

Student Enterprise Student story: Jessica Rawlinson

Business: Student Midwife Study Gram

studentmidwifestudygram.co.uk

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Jessica's story:

University of Surrey student Jessica Rawlinson began studying for a degree in midwifery in 2017 after a career change. Whilst working for Boots the Chemist with a range of staff, Jessica took a particular interest in the work carried out by the pharmacist including the health of mothers and new babies. On becoming a mother herself, Jessica decided that re-training as a midwife would be her new career path. Studying at the University has given her a new focus for the future Jessica says 'when I arrived at the hospital to have my baby, I was supported by an amazing midwife so this confirmed my decision to re-train for a more rewarding career'.

Training to be a midwife includes lots of intense training and placements to develop learning along lectures. Jessica's business idea developed from the need to understand all of the teaching 'I'm a visual learner, so lots of words on the page of a book or a presentation is tricky for me to absorb fully. So after lectures, I'd write up my notes and draw pictures along the way to help me to clarify my understanding'. In addition, Jessica's placements would help her to create helpful diagrams to aid her revision which helps her to fully absorb the detail in order to support mothers to be. Once she had a full set of notes and diagrams Jessica started to think of who else could use them 'I started to wonder if I had struggled with all the notes, if anyone else had encountered the same. I shared my notes and diagrams with my friends and they were so grateful and encouraged me to share them more widely'.

As a user of social media, Jessica carefully shared her images with other student midwives and set up a website 'it was April 2018 and I thought it would remain as a small interested community who wanted help to study. But the business (started as a support system idea) has grown so much that formalising it as business seemed like the natural next step'. The [student midwife study gram](http://studentmidwifestudygram.co.uk) offers study guides and revision flash cards on a range of topics around midwifery. The company also offer study notes on specific topics plus wall art for labour wards. The business has taken off quickly so Jessica reached out to Student Enterprise at the University of Surrey for support and advice 'it's been a bit of a whirlwind and I felt like I needed some guidance on running a business and Student Enterprise have really helped'. Jessica has had one to one advice sessions gaining advice on building on the business whilst studying. In addition Student Enterprise is helping Jessica to explore ways of scaling the business up and she is hoping to apply for funding with Student Enterprise in future.

The company now receives orders from the UK and further afield including France, Japan and Spain 'the response to student midwife study gram has been incredible and a bit unbelievable really! It has all happened based on my struggle to manage my study notes so it's a good feeling that in solving an issue for myself I've been able to help others'.

Running a business can be challenging especially if you are studying at the same time so how does Jessica do it? 'Time is a major issue for me as there never seems to be enough hours in the day! But I aim to carve out slots of time so I can manage my business and

studies plus look after myself and family. I've got a good support network which has been invaluable during this time and I'd recommend the same to anyone else starting a business' And what advice would Jessica pass on to anyone thinking of starting a business 'it's great to do something you have a passion for and a career you love. It will keep you going during the tough times. Always remind yourself of what your original inspiration was for starting as it will keep you on track'.

Are you thinking of starting a business? Student Enterprise can help you with developing your idea, skills support and funding. For an informal 121 discussion email us at

studententerprise@surrey.ac.uk or visit www.surrey.ac.uk/student-enterprise