

## **ALISON THORPE**

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### **Education**

2015–present University of Abingdon, BA in modern history. 2.1 in first year exams

- Gave regular well-received ten-minute presentations to seminar group on study topics
- 15,000 word dissertation on the impact of economic policy on Latin American politics developed research and analytical skills (2.1)

2008–2015 John Redmond High School, Ipswich

A levels: History (A), English (A), French (B)

GCSEs: 10 A and A\* grades including Maths and English

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### **Work experience**

2016 (June–September) Retail assistant, Waterstones bookshop, Ipswich

- Won Employee of the Month award for outstanding customer service
- Deputised for the department manager. Resolved problems such as customer complaints and colleagues' difficulties with retail systems
- Trained and supported two new members of staff on how to use the retail point of sale, cash management and order management systems
- Was trusted to cash up tills and log daily takings using the cash management system
- Dealt with the customer enquiries in person and over the phone, strengthening client facing skills, commercial awareness and product knowledge

2015–2016 (October–April) Waitress, The Winery, Abingdon

- Applied tact, diplomacy and judgement needed in situations such as: asking for proof of age; responding to complaints; managing incidents such as disputes between customers
- Liaised with kitchen staff to cover food orders as well as serving at the bar, so multitasking was essential. Made sure customers were served quickly at busy times

2015 (June–September) Telesales, Eastern Electricity, Ipswich

- Honed telephone communication skills in a pressurised business environment
- Exceeded personal sales target by 10%. Achieved this by refusing to be discouraged by rejection and making a higher number of calls than the average for the team
- Proposed the introduction of a mentoring scheme for new starters and revisions to the standard sales script given to them. Both ideas were implemented

2014 (June–September) Retail assistant, WH Smith, Stowmarket

- Had to be flexible, worked shifts at short notice

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## Volunteering achievements

### 2016–present Secretary of Abingdon University History Society

- Worked with the society's committee to brainstorm, agree and act on a plan to reverse a decline in membership of the society. Increased membership by 10%
- Arranged the venue, refreshments, publicity and entertainment for a fundraising fancy dress gala attended by 250 society members and guests, which made £500 profit
- Promoted the society using social networking. Engaged with students using the society's blog, website, Facebook page and Twitter and Instagram feeds
- Organised management committee meetings. Wrote and circulated agendas and meeting notes. Kept committee members up to date with progress on our plan

### 2015–present Contributor to student and local publications

- Wrote monthly music review column for student newspaper, Abingdon Student
- Used initiative, news sense and understanding of interests of different audiences to pitch proposals and place articles in three local print and online publications

### 2015 (September–April) Fundraiser for Abingdon University Snowboarding Society

- Persuaded local branch of the sports shop White Sports to sponsor the Snowboarding Society's Easter trip to France by providing kit
- Placed a photo story about the society's French trip in two local newspapers. This positive publicity secured White Sports' ongoing support

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## Language skills

- Fluent French
- Working knowledge of Spanish

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## IT skills

- Highly competent user of Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, Access and PowerPoint
- Effective user of social media: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and YouTube
- Good understanding of HTML mark-up and principles of website design, gained from working on university society website

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## References available on request