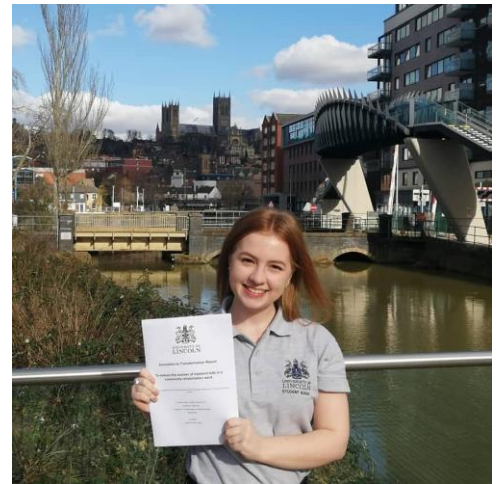


## Imogen Woolf - 2018 Alumni

Hi! My name is Imogen and I am a Practice Nurse at Market Deeping Practice.

In 2011, I commenced my studies at Spalding High School. I really enjoyed my time at school, participating in lots of extra-curricular activities such as school productions and trips to places such as Belgium and Passo Tonale (skiing trip). For my GCSEs, I chose to study Health and Social Care, History and Geography. I knew from quite an early age I wanted a career in healthcare so felt these options were the most facilitating towards my career path. I found the exams hard however knew it was a step to where I wanted to be and managed to pass all my exams.



*Submitting my dissertation*

Unlike my peers, I was unsure if A Levels were the right choice for myself. I knew I learnt best in practical assessments, and I doubted whether I would be able to study hard enough if I were to complete A Levels. Another huge factor was that there was no Health and Social Care course at any local Sixth Forms, which was my best subject and what I found most interesting.

I did apply to Stamford College to complete a Level 3 course in Health and Social Care, however after evaluating studying alongside my wellbeing, I decided to stay on to Sixth Form, as I really enjoyed the sociable school life and found college did not have this approach. I went on to study Sociology, Psychology and Religious Studies at A Level and English Literature at AS level.

I had to work really hard to pass my A Levels and I still think to date it was the hardest academic time of my life. At AS I achieved an E grade in sociology, which really motivated me to work hard to get to my spot at university. I ended up receiving an A, B and C grade respectively.



*Training in the Clinical Suites with peers (COVID edition)*

Deciding which healthcare role to go into was interesting. Most people know of doctors, nurses and physiotherapists, but I found myself with interests in paramedic science, occupational therapy and midwifery at times. Ultimately, I chose to study BSc Hons Adult Nursing, as I found it has the broadest scope of practice and vast career progressions.

I chose the University of Lincoln as my first choice university as unlike other courses, I would be spending 50% of my degree on placement so wanted to stay at home when completing long 13-hour day and night shifts. I also received an unconditional offer from the University of Suffolk, and conditional places from University of East Anglia, University of Northampton and Anglia Ruskin University.

For this reason, I didn't necessarily get the same university experience as most do as I was expected to complete 37.5 hours of clinical placement a week as well as written assessments. It is quite intense training and most of my course mates and I also worked at the hospital as Healthcare Support Workers in our free time as well to support ourselves financially, and to gain more insight. However, I did make some amazing friends and have a great social life when we had a period of few assessments. No one will quite understand your lifestyle as much as your course mates, so hang on to them tight!

Placements were the best part of my training as I got lots of insights into my future and improved my skillset daily. A few to mention were gynaecology, endocrinology, general practice nursing, urgent treatment centre, hospice, rehabilitation ward and district nursing.

Unfortunately, my course was hit exactly halfway through by COVID, and unlike other courses who could continue courses online, my whole course was rearranged to keep us protected but also ensure we meet the qualification requirements for the NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council) so we could become registered nurses in time.



*Last day as a student nurse!*



*Graduation- 1 year late*

We were told to continue with placements, however the learning opportunities we were expecting were completely changed and we were met with training on PPE, respiratory diseases and witnessing some very upsetting times with patients. I managed to achieve my 2300 hours of each practical and theory training and graduated university the following spring with First Class Honours - something I am extremely proud of given the circumstances.

I accepted my Newly Qualified Nurse post as a Community Nurse at the Johnson Hospital, Spalding. This was a fantastic job, and I really felt that I was giving back to the community that I was raised in and proud to live in. I achieved extended qualifications in palliative care, catheter and bowel care, wound management and diabetic care.



*Working Christmas Day as a Community Nurse*

More recently I moved to a new position as a Practice Nurse based in Market Deeping, where I could not be happier. I have a fantastic team of colleagues, great work/life balance and really enjoy my job. I have completed qualifications in cervical cytology, childhood and travel vaccinations and I am about to become the Practice Lead for Micro-suctioning (ear care).

Although challenging, nursing is without a doubt the best career for me and I encourage anyone with a passion to go for it. I advise to do some research before, however, as 50% of all first year nurses do not reach the end of their course. I promise though, if you are willing to work hard, you will never look back!