

Bridget Macfarlane

Lincoln University (2015-2018)

Bachelor of Landscape Architecture. 4 years honours degree.

**What were the best things about Lincoln University for you?**

Lincoln is a very tight knit community, where you get to know most people across your year group. My degree was taught in a far more practical way as opposed to other Universities that offer the same degree. I think this puts us further ahead when it comes to working in the industry. My degree also had lots of practising Landscape Architects come in and tutor us. This has really helped people get jobs and gives you a taste of what working life will be like.

Were there any negative things about the institution for you?

I really enjoyed Lincoln, but on reflection I feel there was a lot of unnecessary pressure put on Landscape Architecture students.

If you lived in a hostel, which one was it? What was your experience like?

I was in Stevens Hall. At Lincoln the halls are a bit different as they are all located on site meaning that you get to know most people across your year group over the year. Everyone eats together in the dining room so it doesn't really matter what hall you get put into, as you will socialise with the others. It was very social and it took away all the stresses like cooking etc and you also make a lot of friends that you will flat with in second year.

If you flatted how did that go for you?

I started flatting in my second year. Flatting is lots of fun. First year we signed the first flat we found out of stress that we'd miss out on one. It ended up being a very crappy, cold flat but still paid a reasonable amount for rent. In hindsight we should have waited a little longer. Flatting is a lot of fun, and in the first few years you tend to worry about location as opposed to the quality of the house. Second year we flatted in Christchurch and travelled around 20 minutes to uni. Third year we moved out to Lincoln which was a 15 minute walk to Uni, the rent was cheaper and there was a good group of people flatting out there.

Did you manage to work during your study? What did you do for jobs?

I worked weekends for third year. Doing a degree as time consuming as Landscape Architecture and trying to maintain a social life was a real struggle. Personally, the money I was getting wasn't enough to make it worthwhile. Other years I would work hard and save during my summers/Uni holidays and then rely on the student loan for rent etc. For my degree we were required to complete two sets of practical work; one I did in a Landscape supplies yard and the other I did in a Landscape Architecture office. This practical work gave me a foot in the door and the office gave me my first job out of Uni.

Did you manage to get a job that related to your degree?

Yes, my first job out of Uni was helping out the firm that I did my practical work, they later offered me full- timework as a Landscape Architect/ Office Assistant. Six months later I found my current job, which a friend sent me that had been advertised on Seek. I sort of walked into my first job out of Uni. Considering I had worked there the summer before, they already knew me and took away all the stresses of job interviews etc. I had two interviews for my current job, I hadn't been through the interview process before and I did find this a little daunting.

I am happy where I am at the moment and I do enjoy my job. Both jobs out of Uni have been in the field of Landscape Architecture. It's what I studied to do and a really good foot in the door. However, it is by no means my end goal and in a few years, I would be looking to progress into something else. Ideally, I would like to work overseas as a Landscape Architect for a few years and then find my niche when I return to NZ.

If you had any advice for a year 13 student what would that be?

Don't worry if you don't know exactly what you want to study, probably just identify an area/ industry that you are interested in. So many people change their degrees in the first two years, if you realise that you don't like what you've chosen it's really not a big deal. Also at this early stage, many papers will cross credit, so your money is not entirely wasted.