

**Personal Profile**



<b>Name</b>	<b>Rachael Gillies</b>
<b>School attended</b>	West Kirby Grammar School for Girls
<b>Subjects studied</b>	Maths, Chemistry, Physics and Religious Studies
<b>University attended</b>	University of Exeter
<b>University campus</b>	Streatham Campus
<b>Degree subject</b>	BA Theology
<b>Number of years as a student ambassador</b>	3
<b>Year of graduation</b>	2014
<b>Current job/employer</b>	University of Exeter Students' Guild

**About me:**

Coming from the North it was a bit of a shock to cross the North/South border. However, I have loved the time I've spent at Exeter. Studying Theology gave me fantastic opportunities to further explore the world through a different lens and I loved the chance to be really creative with my degree.

Whilst at Exeter I not only gained valuable experiences studying Theology, I was also heavily involved in a range of other student activities. I volunteered as part of Welcome Team and illustrated for Razz Magazine. I was also part of the Evangelical Christian Union, planning the annual carol service at St James' Park as well as co-founding their welfare project, Love at the Lemmy.

In my final year I was the Faith and Worldview Officer on the Societies' Executive before being elected into my current position as President of the University of Exeter Students' Guild. In this position I represent the views of the student body to the University and wider community to ensure students can have the best experience possible during their time at Exeter.

<p><b>Had you always planned to go to university?</b></p>
<p>University had always been something I had wanted to do. I come from an academic family so it felt normal. What was tough was deciding the subject I wanted to study and where. I felt a lot of pressure to get it right but in the end I decided to something I loved. It was such a good decision because it meant I was so invested in my degree the whole time I was at Exeter.</p>
<p><b>What would you say to students who are currently not sure if university is for them?</b></p>
<p>University is so diverse, there are so many different options out there, they come in all shapes and sizes with such a variety of courses on offer. Decide what it is about university that makes you unsure, then try and find the right match for you. Also know that there is so much support out for if you do decide to go. However, ultimately if university isn't for you, that is ok too.</p>
<p><b>What made you apply to become a student ambassador?</b></p>
<p>I was attracted by the flexibility of work around my degree as well as all the different types of work being a student ambassador offers me. I really liked the fact that one week you could be taking a prospective student and their family around accommodation whereas the next week you could be trying to show care leavers that university could be an opportunity for them. I wanted the challenge that being an ambassador could offer, whilst being able to talk all about how much I was enjoying Exeter.</p>
<p><b>Do you think that being a student ambassador contributed to your own personal development and if so how?</b></p>
<p>Being a student ambassador provided me with lots of skills I was able to use both in my degree and now in my current role as President of the Students' Guild. Working on Open Days my confidence with public speaking has been increased, as well as my problem solving and networking skills. The variety of work that being a student ambassador offers means that you need to adapt yourself to lots of different groups of people in many environments. This is invaluable now with the work I do now.</p>
<p><b>What was your highlight of being a student ambassador?</b></p>
<p>I loved being able to meet such a variety of people from so many different backgrounds. I really enjoyed hearing about what it was that drew each student and their family to Exeter. The best moment for me was when on arrivals weekend as a Welcome Team member I moved a student into the accommodation that I had shown him round on an open day. As cheesy as it sounds, you don't often get to find out what happens to prospective students you interact with so it was lovely to go full circle with his journey to Exeter.</p>
<p><b>Would you recommend becoming a student ambassador to anyone thinking about applying and why?</b></p>
<p>I would thoroughly recommend being a student ambassador. The flexibility of the job means that fits really well with your university degree whilst providing you with lots of opportunity for personal development. There are few other jobs available at university which provide such diversity, providing you with new opportunities every time you sign up for work. I also really enjoyed being able to talk to people about an institution and experience that had become so important and influential upon me.</p>