



University of Liverpool

Teacher perspective - Maria Saeed



'Insight into University was an excellent opportunity as it allowed me to see the transition between secondary and FE to HE. It was interesting experiencing it from a teacher's perspective, having only graduated recently myself. Lu Mello, my co-ordinator at the University of Liverpool was amazing and after a brief initial chat, organised a varied timetable. I had the opportunity to meet staff from various departments. The meetings were invaluable as I was able to engage different perspectives. A few unified themes emerged, such as entry qualifications, numeracy skills and subject knowledge. I also had the opportunity to see several

teaching lab sessions and speak to staff who had both BTEC and A-Level teaching backgrounds. It was invaluable being able to take their perspective and reflect on it with my own teaching.

The week was a great experience and I am now putting into practice what I have learnt. For example, I am working on developing a numeracy skills pack for all learners, and I am hoping to do several practical sessions in the same format I saw at the university that worked very well. I am also in contact with a Widening participating and Outreach ambassador to organise for university students to come and speak to students hoping to apply to go to university next year. The next step would then be organising a trip for the college students to visit The University of Liverpool and give them the opportunity to learn more about the courses offered, speak to staff and see university facilities. I believe the scheme has been invaluable in developing my own teaching practice and the links between the college and Liverpool University in the long-term'.

Employer perspective - Dr Luciane Mello

'The involvement of the University of Liverpool (UoL) with the Insight into University scheme aims to produce mutual benefits for the schools or colleges and the university. By working together, university and secondary school teachers are able to better assist students in the transition from A-level to Higher Education; while helping the school when advising students

regarding future education and career choices. In its first participation UoL linked up to Blackburn College. We wished to develop a relationship with the College by, for example, discussing potential collaborations and facilitating reciprocal student and staff visits. Therefore, the week was designed to promote interactions between Maria Saeed, members of staff and university students. We see the week as a big success since firm plans have been made involving: staff visits to talk at the College; a visit of Sixth Form students to the University of Liverpool, and a visit by a current undergraduate student to the College, sharing her university experience with the student body there. While the College teacher refreshed her knowledge on what is taught to year 1 undergraduates, University staff were reminded of the Sixth Form curriculum. Importantly, we also got a better understanding of the differences between the BTEC and A level curricula and the forthcoming changes. Looking ahead to our next TAPS involvement, we realised the importance of detailed planning ahead of the visit and of facilitating a group effort engaging with different members of staff in the Department of Biochemistry at the UoL. The quotes below reflect the satisfaction with the experience, of one of my colleagues and an undergraduate student.'

"We are acutely aware that one of the ways Liverpool can improve the undergraduate biochemistry experience is to empower school and college teachers with the confidence to cover the more challenging aspects of chemistry and biology on the syllabus with students, ideally before they reach us in Liverpool. We believe that any time that we spend establishing collaborations with teachers is therefore time well spent, and one that is traditionally underdeveloped even in this age of educational and scientific outreach. Firstly, our teachers get to see how modern research works and how technology has changed what many biochemists do for a living (ie no longer purifying in cold rooms, or sweating over kinetics), and secondly, we get a real feel for the needs of teachers, whose work loads are daunting, and who are at the real cutting edge of education. Finally, the major outcome of this scheme for the University is the firming up of a direct link between secondary and tertiary education, in which passionate teachers in each sector are only an email away"

Dr Patrick Eyers, Reader in Biochemistry

"Meeting Maria was a pleasure. She was very passionate about her work and providing her students with all the tools necessary to better their education. We discussed the outreach opportunities at the University of Liverpool, as well as those I believed may be useful to her students. For instance, Realising Opportunities, a collaboration by 15 research universities that promotes fair access to university for students that may be otherwise disadvantaged. Programs like this could help support her students' progress into higher education. Through meeting her I gained a new insight into teaching secondary school, and the paths that could be taken to qualifying as teacher. Maria's pleasure in her job inspired me to think more about going into teaching after graduation."

Amal Abdulkadir, Integrated Masters student