

# ALISON THORPE

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## Education and qualifications

**2009–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 analytic skills (2.1)

**2002–2009** *John Redmond High School, Ipswich*

A levels: History (A), English (A), French (B)  
GCSEs: 10 A and A\* grades including maths and English

## Employment history

**2010 (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
- Trusted member of staff – cashed up tills and logged daily takings using the cash management system
- Dealt with customer enquiries in person and over the phone, strengthening client facing skills, commercial awareness and product knowledge

**2009–2010 (October–April)** *Waitress, The Winery, Abingdon*

- 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

**2009 (June–September)** *Telesales, Eastern Electricity, Ipswich*

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

**2008 (June–September)** *Retail assistant, WH Smith, Stowmarket*

- Had to be flexible, worked shifts at short notice

## **Further positions of responsibility**

### **2010–present** *Secretary of Abingdon University History Society*

- Worked with the rest of the committee to brainstorm, agree and act on a plan to reverse a decline in membership of the society. Increased membership by 5%
- Promoted the society using social networking. Engaged with students using the society's Facebook page, blog, website and Twitter feed
- Organised management committee meetings. Wrote and circulated agendas and meeting notes. Kept committee members up to date with progress on our plan

### **2009–present** *Freelance journalist for local and student publications*

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

### **2009 (September–April)** *Fundraiser for Abingdon University Snowboarding Society*

- Persuaded local branch of 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

### **2006–2009** *School prefect and form captain*

- Contributed to the school's anti-bullying policy by promoting a national competition run by a network of charities. Co-ordinated the school's entries
- Travelled to Japan with two other students as part of an exchange initiative. Delivered anti-bullying workshops to students in three Japanese schools

## **Language skills**

Fluent French. Working knowledge of Spanish

## **IT skills**

Frequent user of Twitter, Facebook and Blogger; HTML mark-up, used to update Abingdon University History Society website; and Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel and Access.

## **References**

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