

## Taking on the Real WoRLD

Multimedia journalism student Elizabeth Ather proved that GCU students have what it takes to survive in the 'real world' when she wowed bosses during a four-week internship with the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) communications team.

Elizabeth, who is going into her fourth year, gained the internship through the Real WoRLD employability competition, held by the Caledonian Academy and the Glasgow School for Business and Society for journalism and multi-media students.

Her positive approach and ability to undertake a multitude of tasks impressed the team so much, she was put charge of producing a video for the SFC's website. The film, which describes the Council's tasks and responsibilities, includes an interview with Chief Executive, Mark Batho. [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/about\\_the\\_council/who\\_we\\_are.aspx](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/about_the_council/who_we_are.aspx)

Elizabeth, who also volunteers with Insight Radio, valued her time with the SFC. "In my degree, it's important to gain practical experience, so I found the internship extremely useful. Thanks to my degree course, I also felt prepared for the tasks I was set - they were challenging, but I was never out of my depth."

Stephen Crowe, Head of Communications at SFC, praised Elizabeth's 'great attitude'. "Elizabeth was wonderful to have as a placement student - she fitted in really well. She's a credit to the university, and from what I've seen, will have a great career ahead of her. She's also a good ambassador for the course - she talked about it with much enthusiasm and told some great stories about her experiences collecting news and putting together stories. She obviously enjoys it a lot."

Sabine McKinnon, Lecturer in Employability and Real WoRLD Project Manager, adds: "Elizabeth displayed all the employability skills we would like our students to acquire through studying at GCU. Her mentors at the SFC commented on her professionalism and her can-do approach to everything she was asked to do. The Real WoRLD competition is an excellent example of successful collaboration between the Caledonian Academy and the academic schools. Based on our positive experience with the pilot, we are planning to run a new, university-wide employability competition which will be open to all students in the coming academic year."

Elizabeth concludes: "I'd recommend this experience to any student, whatever their degree. It's so important to experience the 'real world' before you graduate. Not only does it impress prospective employers, it means that when you do start your career, it doesn't seem quite so scary!"

Fellow students Douglas Barrie and Greg Mitchell, who were runners-up in the employability competition, gained an internship with the Media and Marketing Office of the British Transport Police in Glasgow.