

OUR COURSES THAT
FIT AROUND YOUR
LIFESTYLE...

Case study Abigail Thomas



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Globetrotting mother of three Abigail Thomas from Carmarthenshire is about to start a two year part time secondary teaching course with the Open University in Wales and feels she is finally about to embark on her preferred career.

Having been born and raised in St Clears, Abigail went on to study psychology in London where she got her first taste of teaching. The university actively encouraged students to take advantage of the opportunity to be part of a school tutoring scheme, and while Abigail very much enjoyed the experience, the additional expense of doing a further PGCE course at the time was not practical.

"I really enjoyed the chance of being in front of the children, but after three years at university, it was time to start earning a living and I got a job with an advertising agency. After doing this for a few years I got itchy feet, packed my bags and went travelling for a few years – Australia, New Zealand, America, Israel – and gained fantastic experiences along the way."

On her return to the UK she worked in Cardiff in a variety of communication roles before getting married and deciding as a family to move back to west Wales. While raising their three children she again immersed herself in new experiences, volunteering with the local Cylch Meithrin and Ti a Fi and being elected as town councillor, a role she continues to do today.

The urge to teach was still within her but with a young family it was difficult to find a course that could fit around her family life.

"I had made various enquiries about teaching courses but they weren't conducive to family life – then I saw the Open University part time offer and realised

it was perfect for me. I managed to secure a three month teaching cover post in a local secondary school which gave me great insights as it meant covering all subjects and all ages – a wonderful preparation."

As Abigail looks forward to beginning her distance learning course she believes her wealth of life experiences will hold her in good stead especially with the introduction of the new curriculum.

"I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to travel widely and experienced work in various sectors – all of which can only be beneficial when guiding future generations. Many of my roles have focussed on delivering clear communications, in my view a crucial element when engaging with young people.

"I am also so fortunate to be on course now to meet my ambition to share my passion for my subject with others and instilling in them the desire to learn.

"I fully support the holistic, cross cutting nature of the new curriculum and while my subject is Science, I want to incorporate all elements, from creative thinking to literacy to digital competency as all those skills will be needed by our young people as they venture out into the world and become responsible global citizens.

"This would not have been possible without the Welsh Government's new flexible routes into teaching offered by the Open University – and the latest chapter in my varied life is about to begin."

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