for your future accomplishments. For any current apprentices reading this, remember to believe in yourself and give your very best in everything that you do. There may be some days that are challenging than the others but remember to keep going as it's all part of a journey to success. The only road to failure is giving up, so don't take that route! Keep working hard until you can see a clear path to the destination you want to reach."

LEVEL 4-5:

Shortlisted: Enya-Marie Clay, Open University.
Joshua Cookson, KPMG



Runner Up:

Runner Up: Amy Dowsing, KPMG:

"I'm absolutely buzzing to be the runner up for the level 4-5 apprentice of the year awards, it's definitely not something I was expecting! Congratulations are in order to everyone who was nominated, those who were shortlisted and of course the winner, a special congrats to Joshua Cookson, an apprentice in my cohort who was also shortlisted from KPMG. I am a massive advocate for apprenticeships and try to do as much as possible to promote them to students, I have been involved in great projects one of which has involved talking with English teachers in the local area about how they can adapt the English curriculum to ensure their students are well equipped for the world of work. I really appreciate being nominated and shortlisted for this award and to see my hard work is being recognised, special shoutout to my amazing PM and PL, Jack Walsh and James King for not only nominating me but being supportive managers."



1st Place Winner:

Callum Benson, Cripps LLP:

"It feels incredible to have been named Apprentice of the Year for my qualification level. I feel exceptionally fortunate to have been appointed as an apprentice at Cripps in the first place and I have been presented with real opportunities to strengthen my skillsets as part of my apprenticeship and to build on my knowledge - both within the legal sector and more broadly. Being an apprentice has made me more confident, more employable and has instilled in me a holistic, ground-up understanding of the workforce that I will be joining as a solicitor in five years' time. I'd like to say how grateful I am for all of BPP's help: allowing me to lend my perspective to discussions on the national approach to apprenticeships, and enabling me to speak up about apprenticeships to the communities around me. I also can't thank Cripps enough for all of the support they have given me and for facilitating the exceptional programme that I'm on."

LEVEL 6+:

Shortlisted:

Alixé Galatis, Bright & Sons Solicitors.
Casius Lee, Accenture. Joshua Wilkins,

Allen & Overy LLP. Reece Brewster, Jaguar
Land-Rover.



Runner Up:

Hamza Islam, Norton Rose Fulbright:

“Hamza’s commitment to excellence and personal growth sets a high standard for apprenticeships, the wider apprenticeship community, and demonstrating professionalism and enthusiasm throughout.”



1st Place Winner:

**Dhimle Patel, Great Ormond Street
Hospital:**

“Ever since I first joined BPP University, I have been deeply inspired by what apprentices can accomplish while balancing work and studies. Year after year, I eagerly watched the annual Apprentice of the Year Awards ceremony, listening to the remarkable impacts of the winners, never imagining that I would one day receive the same honour. Today, I am incredibly grateful and proud to announce that I have won the Apprentice of the Year award at the BPP University Apprentice of the Year Awards. This achievement is a testament to the support and inspiration I received from those who came before me, and I want to extend a huge congratulations to everyone who was nominated. Thank you to all the past winners who inspired me to reach beyond what I thought possible. To those who come after me, I hope my journey shows that every individual can make a significant impact.”



EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR:

This award celebrates those employers who have gone above and beyond for apprenticeships, not only equipping individuals with job-specific skills, but also focusing on providing future-ready skills and all-round support.

SMALL / MEDIUM:

Shortlisted: Deighton Pierce Glynn. St Austell Brewery



Runner Up:

The Martlet Partnership LLP:

The Martlet Partnership have shown incredible commitment to provide apprentices with the necessary tools, support and experience for them to thrive in their accountancy careers and sets them on the pathway to happiness, fulfilment and success.



1st Place Winner:

Dolphin IT Solutions (UK) Ltd:

Dolphin IT Solutions has made a significant impact on many young individual’s careers, giving them the opportunity to kickstart their careers. By creating an inclusive workplace culture and providing opportunities for apprentices, the company is helping to create roads to success for individuals from all backgrounds.

LARGE:

Shortlisted: Weightmans LLP, Willis Towers Watson



Runner Up:

Addleshaw Goddard:

Addleshaw Goddard have implemented programs that prepare apprentices for long-term career success, and continuous learning and development.



1st Place Winner:

NatWest Group:

Natwest have set a high standard for supportive apprenticeship initiatives through their unwavering support and dedication to developing future-ready skills, providing wellbeing support and providing an arena for apprentices to grow and succeed.

A massive congratulations! You have all been making such amazing achievements and we really hope you can all recognise the amazing work you have been doing in your apprenticeships, in your work, and in the wider sector to make positive social change!



CENTRE EXPERIENCE

The Centre Experience team is dedicated to enhancing the student experience through various channels. You can connect with our Student Support Officers in person at the centre, online via The Hub, or over the phone. We are here to answer your queries, host educational and social events, and collaborate with other teams within BPP to ensure you have the best experience possible.

Our team has recently expanded. Below, you can learn more about us, our journeys at BPP, and which centres you can visit to say hello and join our events.



Raiesa Baig Ali,
Head of Centre Experience, London

I've worked at BPP since November 2019 and started my career as a Programme Support Officer within the Business School, working with students face to face, through query forms and on the phones. I progressed into the role of Programme Support Manager after 18 months and then I became the first member of the CX Team in July 2022 when I took on the role of Centre Experience Manager at Shepherd's Bush. I've now moved into my current role of Head of Customer Experience, based at Portsoken Street. Working in Centre Experience, I focus on the day to day running of the student services

within the centre, ensuring the best customer service is experienced. This includes staff and students! I am responsible for ensuring there is a consistent approach in centre, including student support, events and recreational facilities. The team is also an escalation point for especially difficult queries & situations. I enjoy working at BPP because we have a dynamic environment and there is always room to voice ideas. To progress your career at BPP, I would recommend networking & understanding how you and your role fits into the business. Doing this will allow you to open your eyes and see how much opportunity you really have. Outside of work, if you are a fan of cricket or football, you may see a glimpse of me on TV working as a security officer on the pitch or alongside players!



Sam Allmark,
Centre Support Manager, London

Over the past four years at BPP, I have progressed through several roles. I began as a Programme Support Officer for the Business School, then managed the PSO team, which transitioned into the Student Support Team. I then managed the International Engagement Team, supporting students in their first term. Now, as a Centre Support Officer, I am looking forward to enhancing the experience of both new and current students.



Jamie Bedson,
Centre Support Manager,
Manchester

I have been with BPP Manchester, St James since May 2023, currently acting as the Centre

Support Manager. Over the past year, I have collaborated with various teams across the business to enhance both staff and student experiences. I have supported with organising events, streamlining student support, and helping the schools with outreach initiatives. As I move into my second year at BPP, I am involved in some key projects. These include improving the student journey related to accommodation, enrolment, and admissions, as well as leading the international inductions in Manchester, ensuring these inductions are tailored to the Manchester experience.

Below you can see some photos from induction and other events over the past few months, we hope to hold more a lot more events in future, so keep a look out!



HEALTHCARE STUDENTS RECEIVE CAREER BOOST

The School of Nursing welcomed its first ever Healthcare specialist Careers Consultant in January this year. Leila Denison-Pender who has an extensive professional background in career coaching, is now based at both the Waterloo and Shepherds Bush campuses and is available to support all students in the School of Nursing. Whether you are seeking advice on your options within the healthcare industry or looking to secure your next position in the sector Leila can provide you with personal, bespoke assistance with this including reviewing your CV, applications and preparing you for interviews. Leila works across a wide range of specialisms within the healthcare industry, including nursing, pharmacy and physiotherapy. Appointments, which can either be online or in person, can be booked with Leila through the [BPP](#)

[Futures](#) platform. The platform also includes extensive links to additional careers support organisations that the careers service has paid licences for. These include [eCareersGrad](#) (providing access to modular, video, interactive eLearning courses), [Career Set](#), allowing you to receive personalised CV and Cover Letter feedback Instantly and [GoinGlobal](#) providing you with individual Country guides and advice on applying, working and living overseas.

The Careers Service is also currently actively building links with recruiters in the healthcare sector in order to assist you access both part-time jobs while you are studying and full-time positions once you graduate. Leila can offer you personal support with applying for these opportunities.

One student Leila has been helping recently is Nayab Shahid who commented:

“Leila’s guidance has been invaluable to me. After our initial contact, Leila assisted me in building my CV, incorporating elements specific to the UK template that I was previously unaware of. Additionally, she provided extensive information on healthcare opportunities available to students. Thanks to Leila’s advice, I applied for and secured a volunteer position in physiotherapy at The Creighton Centre, which is dedicated to physiotherapy services. This centre regularly hosts NHS physiotherapists for training, offering me a unique learning opportunity. I am extremely grateful for Leila’s ongoing assistance and the support provided by the BPP Career Team.”



Period Hygiene is Empowerment

ARE YOU A BPP STUDENT?
DO YOU NEED PERIOD PRODUCTS?
SCAN THE BELOW QR CODE TO HAVE PRODUCTS SENT TO YOU AT HOME FOR FREE!



Products available



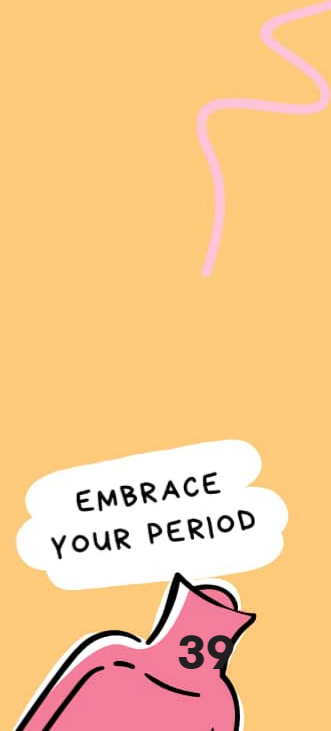
DAY / NIGHT PADS



TAMPONS



When disposing of your products in centre, please put them in the bins provided.



WALKING 10K FOR ACCESS TO JUSTICE



By taking part in the legal walks, BPP Social Impact have raised over £1,000 for these organisations and we hope to continue our fundraising efforts over the rest of the year.



BPP Social Impact

BPP staff and students were delighted to take part in the London Legal Walk and Leeds Legal Walk again this year. Our teams raised money for the London Legal Support Trust and The Access to Justice Foundation, two organisations which provide vital support to frontline free legal advice services across the UK.

Supporting those in need

Due to severe cuts in legal aid funding, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current cost-of-living crisis, many individuals in the UK are unable to access the legal advice they desperately need.

Without proper access to justice, individuals are vulnerable to poverty, homelessness, physical and mental health issues, unemployment, and many other difficulties.

The London Legal Support Trust and The Access to Justice Foundation support free legal advice agencies through fundraising events, the provision of grant funding and by supporting the general infrastructure of the sector. Their work is therefore crucial to ensuring that marginalised individuals and communities receive access to the services they need the most.

Walking with the legal community

The annual legal walks are the most important event in the legal calendar and a wonderful way to connect with the wider legal community.

In London and Leeds, BPP students and staff walked alongside teams from law firms, legal advice centres, barristers' chambers and other universities. It was great to catch up with familiar faces and learn about the work that everyone is doing to support free legal advice services. After walking 10K, we then had the chance to celebrate at the end with some well-earned food, drinks and music!



Getting involved with BPP Social Impact

The BPP Social Impact team run a variety of projects which support vulnerable individuals and provide public legal education to local communities.

If you'd like to take part in any upcoming fundraising events or learn more about BPP Social Impact, please email us at socialimpact@bpp.com and visit our page on BPP Futures. You can also follow us on X (@SocialImpactBPP), LinkedIn (@BPP Social Impact) and Facebook (@BPP Social Impact).



CAREER PROGRESSION

LAILA BARBE



My Story

University

University for me was an incredible life experience and challenge for many reasons; the freedom to move away from home and live independently while applying myself to my studies and extra curricula opportunities. I went into the experience full of excitement and dedication, and really applied myself to my studies coming out with a solid degree and a year placement of working as Business Analyst at Reuters.

Securing a job after University

Finding a job after University proved difficult, I was initially planning to go into investment banking in the City when the recession hit in 2009 and the big banks began to collapse, naturally all recruitment in the industry was frozen – this was no longer a viable option! It was then that I decided to continue my studies and train to become a Solicitor. After completing the GDL and LPC (the academic part of my solicitor training) I began to apply for Trainee Solicitor roles, for my practical part

of my training. This again proved challenging, the market for roles was hugely competitive, and the effects of the recession were lingering. It became clear to me that I needed more ‘strings to my bow’ to catch the attention of any of the big firms. I managed to secure a role with BPP, as the Students’ Association CEO of Students (a combination of the current President & Managing Director role). In this role I was given a unique opportunity, as someone in an entry-level graduate position I operated within a senior circle and was exposed to important high level strategic matters. I attended and advocated at all BPP University Academic decision-making Committees, reported directly to the CEO and Vice-Chancellor and met regularly with University Deans and Directors. During my time as CEO of students I drafted policies, met with regulators, managed a budget and led the Student Voice Representatives. This role opened doors for me, the skills that I gained and network that I made enabled me to secure a training contract within BPP’s legal team, which was a combination of inhouse legal experience and secondments to Mills & Reeve and Eversheds Sutherland law firms. Eventually, having worked incredibly hard to prove myself over two years of legal training, I qualified as a solicitor and was offered a permanent role both within BPP’s Legal team and in Eversheds Sutherland’s Commercial Litigation team in the City of London. Working for a London City law firm was a dream to me, so naturally I accepted the role at Eversheds Sutherland.

Unexpected Opportunities

I was happily working as a solicitor in the City, when I got a phone call from BPP’s previous CEO asking me to come back to BPP to help lead BPP’s inhouse legal team. It was completely unexpected, but an absolute honour to receive the call. I jumped



at the opportunity of being able to gain the experience of setting up a new team, new processes, new service offering with Alison Wells, our previous Director of Legal. It was unusual for someone at my junior level to be offered such an opportunity, so naturally I accepted and put my absolute all into building an agile, commercially focused legal team that aligned with BPP’s strategy.

This challenge gave me the confidence and skills to further progress my career within BPP and I was open minded about what my next step would be. So, when the opportunity arose to lead the University Central Administration (UCA) department, even though some may say this was a surprising move for someone with a Legal background, I could see the opportunities for my personal growth and am so pleased I went for it. Leading UCA, a 70 strong national department with a circa £4m budget, has given me the opportunity to hone many skills, in particular: Leadership, People Management, Budget Management & Strategic Problem Solving and I absolutely love it.

My top tips for career progression:

1. Be open to opportunities & express interest:

Be direct and confident in approaching someone to express interest in their area, you never know where this could lead. My keenness

to find a resolution to the multiple GDPR breaches in UCA is what lead me to my current role!

2. Don't be afraid of change:

You can surprise yourself with what you can achieve when you step out of your comfort zone. I would never have thought that I would have changed my Legal career trajectory so soon, but I am so pleased I went for it.

3. Networking is so important:

In all my roles I have made a conscious effort to build my network across BPP and beyond, and these relationships have helped me succeed both in my day-to-day problem solving, but also when it comes to career opportunities.

4. Find a mentor:

Taking the time to speak to someone with experience about your career/ skills progression can be extremely helpful.

5. Continue to diversify your experience:

In addition to my role as Director of UCA, I am also the Chair of BPP’s Students Association and in my ‘spare time’ I volunteer as a School Governor – I get so much from both voluntary roles, as I feel I am giving back in areas I feel very passionate about.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

ALASTAIR YOUNG, COACH (LEGAL APPRENTICES)



According to the Sleep Foundation, sleep deprivation is disastrous for job performance as it overworks the neurons in the brain, leading a plethora of effects ranging from lack of focus and inattention to increased risk of mistakes and even, eventually, cognitive decline. So, whilst we may be tempted to forgo sleep to be more efficient, this is definitionally self-defeating. But what do we do in a situation where we are busy people, balancing working and studying together as well as dealing with the competing demands within those spheres? From coursework deadlines and exam dates to time recording requirements and meetings that must be attended, not to mention the array of personal obligations we may have, sleep is paradoxically one of the most vital aspects of our happiness and success yet often the first requirement to be dropped in busy times.

There are even worrying sleep “productivity” trends arising, such as the Uberman sleep schedule of only sleeping three hours a daily spaced over 24 hours in 20-minute naps. This is even though a 2017 US study linked irregular sleep patterns to worse academic performance in undergraduate students, even when the same number of total hours were slept.

There is also the trend in some highly pressured corporate jobs to do the “Magic Roundabout”, which effectively equates to working all night, taking a taxi home to change, and then getting the same taxi back to the office to work. This led to the death of a banking intern in London after he followed the “Magic Roundabout” for 72 hours straight. Sleep deprivation is not only counterproductive, but dangerous.

What would you do if you heard that there was a supplement that would dramatically lengthen your lifespan, immeasurably boost your productivity, drastically reduce your risk of chronic disease, supercharge your focus, and promote your mental health?

Well, there is such a supplement; sleep. According to Professor Matthew Walker in his bestselling book “Why We Sleep”, sleep is so important that it is effectively not just a pillar of health and wellbeing, but the foundation on which all other pillars (such as nutrition and exercise) stand.

Worryingly however, we lawyers are a chronically under-slept bunch. According to the Law Society Gazette, a huge 72% of the lawyers in one survey (by the charity LawCare) slept for seven hours or less per night in the previous two weeks to the survey, a full hour less than the recommended minimum of 8 hours of sleep. In fact, 12% indicated they slept less than five hours per night. Not only does this have serious health implications, but it is a productivity (and so a qualification and career) killer.



So, what do we do? Perhaps the first step is to schedule sleep first, before any other commitments whatsoever. Rather than adding up all the time you need for your various commitments and then allotting the rest to sleep, or even collapsing on the bed whenever you finally get the chance, instead start your schedule by working out your sleep time – and yes, it does have to be a minimum of 8 hours every day, yes even if you are busy, yes even if you are super busy, yes even in exam time and yes even on holiday. Plan your daily routine and stick to the rule that, before anything else, sleep must be put into the diary first and always for 8 hours. If you need to be out of bed by 07:00, then from 23:00 the previous night and for every one of the following 8

hours, literally add “SLEEP” into your diary. Treat it like you would any other commitment, whether that be an exam or an important unmovable meeting; you cannot change it or miss it, and everything else must fit around it.

Try this out as part of a wider trend of self-care. After all, you cannot be replaced so you need to take care of yourself physically, mentally, emotionally and, to slightly stretch the definition of the word, soporifically. Try it out for a month and notice the improvements. Sleep enough, even if that means less gets done per day. It’s better to do slightly less much better, than slightly more much worse.

1 <https://www.lawgazette.co.uk/news/burnt-out-sleep-deprived-and-hiding-mental-illness-lawyers-reveal-struggles/5109937.article#:~:text=Many%20legal%20professionals%20are%20also,than%20five%20hours%20a%20night.>

2 <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-hygiene/good-sleep-and-job-performance>

3 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5468315/>

4 <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2013/oct/05/moritz-erhardt-internship-banking>

MY JOURNEY INTO LAW

RIZWAN MUGHAL, BPP LAW SCHOOL



Rizwan Mughal, BPP Law School Alumnus, lets us know about his journey into law. From his humble beginnings in Lincoln to becoming senior legal counsel in projects relating to AI and blockchain technology in Dubai.

HOW IT STARTED

“Join the Army”. “You won’t get the grades you need for Uni”. “What’s Forensic Science”. “Where’s Lincoln?”.

These are all genuine remarks made from people I knew: teachers, careers advisors, and friends.

I didn’t join the Army. I did get the grades I needed for university. I think there were only a handful of universities offering Forensic Science courses in 2004, compared to over 400 courses across 57 universities in the UK today. For those still wondering, Lincoln is in Lincolnshire! I graduated in 2007 (with a 2.2.).

After I graduated, I wasn’t sure what I wanted to do. I enjoyed crime scene investigation,

but I wasn’t ready for a life in the labs. I had options, but no real guidance. I was interested in studying a masters course in Aircraft Accident Investigation at Cranfield University; I received a job offer to work for a sports doping laboratory in Cambridgeshire; and another offer to work as a DNA Liaison Officer for the British Transport Police in London. At the same time, while online, I kept seeing pop-up adverts for the law conversion course, and I was lured into the prospect of becoming a solicitor, by the fancy websites of Linklaters, A&O, and Freshfields. Put on a suit, get paid city money. How hard could it be, I thought to myself (I can’t even blame ‘Suits’, because this was years before Mike and Harvey were brought into our lives!). So, I applied for the GDL at BPP in Leeds, and embarked on the “lawlleroaster” of a lifetime.

Law school was tough! It was a steep learning curve. I’d completed the first term and wasn’t sure what area of law suited me, or if I even wanted to continue studying law. It was a lot of reading, and writing (and no titration calculations). What had I done?! I’d gone from studying cadavers to studying Lord Denning. From doing a dissertation on lie detector tests, to weekly dissertation-length analyses on *Donoghue -v- Stevenson*. I had taken out a professional development loan to pay for my GDL, so quitting wasn’t an option. NatWest’s interest rates made sure of that. I was interested in criminal law, but was discouraged from working for the CPS (and I didn’t quite fancy the life of a criminal defence lawyer). I didn’t have a training contract, and I wasn’t sure how I’d get one. I applied for multiple internships and work experience, but my first lifeline came in the form of the remarkable BPP Access to Practice Scheme (which I believe was a joint initiative with Addleshaws). This led

me to meeting my mentor and legal trainer, Qamar Ayaz, and ultimately to my training contract. I had a unique opportunity to work alongside Qamar, who left his stable job with DWF to open his own law firm (Stradbroke Solicitors), specialising in catastrophic injury. You could say my training was pretty hands-on; so hands-on in fact that when I was still a paralegal, I got to play advocate in a one day trial, before Recorder Lewis QC, as he was then (Andrew Lewis KC), who granted me rights of audience to represent my client after a blunder with instructing counsel. I was up against two barristers. Granted, it wasn’t a complex case, but I didn’t wake up that morning expecting to represent my client in court and cross-examine four witnesses. The firm funded my LPC, which I studied part-time whilst working full-time. I worked with Qamar for 5 years until I qualified, after which point I wanted to work for a big firm. Qamar and I remain good friends to this day.



QUALIFICATION

I qualified in September 2013 and I moved to Birmingham, to start life as an NQ at DAC Beachcroft, in their niche sports liability team. I learnt a lot, had another great mentor who’s now a partner at DAC, and lots of autonomy. We defended high profile, high value, racing incidents, football incidents, and rugby incidents. I stayed on at DAC for 4 years, but transferred to their Leeds office to be closer to family in 2016. I was like a sponge, just challenging myself to learn from every case I worked on. I also got to work on highly confidential MOD and NHS cases. I didn’t lose one trial (the trick is knowing which

cases you’re bound to lose, settle those, then prepare a solid case for the runners).

Then in 2018, I moved over to rival firm, Clyde & Co, and I did a two year stint as a catastrophic injury and large loss associate in their Manchester office. I maintained my trial success rate, the culmination of which was a hotly contested High Court Declaration Proceedings matter, with issues of fraud and voiding an insurance contract. I am still involved in litigation and arbitration but haven’t had a full-blown trial since then.

In 2020, I made the decision to move over to a Claimant catastrophic injury team at Minster Law. I moved into a management position within three months of being at Minster, and this time also coincided with the pandemic. Now, I was managing a new team of around 20 lawyers, in a new role, fully remote; talk about imposter syndrome.



THE RETRAIN

Life was ticking along smoothly. Then in December 2021, my wife got the job offer of a lifetime that threw our stable lives into an adventure we weren’t particularly looking for at that time. We moved to Dubai in March 2022.

With this came the opportunity for me to build my own practice. I joined consultancy firm, Mezzle. In Dubai, the legal market was heavily focused around corporate commercial, and as I was beginning to find out, in the emerging technology sector. I always had an interest in emerging tech, and had been reading

textbooks, articles and attending courses about blockchain and AI law, since 2019. The AI and blockchain scene was booming in Dubai. Fintechs were being set up at an alarming rate, and investors were throwing money at these shiny new projects. I had a unique opportunity to work with start-up founders from all over the world who were coming to Dubai to make it big, with projects ranging from electronic payment platforms; e-commerce; on-demand service apps; deal aggregators; trading platforms; crypto exchanges; NFT marketplaces; social media platforms, and so on. I was drafting online policies; SAFTs and SAFEs; funding agreements; and a whole suite of software, cloud services, and hardware agreements. I've seen smart contracts coded, been involved in NFT projects, cryptocurrency exchanges, and I've been at the forefront of developing metaverse projects.

Dubai's legal scene is quite different from the UK. Lawyers not only move around more frequently, but they freelance as legal consultants. It's not unusual to come across lawyers who work for a law firm, and they're also legal counsel on a couple of side projects. As I was working in the region and building on my experience, I was offered to work as sole in-house legal counsel for a global trade and commodities company. This role saw me involved in cross-border transactional work: dealing with trade deals, sanctions, acquisitions, and learning the process of metal refinery, and mining precious metals in Africa! From catastrophic injury to dealing with lithium mines in Namibia, I never would have mapped out this experience. It's been an interesting journey, and it feels as though I could publish a book filled with all the incredible anecdotes I've collected over the years!

HOW IT'S GOING

I'm currently senior legal counsel working on confidential projects in the AI and blockchain technology sector. My day to day role consists of managing the legal department, drafting and reviewing contracts, preparing legal



opinions, dealing with regulatory authorities and licensing requirements, and dealing with disputes.

I'm hoping my journey resonates with some of you, and that it demonstrates that you don't have to get stuck on a linear track. Not everybody has it figured out. A legal career wasn't even on my radar until after I had completed my undergraduate degree. If you have your eyes set on partnership, or perhaps you think that you'll never make Partner, remember that this isn't the only option available to you. Your career can be more fluid, and you can change specialisms.

Don't get too hung up on trying to map out your entire legal career, and don't worry about what your peers are doing, or where you think you should end up. Enjoy the process of learning, and your unique journey. Most importantly, make sure you're being the best version of yourself in each role, and I promise you, the rest will fall into place.

If you'd like to find out more about Rizwan and follow his journey as a lawyer, please follow his socials below.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/rizwan-mughal-23221644/>

Instagram: [riz.the.lawyer](https://www.instagram.com/riz.the.lawyer)
www.thelinkinglawyer.com



MY STUDENT JOURNEY: NAVIGATING CHALLENGES AND CELEBRATING SUCCESSES

TIMOTHY MUKORO



my family and friends, filled me with eager anticipation. The prospect of studying at a world-class institution in London felt like a dream come true. My expectations were sky-high, as I imagined the academic and personal growth opportunities that awaited me.

Upon my arrival at Heathrow Airport, I was warmly greeted by the BPP University team. Their hospitality was overwhelming; they welcomed me with bright smiles and thoughtful gifts, making me feel instantly at home. This initial reception left a lasting impression and eased some of my anxieties about this new chapter in my life.

Navigating the complexities of a new environment proved to be my first major challenge. The transport system was particularly bewildering; every time I asked for directions, locals would hand me a map, which only added to my confusion. Nodding



My name is Timothy Mukoro, and I am from Delta State in the southern part of Nigeria. With a solid foundation in Computer Science, I pursued both my undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in this field. My academic journey extended further with a Post Graduate Diploma in Education, culminating in an MSc in Management with Data Analytics from BPP University, London.

“The journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.” This ancient proverb resonated deeply with me as I embarked on my quest for qualitative education, navigating through different fields and crossing continents to achieve my dreams.

Leaving Africa for the first time was a whirlwind of emotions for me, a blend of excitement and anxiety. The thought of venturing into a foreign country, away from

in feigned understanding, I often found myself more lost than before. The cultural difference was striking—people here were very independent, and there seemed to be a rule for everything, which felt quite suffocating. The unpredictable weather was another shock, the sun setting at 8 PM and the harshness of winter made me feel like I was living in a freezer.

Finding stable accommodation was very difficult. Initially, I moved from one temporary place to another. This housing instability, combined with the pressure of upcoming summative assessments and the need to find a job, created an overwhelming situation where I had to juggle multiple priorities.

To navigate these challenges, I leaned heavily on the support of the Student Association. They provided invaluable tips and guidance on adapting to my new environment, and their approachability made them a reliable resource. I focused on setting clear priorities, tackling one issue at a time, and acknowledging my limitations. Seeking help when needed was crucial, whether for academic advice, accommodation support, or job hunting. Gradually, I managed to balance these competing demands, gaining mastery over my circumstances, and overcoming the hurdles I faced.

Choosing MSC Management with Data Analytics was a defining moment in my academic journey. My interest in management began years ago when I became a Graduate Member of the Nigerian Institute of Management (Chartered) after completing nine management courses. This early exposure ignited a passion for management that stayed with me. Ten years later, while pursuing a Post Graduate Diploma in Education, I rekindled this interest through additional management courses. Simultaneously, my background in Computer Science had cultivated a deep appreciation for data. The opportunity to combine these two interests into a single program seemed like a dream come true. When I discovered that such a course existed, I knew it was the perfect major for me.

Among my most memorable classes were those

on Global Strategy and Sustainability. The module tutor, Mr. Ali Usman, had a unique way of inspiring students to strive for excellence. He often reminded us, “Come on! There are easier ways to fail. Why would you spend thousands of pounds and leave your country just to come and fail?” His words echoed in my mind, fuelling my determination to excel. Another inspiring figure was Mr. Ahsan Tariq, who taught the Personal Effectiveness module. Mr. Tariq’s humility and approachability made a significant impact on me. His unwavering commitment to student success and his willingness to provide personal academic assistance were truly motivational. To this day, I reach out to him for guidance, especially when I need a character reference.

Throughout my academic journey, I have achieved numerous milestones. These include developing skills in qualitative research, critical thinking, data analysis, presentation, and digital proficiency. However, this journey was not without its struggles. Balancing academic demands with personal life and work was challenging. There were moments of intense pressure, especially during summative assessments and periods of housing instability. Despite these challenges, each obstacle helped me grow and reinforced my resilience.

Managing my coursework required a strategic approach. I found that developing regular study habits was crucial. Studying in small, consistent increments each day proved far more effective than cramming all at once. Maintaining a balance between academics and personal life was essential. I learned to prioritize tasks and set clear boundaries. Seeking help when needed was another key strategy. BPP University offers a wealth of resources, from academic support to mental health services, and utilising these resources made a significant difference. Knowing when to ask for help and taking advantage of available support systems were vital to my success.

During my time at BPP University, I actively sought out leadership roles and became involved in various extracurricular activities that significantly enhanced my student

experience.

I was appointed as a Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) representative. In this role, I helped my peers by guiding them to career events and student support resources, advocating for their views in meetings with Programme Leaders, and liaising with members of the Students' Association team. Additionally, I provided feedback from SSLC meetings to the student body, ensuring that their voices were heard and addressed.

I also served as a Student Voice Representative (SVR), where I made several impactful contributions to the student community. My involvement included participating in focus groups, such as those on Library Services, and being a panellist in discussions like the Men's Mental Health Panel. Furthermore, I contributed to the creation of the Student Written Submission for 2024, a key document representing student perspectives and needs.

These roles greatly enriched my student experience. Being involved in these extracurricular activities provided me with a broader perspective on student life and enhanced my leadership and communication skills.

After graduation, I aspire to leverage my skills in Data Analytics in a stimulating and challenging role. I am eager to explore opportunities in the Education and IT industries where I can continue to learn and grow professionally.

To incoming students or those currently navigating their student life, my advice is to



seize every opportunity to take on leadership roles in addition to your academic activities. These roles will help you develop leadership and communication skills, expose you to numerous opportunities, and grant you privileges that you might otherwise miss.

I am deeply grateful to all those who supported me throughout my journey. My sincere thanks go to my module tutors, Ellie, the Head of BPP Students' Association, Jaimin, the former president of BPP Students' Association, the ever-responsive Student Association team members, and the entire staff of BPP University. Special thanks to my supportive course mates like Isaac Iyanju, Wilfred O., Olivia, and others. Each of you played an individual role in my journey, contributing to the resilient person I am today.

In closing, I encourage all students to embrace every opportunity for growth and leadership. Your academic excellence and career success are within reach, and student leadership at BPP University can be a powerful catalyst in achieving your goals. Never underestimate the impact of a strong support network and the value of perseverance. Thank you all for being a part of my journey, and I look forward to the future with optimism and determination.



FROM THE FOOTBALL FIELD TO THE ACADEMIC ARENA: A JOURNEY OF RESILIENCE AND DETERMINATION

IFTAKER AHMED



My name is Ifti, and I was born and raised in Chittagong, Bangladesh. My journey from a footballer with dreams of playing for my country to a student navigating the complexities of international education is a story of resilience, determination, and the belief that every challenge is simply an opportunity for growth.

Growing up, sports was my passion, with football holding a special place in my heart. By the time I was in class 7, I was competing in major tournaments like the Airtel Rising Star trials and eventually earned a spot on Bangladesh's U-16 national team. I captained the Chittagong District and Division teams and even played in a tournament in India for another team. These experiences not only honed my skills on the field but also taught me the value of teamwork, discipline, and perseverance.



However, in 2017, my football career took an unexpected turn when I suffered an ACL injury. The surgery and recovery took a year, and despite my best efforts, persistent knee pain ended my hopes of returning to professional football. It was a devastating setback, but it also opened the door to a new chapter in my life.

With the guidance and unwavering support of my uncle, Mr. Nazim, I redirected my focus toward academics. He suggested that I pursue higher education abroad and generously sponsored my studies in China. The transition was daunting, I had no background in academics, and I was unfamiliar with both English and Chinese. Yet, the resilience I had developed through football gave me the



courage to face these new challenges head-on.

The first six months in China were incredibly difficult, but I was determined to succeed. I dedicated myself to learning English, Chinese, and my major subjects, studying for 4 to 6 hours a day. My hard work paid off, within six months, I was proficient in both languages and excelled academically, earning a stipend for my outstanding results. My love for football never faded; I connected with fellow students, joined the business school team, and played in amateur leagues, even coaching a youth team and creating an international student football team.



Just as I was finding my rhythm, the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted everything. I returned to Bangladesh and struggled to keep up with online studies. It was a challenging time, but once again, my uncle's guidance proved invaluable. In 2022, he encouraged me to take another bold step and pursue further studies in the UK, which he generously sponsored.

Arriving in London was both exciting and overwhelming. The campus at Shepherd's Bush was smaller than I had imagined, and adapting to a new environment took time. However, I was quickly impressed by the quality of education and the support from

faculty. My uncle introduced me to the Bangladeshi community and to key figures at BPP University, including the Pro Vice-Chancellor, Juliet Wagner, who introduced me to BPP Student' Association (SA).



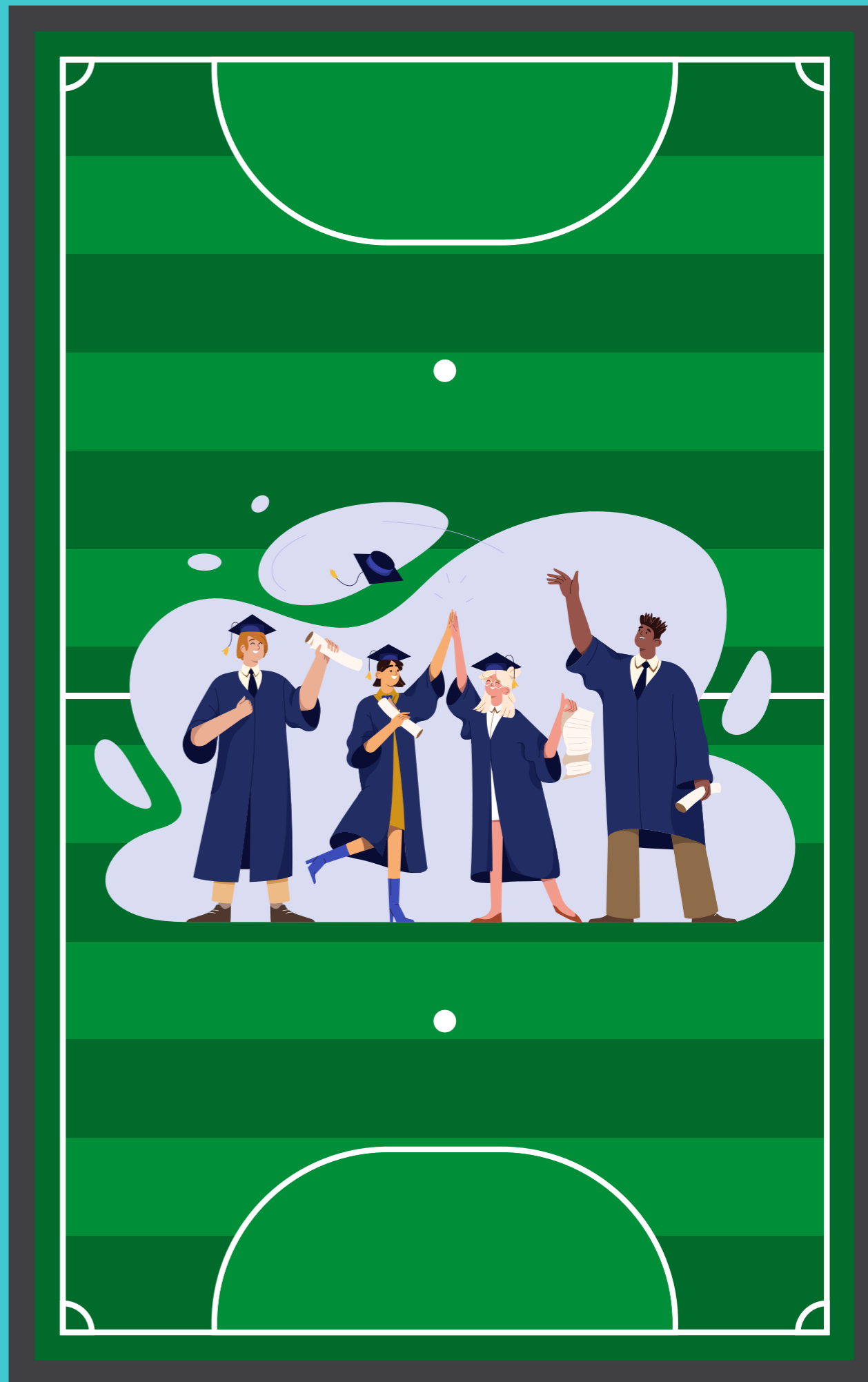
Joining the SA as a Student Voice Representative was a turning point in my journey. The role boosted my confidence, expanded my network, and allowed me to engage directly with the university's higher management. I organised events, including a football tournament and a singing competition, and established the BPP Bangladesh Student Network Society, which now has over 60 active members. I've also recently established a football club, which currently has around 36 members. These experiences not only enriched my student life but also strengthened my leadership and organisational skills.

Outside of my academic pursuits, I work as a bookkeeping assistant at Nelson College London and volunteer for NCL Tours, where I gain practical experience in accounting and help create holiday packages. I also volunteer with Chattagram Samity UK, the oldest and



largest Samity, which helps me stay connected to my roots and community.

Reflecting on my journey, I've come to appreciate that life is full of unexpected turns, and it's how we respond to these challenges that defines our path. From a footballer in Bangladesh to a student in China and now in the UK, I've faced numerous obstacles but never lost sight of my goals. My message to fellow students is simple: don't give up, no matter how difficult the road ahead may seem. Keep smiling, keep trying, and believe in your ability to succeed. Together, we can create a brighter future for ourselves and set positive examples for the next generation.



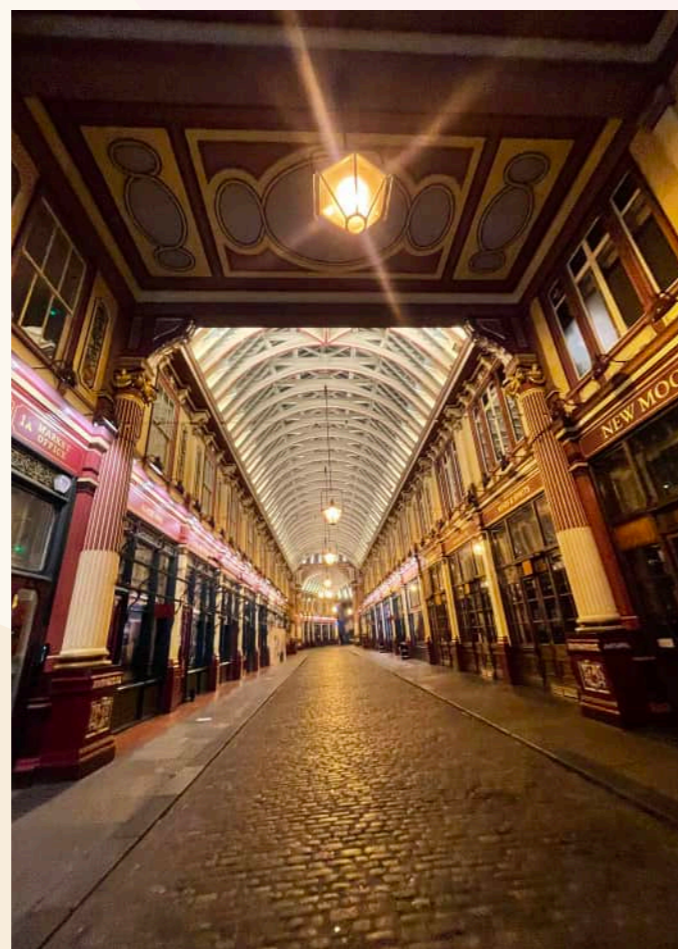
NEW EXPERIENCES

AMALDEV DEVERAJAN



by the local artists, musicians, dancers, and magicians who perform on the streets, adding to the city's vibrant energy. On weekends, I see people enjoying themselves with pure happiness, and I'm struck by the warmth and respect that Londoners show to everyone, whether in tube stations, bus stops, or shops.

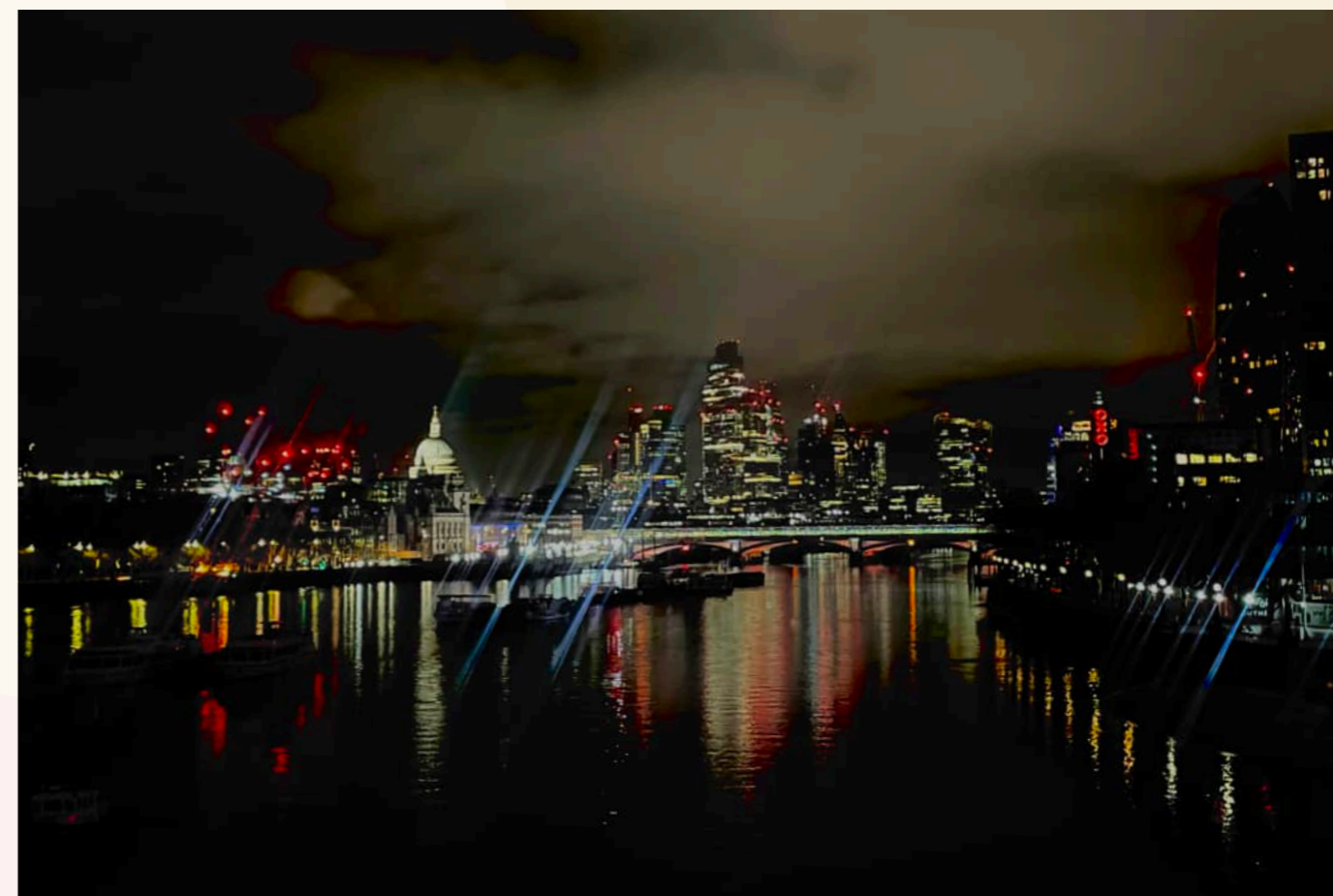
The city's infrastructure is a marvel, with the underground trains being a particular wonder. I'm amazed by the history and engineering that has gone into building this network over 200 years ago, with the city growing up around it. It's a testament to human ingenuity and deserves to be on the list of world wonders. The iconic double-decker buses, with their classy looks, are another delight.



As I stepped off the plane at Heathrow Airport, a mix of emotions surged through me - excitement, nervousness, and a hint of homesickness. Leaving behind the comfort and familiarity of Kerala, India, I embarked on a new chapter in London, pursuing my master's degree at BPP University. This city even though cold, bustling with energy and with its amazing opportunities, has captured my heart. I was eager to explore and learn.

From the moment I arrived on campus, I felt welcomed by the warm smiles and open arms of my fellow students and professors. London's vibrant energy is infectious, and I soon found myself immersed in its rich history, art, and music scenes. I've explored world-class museums like the British Museum and the National Gallery, attended concerts at the O2 Arena, and discovered new favourite spots in the city.

London is a city of dreams, where I've seen people from around the world chasing their aspirations. As an art lover, I'm fascinated



As an international student, I've experienced the diversity of London's culinary scene, tasting a variety of foods from around the world. I've met tourists from many countries, and we've shared our cultural experiences and traditions. I believe that London is the center of the world, lots of amazing things to do in this city, I have enjoyed a lot.

London has something for everyone, and I've discovered new passions and interests here. From street performers in Covent Garden to football matches at Wembley Stadium, there's always something exciting happening. I've even taken a day trip to Oxford, exploring the famous University and its charming streets. With its rich history, cultural diversity, and warm people, London has truly become my second home. I'm grateful for this incredible journey, and I look forward to the many more experiences and memories to come.

In conclusion, my time in London has been a life-changing experience. I've grown academically, personally, and culturally, and I'll always cherish the memories I've made here. If you're considering studying abroad,

I highly recommend London - it's a city that will capture your heart and broaden your horizons."



CONFIDENCE AND IMPOSTER SYNDROME AS AN APPRENTICE

IYANU ADISA



who chose to go to university the traditional route. The choice to not go to university wasn't a matter of lack of intelligence (I did apply and get in) which is a common misconception of apprentices but a personal decision looking at my strengths, learning style, the cost of university and the opportunities it would provide me to achieve my career goals.

Tips for tackling imposter syndrome- things to remember!

As an apprentice, you may feel you don't have anything to offer, but that is far from the case, in fact not having technical knowledge or experience means you can provide a fresh perspective to those that live and breathe a subject or skill leading to innovation.

Being on a different path from the average 20-year-old is daunting. What I have found particularly helpful is going over my achievements and any feedback received that I keep for my evidence log as part of my apprenticeship to remind me on days when I feel less than, I am capable. Challenging negative beliefs when they rise prevents them from spiralling into bigger issues and taking a toll on your mental health.

Speaking up about how you are feeling is important for tackling imposter syndrome. Voicing how you feel out loud can make a problem feel less big and offer the opportunity for others to support you or even provide shared experiences so that you know you aren't alone in how you feel.

Look out for opportunities within your company or even resources online that help you deal with imposter syndrome. Just this week I completed a session on Inner Critic which touched on imposter syndrome led by my company.

Imposter syndrome is defined by the National Institute of Health as a behavioural health phenomenon described as self-doubt of intellect, skills, or accomplishments among high-achieving individuals.

In simple terms, it just means feeling you're not good enough when you're probably doing great.

Feelings around imposter syndrome

I would say that a huge part of imposter syndrome is rooted in comparison. Being a competitive individual, it is very easy to compare myself to other apprentices, people in my teams and worst of all people on LinkedIn. It is a total cliché, but you must focus on yourself and your career journey otherwise you will get lost in the cycle of comparison which will negatively impact your confidence and ability to succeed as an apprentice.

Another struggle I face is comparing myself to grads at my company or my peers in sixth form

COMMERCIAL AWARENESS WEBSITE

ELYSIA SHIRLEY



Throughout my studies I have written various articles for firms local to my home and chambers in London. I wanted to create a website solely for the purpose of this and to allow other students, and individuals already in the legal field, to have access to a website and a monthly newsletter, of legal articles I write as news stories come out.

The website name about due to my surname 'Shirley' which sounds like 'surely not news', hence 'Shirley Not News'. Topics I have written about to date includes Intellectual property, Insolvency, Family, Employment, Courts, Defamation and International stories.

To sign-up, all you need to do is put your preferred email into the sign-up box at the bottom of each page on the website, and you will receive a monthly round-up on the first working day of the month of the articles posted from the previous month.

Hello, my name is Elysia Shirley, and I'm currently studying the LPC LLM online at BPP University.

Whilst studying for the LLB in 2023, I tried my best to keep up with Commercial Awareness to improve my employability prospects.



LONDON AND MY BPP EXPERIENCE

SYED ZEESHAN ABID



examination, examination in chief, and many other traits of advocacy from my mentor during my days at these chambers. He is not only a famous trial lawyer, but also a great and caring human being. He taught me a lot about technicalities of law, and he also advised me on how to go about living a successful and meaningful life. I am forever in the debt of my mentor for teaching me the practicalities of life.

It was through his guidance and motivation, that I embarked upon the journey of becoming a foreign qualified lawyer. I chose the UK as my destination, as the UK has been an inspiration for me because of their rich history, acceptance of multiculturalism and due to their openness to accept people of different races and religions.

I arrived in the UK on the 21st May 2024, my dear friend picked me up from the airport and our first stop was to eat dinner in Ilford. It was an amazing to experience such delicious Pakistani cuisine in the UK, I wasn't expecting the food to be so authentic. After this, I stay with my friend for a while and got to know my fellow students on my new course, the LLM



I am a practicing lawyer from Pakistan with more than four years of experience in the field. I completed my BA in Political Science from Forman Christian College University, Lahore in 2016. My interest in governance and politics made me realise, to understand governance, I must understand law. That's why I chose a career in Law and so began the start of my career.

I had the honour and privilege of working as a coordinator for the Provincial Minister of Auqaf and Religious Affairs, Punjab, Pakistan for one year through the National Internship Program. I received this opportunity from British Council Pakistan and was posted at the Provincial Assembly of Punjab as a Speech Writer of Honorable Speaker of the Provincial Assembly. I learned a lot during my years at the Provincial Assembly of Punjab.

I started my practice as a lawyer in 2020 under the able guidance of Sir Asif Javed Qureshi, Advocate Supreme Court of Pakistan, in Lahore. I learned the art of trial, cross

IBCL, in London Waterloo. I found out they belong to neighboring districts in Punjab, Pakistan, so we got along well. After this fateful meeting, we found accommodation together and have been living as roommates since.

The amazing thing about the UK is that it allows communities to prosper with equal opportunity, living in Ilford has shown me this. It does not feel like I am living in a foreign land whilst being here in Ilford, walking through the markets, it feels like we are walking in the Liberty Market of Lahore. Ilford has a huge Pakistani community, many of the businesses here are owned and operated by Pakistanis. It feels like a safe haven and home away from home for international Pakistanis living here.

After moving into our accommodation, the next challenge arose in finding a part-time job. With the guidance of our friends, we started searching for a job through online career sites of big companies. We also went door to door, searching for any opportunities that would arise. Luckily, I was able to find a job quickly with a well-established fast-food company, after successful passing the interview, I was soon in training for the role. I was happy to find a job so quickly after arriving only a month previously, my roommates also managed to find roles too luckily.

My student experience at BPP Waterloo is also going well. I am learning about new topics and the teaching techniques are utilizing technology very well, the lecturers are also friendly and accommodating. A feature I have been impressed by at BPP Waterloo centre, is that they have multi-faith room for students of different religions to pray.

BPP also has the brilliant Students' Association which caught my eye early on. It provides a great platform for students of BPP to connect with each other, for instance, I was able to attend the Eid celebration event as arranged by BPP Students' Association. There, I met with students from different courses and made new friends.

Another amazing, as well as surprising, thing for me has been realizing than as

an international student, I can also vote in the UK's general elections. This explains the structure of the UK's system in which ownership is given to everyone who has chosen the UK as their destination. I went to polling station with my friends and we exercised our right to vote. I am grateful that I got to observe the process of voting in the UK, I interacted with locals, and learned new things about UK's political system.

My experience in London has been exceptional. I am extremely impressed by the public transport infrastructure of London, connectivity through trains and buses has made my life so easier. It is extremely easy to commute from one place to another using the integrated public transport of London. The weather in London has also been kind and pleasant (so far!). I have also managed to visit monuments of historical importance like Trafalgar Square, National Arts Gallery, Piccadilly square, Westminster, and the London Eye. My journey is still on going, I look forward to exploring London further and being able to utilise my time in the best possible way.

They say London is rewarding and hospitable and I couldn't agree more. I look forward to exploring more, gaining new skills and sharing my experiences with people back in Pakistan when I return.



AN ODE TO EDUCATORS

AFAQ AHMED KHAN



In rooms that hum with youthful din,
Where sunlight paints the windowsill,
There stand the architects of minds,
The teachers, with their gentle minds.

Their eyes, a well of wisdom deep,
Where knowledge flows in endless sweep.
They hold the key to unlock dreams,
And chase away the darkest schemes.

With chalk-dusted hands and weary smiles,
They build a world for curious miles.
A map of stars, a whispered rhyme,
They ignite passions, make them climb.

They see the spark, though faint it glows,
In every heart, a hidden rose.
They fan the flame with patient hand,
And guide it forth, across the land.

Through tears that fall and laughter bright,
They mend the wounds and set things right.
A listening ear, a whispered word,
A silent strength, a hope conferred.

They are the heroes seldom sung,
Whose battles fought are battles won
Within the fortress of the mind,
Where doubts and fears are left behind.

They challenge us to reach the sky,
To question all, and never sigh.
To chase the sun with eager feet,
And taste the knowledge, bittersweet.

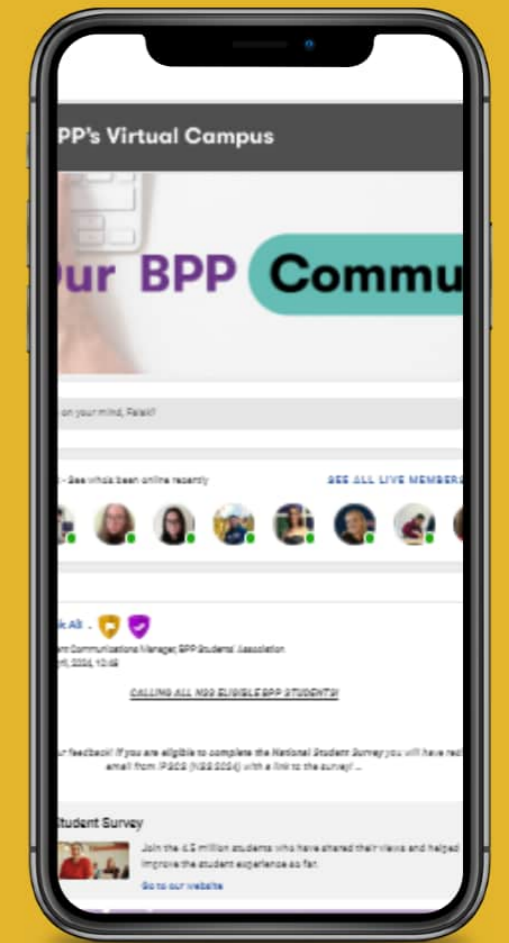
For in their hearts, a fire burns,
A love for learning that returns.
They paint a future, vast and grand,
A world we build, hand in hand.

And though the years may fade and blur,
Their lessons etched, forever sure.
A guiding light, a gentle hand,
The teachers, in this grateful land.

So let us raise a heartfelt plea,
For all they've given, wild and free.
For patience worn and spirits strong,
A teacher's love, where we belong.



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