

# Goodbye & Good Luck!

As our time writing for CN magazine draws to a close, we thought we would use this article partly for reflection and to look ahead to the future.



**Megan Williams**  
BSc Dietetics  
Plymouth University  
@Megan\_6291

The last few years have been a whirlwind! Back in 2017, after completing a course in human biology, I applied for a degree in dietetics. I had read the warnings on university sites and forums about how intensive the next three years would be, but I didn't let it discourage me. Whilst many days have seemed endlessly busy, knowing all the hard work has almost paid off reminds me how worthwhile this journey has been!

University is still in progress and virtual lectures are the new norm. What's unique to this semester, aside from COVID-19, is I'm working for an NHS trust whilst finishing my studies. In light of the pandemic and placement coming to a sudden end in March, I was keen to get back into the hospital and agreed to having my name on the temporary HCPC register. For me, continuing to practice and gain clinical experience has been invaluable and has enabled me to become confident with my own style. Although the circumstances now are somewhat different to those I encountered on placement three months ago, the dietetics remains the same and the office, like most dietitians' offices, is still stocked with cake (if not even more so).

With the end of the degree approaching, I'm now making plans for the future. Like most final year students, I've recently submitted an application for a permanent band 5 position. With graduation delayed until next year, securing my first post will be my personal marker of success. I'm also in the process of building my CPD portfolio, collating all my university work and clearing physical and mental space for the next chapter. When that chapter begins, I can start looking ahead to the areas I would like to gain more experience in, such as gastroenterology, neurology, renal and critical care.

I'll end this with a small piece of advice I was given when starting the course: *'Work hard, but make sure you continue to do the things you enjoy in your spare time. Maintain a healthy work-life balance, try your best to keep your weekends work-free so your mind and body feel rested and, most importantly, enjoy it!'*



**Olivia Hill**  
BSc Dietetics  
Plymouth University  
@livvyjaynehill

By the time you are reading this, I hope the world will be returning to some sort of normality. Like Megan, I am also on the temporary HCPC register and working within the NHS. This has been a brilliant opportunity to continue learning and to keep up with clinical practice, but it has not come without its challenges.

Balancing the act of working on the wards, attending virtual lectures and finishing off the last assignments has enabled me to refine my time management skills but also ensure I take some time out for my mental health. The last three years may not have prepared me for a world pandemic, but they definitely taught me useful skills to work through it. A degree in nutrition and dietetics builds you up with resilience, innovative thinking and an ability to stand up for what you believe in (such as the continually progressing evidence base!). All of which are transferrable skills and you can take forth to your new graduate job.

I am really enjoying my new role and have managed to secure a permanent NHS position for when I graduate. If you too are starting out in your first nutrition or dietetic role, see it as an opportunity to get those foundations right, rather than sprinting before you can walk. I think it is important to know that imposter syndrome is normal at first, and we are not expected to know everything. We are in a job where we are learning every day and will continue to do so throughout our careers, so embrace these opportunities!

Congratulations to all students graduating this year! We wish everyone the of best of luck in their future careers. We would also like to say thank you to the team at CN! It has been a fantastic two years of writing the student column and we hope that you have enjoyed joining us on our student journeys.

Keep in touch via Twitter to follow our next chapter: @livvyjaynehill @Megan\_6291



@CNmagazines



@CNmagazines



cnmagazines