

How am I feeling right now?

Very hot and bothered.

Just kind of, well, excited actually, it's been ... I'm feeling really exciting and actually really proud that I've managed to get this far because I think at the beginning of the programme I never would have thought I would have got to the end, so I am really chuffed that I've got this far.

I think the biggest thing is I've done it, I've actually managed to get an MSc which I never thought I'd ever do and I feel really proud of that, so that's the bit I think is just saying "Yeah, I've got a gown on. I've got a hat on!" and "I've done it" and that's the bit that's really exciting.

I've got my boyfriend, Rob, with me today and I think he is ... he's really proud on me.

It's been really important to have somebody support you along the way when you're doing the studying because it can, especially when you're doing it online, it can take a lot of your personal time up as well, so to have somebody there that's motivating you to carry on with it, is really important.

But now I've graduated, what's next?

That's a really interesting question.

I wanted to do some studying that made a difference to what I did in my job and in my work and I think it's about that now. It's helped me understand things a lot better, so it's about putting that into practice really, rather than it just being a qualification that I've done. It's actually something that's made a difference to my life.

The best thing about online study is that you can do it in your own time. When you're working, I mean, I work full-time, I've got two children, I'm a single mum, so you ... there isn't the extra time, there isn't the flexibility necessarily to go and do study in a university. So when you do studying online, it gives you that opportunity to do things in your own time and to sort of manage and fit it into that bit of your life really.

I think the biggest barrier to overcome when you start studying, especially if you have, I mean, I haven't studied for 20 years, I know that's hard to believe, obviously, you've got to say that haven't you but I think is going back to academic study and understanding how that works because it is a very, very, different system. So it's about understanding how you write, how you think and I think the biggest barrier was, at the beginning, was remembering how to do that or learning again how to write at Masters level or how to think at Masters level.

How to maintain motivation when you're on your own in terms of, you know, studying on your own. So one of the things that I did that made, I think made the biggest difference was making contact with other students, virtually, by email and things like that and that has been the thing that has really got me through.

Really pleased, really proud for Emma, she's put in a lot of hard work and it's been a long haul for her but, you know, we're all just glad to be here and share this moment really. It's been a lovely day.

When I sat down after I'd walked across the stage, I kind of sat down and thought "I'm so excited. I want to go and do it again!" it was really, really, good fun.