

**Rachel Williams**  
**Student: 2006206**  
**Word Count: 2108**

**Changemakers:**  
**Building your Personal Brand for Sustainable Employment**

**Part 1**  
**MSc Psychology in Education Degree – Personal Statement**

Experiencing first-hand the way in which people can be affected by psychological complexities and the impact these can have on learning within the educational context has caused me to develop a curiosity of human behaviour and an eagerness to deepen my understanding of psychology in education. An awareness of the current mental health crisis facing children and young people today, together with my own personal experiences, has manifested into a desire to work as part of the solution; to become an advocate for physical, social, and emotional wellbeing and to develop the skills necessary to provide efficient support and assistance to both teachers and children in the classroom, enabling all children to harness their minds and to achieve to their highest potential.

Having always been keen to learn and develop new skills, following my secondary education I spent six years as a qualified accounting technician working in practice. As a committed individual with drive and determination, I enjoyed the challenge and proved to be successful, becoming team leader and mentor to a younger apprentice. This enabled me to develop profound communication and organisation skills and gave me the opportunity to take responsibility and offer personal support to my colleagues when required; attributes which I believe will benefit me in undertaking a postgraduate degree. It was within this role that I realised my vocation is to work with people and that I thrive when dedicating my time to helping others.

Upon this realisation, I applied to volunteer with Think Pacific and travelled to Fiji where I spent four weeks working closely with a kindergarten teacher. Having had limited teaching experience, and with access to limited resources, I had to observe the teaching styles of others and adapt the skills and knowledge I had acquired through my own education to ensure my input was impactful, beneficial, and accessible to all. As a volunteer, it was my duty to ensure that children of all needs and abilities felt valued as equal participants within an inclusive environment. Through this experience I was exposed to a variety of challenging behaviours in the classroom and in order to manage these behaviours effectively I was encouraged to reason, collaborate, problem solve and persevere. This experience, although challenging, highlighted how incredibly rewarding it can be to work closely with a child to make improvements and achieve triumphs within a continuum of learning.

Following volunteering, I spent a further six weeks employed as an Au Pair in New Zealand. Responsible for the care of four young children, this new role presented the opportunity to facilitate independent learning in a new capacity. I quickly adopted the role of nurturer, educator, and discipliner, but most importantly, I developed a reputable rapport and relationship of trust with the children, an essential quality to have as an educational psychologist.

Keen to deepen my knowledge of childhood development within an educational context, I am currently studying for an undergraduate degree in Education Studies: Primary, with a goal to pursuing a career within the sector of education. The demand and requirements of this degree have tested my resilience as an independent learner and have encouraged me to step out of my comfort zone to critically explore the theoretical and practical world of education. Reading for this degree has given me a solid foundation from which I will be able to expand my knowledge and work towards my goal of becoming an educational psychologist.

I am certain that developing an understanding of psychology in education will give me the skills and knowledge needed to have a positive impact on individual learning experiences. Not only will this be rewarding, but it will also enable me to benefit the child's ability to develop through education whilst enhancing the prospects of them becoming independent, confident, enterprising contributors to society. I

believe that my ambitions and experiences will be an invaluable asset to both the Psychology in Education postgraduate degree and to an ever-evolving education system with mental health and wellbeing at the forefront of its mission; confirming to me that a career as an educational psychologist is a route in which I am eager to pursue.

## Part 2

### CV in application for work experience, working alongside an Educational Psychologist:

# Rachel Williams

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MSc Psychology in Education Student



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### PERSONAL PROFILE

- I am an enthusiastic, resilient, ambitious individual with drive and determination who strives to achieve to the highest of their abilities.
- Invaluable experience in senior management and team leader roles.
- I have a broad skillset which can be adapted and utilised to enable me to achieve success.
- Profound communication and organisation skills.
- Respectful, trustworthy individual with a willingness to learn.

### MY INTERESTS

- I have a particular love for travelling, immersing myself in new cultures and learning about different traditions and cuisines.
- I have a passion for helping those who are less fortunate than myself and for raising awareness of important causes. To do this I have organised and participated in a variety of charitable events.
- More regularly, I frequent the gym, enjoy socialising and love to cook and read when I have the time.

### MY EDUCATION

**Masters Of Psychology in Education**  
Cardiff Metropolitan University | Current

**Bachelor Of Education Studies: Primary**  
UWTSD | 2023

**Professional Diploma in Accounting**  
Association of Accounting Technicians | 2017

**Secondary Education**  
St Joseph's Comprehensive | 2013

### MY SKILLS

- ✓ **Communication**
- ✓ **Adaptability**
- ✓ **Responsible**
- ✓ **Problem Solving**
- ✓ **Positive Ethos**
- ✓ **Collaborative**
- ✓ **Organised**
- ✓ **Reliable**

## MY WORK EXPERIENCE

**Sept 2018 -  
2023**

### **Senior Manager**

#### **The Brit Pub**

To support myself financially while studying for my undergraduate degree, I held a full time position as senior manager for an award winning pub and restaurant. Although demanding, the flexible nature of this industry allowed me to achieve a First Class Honours degree. Planning and organisation was a key demand of this role which I implemented to the highest degree. Achieving awards for Pub of the Year from prestigious industry giants is an accolade to my success as a manager.

One of my proudest achievements during my time as senior manager is the positive ethos and relationships of trust I built with both my team, the senior director and customers. I strongly believe in creating a healthy working environment and always endeavoured to address conflicts in a respectable, professional manner. Throughout my time as senior manager, I developed as an individual on both a personal and professional level. I am confident in my abilities and believe that with my broad skillset and willingness to learn, I will be a great asset to the education sector and look forward to working alongside and learning from an educational psychologist.

**April - May  
2018**

### **Full Time Au Pair**

#### **New Zealand**

As part of a seven month sabbatical, I travelled to New Zealand where I was employed as an Au Pair, responsible for the primary care of four young children. With ages ranging between nine months and ten years of age, I quickly adopted the role of nurturer, discipliner and educator; but most importantly, I built a reputable relationship of trust with both the children and parents, an essential quality to have as an educational professional. Within this role, I was enabled the opportunity to facilitate independent learning, providing them with engaging, alternative, real life learning experiences. This role presented new challenges and learning opportunities for me and confirmed to me that it is my vocation to work with children of primary school age.

**February  
2018**

### **Voluntary Teaching and Sports Coaching**

#### **Think Pacific, Fiji**

Keen to experience teaching in a different capacity, I travelled to Fiji where I spent one month working alongside a kindergarten teacher. This experience presented new challenges but enabled me to experience the impact that education can have on a child's individual development and quality of life. My role as teaching assistant required me to propose creative teaching methods to assist with teaching English, Maths and Advocacy. Working closely with other volunteers, we delivered innovative sporting sessions which emphasised the importance of health and wellbeing and created an engaging, encouraging, supportive environment for teaching and learning. This whole experience was life changing for me. It highlighted the importance of education at grass roots level and gave me an insight as to just how crucial a good quality education is to the attainment and achievements of underprivileged children.

**2018**  
**2014-2017**

**Accountant. Team Leader. Mentor.**

**Accountancy Solutions**

- Preparing and finalising Financial Statements.
- Completing and submitting VAT Returns.
- Responsible for processing payroll for companies.
- Organising and processing bookkeeping.
- Team leader responsible for wellbeing of colleagues.
- Professional Communication.
- Mentor and tutor to apprentices.

**2014**

**Bartender**

**Blancos Hotel & Restaurant**

- Customer Service.
- Responsible for training new employees.

**2013**

**Sandwich Artist**

**Subway, Liverpool**

- Customer facing role.
- Fast paced environment.
- High standards carried out.
- Handling payments.

**2012**

**Waitress**

**Blancos Hotel & Restaurant**

- Head Waitress..
- Customer Service.
- Organisation Skills.

**2011**

**Retail Assistant**

**New Look**

- Communication
- Till Service

### **Part 3**

#### **Zander Letter**

Dear 18-year-old Rachel,

Hello! This is you in ten years' time. I remember you; I think back to you often. The young, courageous girl who had it all going for her but who was riddled with anxieties about her future, what she was going to do and how she was going to do it. Let me tell you, it has all worked out for you, just the way it always would.

First of all, let's make one thing clear; there are going to be plenty of challenges along the way, but you will get through them all and you will become a better person for it. You're working in an accountancy office at the moment. You enjoy your job, sometimes; but often find yourself dreaming of doing something more exciting, more worthy of your time and well, more you. This opportunity comes to you tenfold, you won't see it coming yet but in a few years' time you will embark on the journey of a lifetime that will change you forever. I mentioned that you were courageous, and I wasn't wrong. At twenty-four you will finally take a leap of faith in yourself as you leave everything behind to set off on what will turn out to be a seven-month round trip on the other side of the world.

One of those months will be spent volunteering in Fiji. What an experience this will be! Participating in a project that aims to provide opportunities to underprivileged children through education you will have the opportunity to learn so much about yourself whilst developing many important skills which will benefit your future career as an educational psychologist. One of the main challenges of this teaching project is going to be the lack of resources you will have to work with, you will have to think outside of the box. You will learn that one of the key elements to a good teaching environment is ambiguity and being able to provide resources that are open for interpretation by children to encourage learning through exploration and discovery (Bryce-Clegg, 2015). You will need to get creative! You will soon understand how incredibly useful natural resources like sticks, leaves and sand can be and how, when planned for and used appropriately, they can have excellent play value and provide stimulation and support for learning in a motivational and meaningful way (White, 2019). You will always look back on this experience fondly and the innovative skills you will develop will prove to be an asset to your professional portfolio.

Fast forward a year, you will see yourself starting an undergraduate degree in primary education studies and despite what everyone says, this will be the best decision you have made! Excited to learn again, you will find yourself fully engaged in the content of the course. It will be challenging, however, to find a balance between work, life, and university as a mature student. Taking the opportunity to work with your peers will assist you in overcoming these challenges, helping you to feel less isolated (Heagney and Benson, 2017) and enabling you to gain confidence and persevere through the pressures you will face. Like I told you at the beginning, it will all work out just how it is supposed to. In fact, it will work out better than you could have imagined.

Congratulations! You did it. You achieved your first-class honours degree and were accepted to study a master's in psychology in education, and I couldn't be more proud of you. An accolade to your hard work and determination, and the beginning of an exciting career. You will go on to do great things, so long as you keep your focus and continue to work hard. Just keep striving and keep believing in yourself, you are capable of achieving all you set your mind to.

Your older and wiser self,

28-year-old Rachel.

## Reference List

- Bryce-Clegg, A. (2015) *Best Practice in the Early Years*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Heagney, M. and Benson, R. (2017) 'How mature-age students succeed in higher education: implications for institutional support' *Journal of Higher Education and Policy Management*, 39(3), pp. 216-234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2017.1300986> (Accessed: 28 Mar 22).
- White, J. (2019) *Playing and Learning Outdoors*. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. London: Routledge.