



The
University
Of
Sheffield.

Kieran Robinson from Barnsley, South Yorkshire



Year 3 - MEng Chemical
Engineering with Fuel
Technology

Chemical & Process Engineering.

Why did you choose Sheffield?

I wanted to attend a local university so I could continue to live at home. I was undecided on exactly which degree I wanted to do; either automotive or chemical engineering. I participated in all the open days for the universities I had selected. This is a very important step and if you are reading this then you are doing the right thing in coming to visit first. You get a feel, not just for the department but for the university as a whole and Sheffield itself.

What do you like about:

Sheffield?

I'm a local so I like the fact that Sheffield isn't too much of a change for me. Sheffield is a very multicultural and cosmopolitan city, but it has maintained its roots as well.

The Department?

I like the fact that there students from many different backgrounds and we all enter at the same level regardless.

My friends are from many different countries which makes life interesting and being sociable is very easy too. The atmosphere is very relaxed with our dedicated computer room and student lounge next door.

The University?

The support has been good whilst being a student at Sheffield. The lecturers and staff are always accommodating.

What has challenged you so far?

The major challenge for me has been the adjustment in learning style. You quickly have to become an independent learner which at times can be daunting. However, through determination and hard work the exam results will be a true reflection of your effort. You get out of Sheffield what you put in, both academically and socially. If you are prepared to put in the effort your time at Sheffield will be excellent.

After doing the Design Project, how do you feel about designing an industrial chemical plant?

I am doing a design project on how to implement biofuels in the UK. This is both the most interesting and challenging assignment I have done. It involves months of hard work in an area that suits my interests. At the moment I am in the middle of my individual design which involves looking at how to cook wheat which will later be turned in to a renewable alternative to petrol. I have to understand the chemistry behind the process before being able to translate that in to engineering terms. This is what being an engineer is all about; taking a problem and grinding out a solution. I feel the experience gained from this design project puts me in good stead for my first job as a chemical engineer.

What has surprised you about your course?

I was taken aback by the range of topics. The modules range from computer programming to environmental protection which keeps the degree interesting. I was surprised by what chemical engineering actually is; my preconceptions were almost entirely wrong. I failed to look into the subject enough when I was in your position and went solely on my image of chemical engineering. I have been fortunate enough to end up liking what it really is. I strongly advise that before committing to a career in chemical engineering you research what it entails. The following website is a good place to start www.whynotchemeng.com

What have you learned about yourself?

During my time at Sheffield I have learnt that I am much cleverer than I give myself credit for. The degree brings out the best in you if you put the effort in. You will have noticed a recurring theme about having to work. I haven't done this to put you off, just to make you aware that in order to leave with a very highly regarded degree (which you will do) you will have to earn it. The sense of achievement and satisfaction far outweighs those early nights in with the text books.