



Hannah Willis

REA member based at Swansea RFC

Commercial development of Swansea and Wales Women

Hannah applied to be part of the Enterprise Academy without quite expecting how many unique opportunities would emerge from being involved with it! As an event management student with a keen interest in pursuing a career within the sports sector, the academy was the perfect opportunity to gain an insight into the commercial aspect of rugby and the challenges that the game faces both on and off the pitch.

Hannah joined Swansea RFC as part of their commercial team, and from the first meeting, the club were extremely open to suggestions and ideas from her as to what commercial activity could be implemented over the forthcoming season in an attempt to increase marketing, PR and event activity surrounding the club and the team.

Initially, Hannah took on the roles of increasing the use of the club's social media pages, connecting with sponsors, and assisting on match days with improving the overall experience that supporters were having at St Helens. This then developed into establishing the Swansea RFC Business Club which all sponsors were invited to be a part of, and Hannah created a business newsletter that would be sent out at regular intervals to sponsors in an attempt to keep them involved with the club outside of match days. Through establishing the business club, Hannah was then able to use her event knowledge to stage a series of business breakfast which were marketed to sponsors as a method of encouraging networking between businesses that all had a common interest: Swansea RFC. Hannah has attended every home game, and all away games bar two, and has often been asked to cover the match on social media and conduct post-match player interviews.

Not only has the Academy enabled Hannah to be part of a championship club, but as hosts for the Wales Women's Six Nations home matches, Swansea RFC were able to offer Hannah the opportunity to develop a marketing campaign for the matches which included the chance to go to the WRU National Centre of Excellence on two occasions to interview the Wales Women's head coach, and several players.

Hannah also had the opportunity to work at a Premiership match as part of an S4C project, where two academy members were responsible for arranging a social media marketing campaign in the run up to the match, and then on the day of the match co-ordinating a guard of honour with two of the local youth teams.

Being part of the Academy and working predominantly with the sponsors helped Hannah with the completion of her dissertation which she decided to base on the corporate sponsorship strategies used within sport.

The placement has undoubtedly increased Hannah's desire to work within the sports sectors, and she is keen to use the experience of being part of the academy to support her future job applications. Swansea RFC as a club have been incredibly welcoming, from the commercial team, to the coaches, players and supporters, and provided Hannah with some one-off experiences that she would not have been able to be a part of had she not applied to be an intern.