



Jason

Petrol, farmyard, grassy, floral, herbaceous... there are some characteristics of certain wines that don't always sound that appealing, but when you put your nose in the glass you can actually "Ooh, yeah, I can kind of see that." I've always had a strong interest in wine because you're always learning about new wines, new, new areas that they come from. I work in wine retail and I've done that for the past 17 years. Wine can be quite a confusing or intimidating thing for some people, so I just like to, to try and break down the pretence a bit. I enjoy building up a relationship with customers.

On the days that I'm off work they are - my purely devoted to my study days. I chose distance learning because it obviously gave me the flexibility to work and study at the same time. I have an office in the garden where I can study so I'm completely separate from the house, so there's no distractions there.

The types of assessment I've had to do have varied from - I'd say mainly written assignments, but there have also been a few oral recordings to do along the way as well. I think the main benefit of doing a written assignment is to be able to consolidate what you've been learning over the past unit that that assignment's testing. You have to get over 40 per cent to pass. One assignment I was really worried about was a recent one where I, I doubted the knowledge that I had acquired through that unit. I thought I might just scrape a grade two, but I ended up getting a grade one, it was one of those - I got it back, I think "How did that happen?" you know.

The best tip for assignments really is to start as soon as possible, it really is and to be well prepared, you know, prepare yourself for doing it and allow yourself plenty of time. I've had a couple of exams over the course of the past few years. Exam stress for me has always been a problem: I always think I'm never going to remember anything, but once I'm in there, after 10 or 15 minutes I find my focus and generally get on with it. In terms of being prepared for exams, it's setting a realistic revision timetable in advance. My next assignment is my final assignment for the course I'm doing. Ideally I'd like to get a grade one but if I get a grade two - that's super.

Between sort of bouts of study, or at the end of the day, I try and go for a wee walk locally. I'm a bit of an amateur birdwatcher and I quite like going out to see what I can spot.

My wife was a distance learning student to start with, and seeing her achieve made me believe that "Yes, I can do this too." I've had her to support me along the way. I think support is really important when you're doing a distance learning course.

I've gained a real sense of achievement on my course and I'm really looking forward to the opportunities that it will give me in the future.

Go the distance.