

## Alumni profiles

### Questionnaire

- Name: David Fleming
  - Nationality: British
  - Course studied at Southampton: MA Transnational Studies
  - Year of graduation: 2008
  - Current position (job role or title): International Development Consultant
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### Questions about your experience with us

- What did you enjoy about the course?

I thought that the course structure was very well designed and the choice of modules perfect for covering a wide range of topics whilst ensuring that there was a common theme running throughout the course. The quality of teaching was very high and the level of support from tutors in writing coursework and the dissertation was excellent. I would highly recommend this course to anybody interested in gaining a deep understanding of some of the most important issues affecting our lives as global citizens.

- What is Southampton like as a place to study?

The Modern Languages department was a very friendly, welcoming and sociable place that offered an interesting discussion with somebody around every corner. The tutors and students were all fantastic and created a pleasurable environment for studying.

- Tell us about your current job?

I work as a consultant in international development. The company I work for, Itad ([www.itad.com](http://www.itad.com)), specialises in conducting evaluations for governments and development agencies worldwide to assess the impact of programmes across a range of sectors on reducing poverty and vulnerability, and on increasing resilience and sustainability. We do this by gathering evidence on impact through robust social science research designs to help donor agencies understand what works in international development and why. I myself specialise in evaluation in fragile and conflict-affected states in Africa and helping donors understand how programmes can be designed and implemented better to reduce the risk of conflict, reduce fragility and have a greater impact on the lives of those living in conflict. My work involves designing rigorous evaluation methodologies, conducting interviews and focus groups with stakeholders and programme beneficiaries worldwide, and writing reports summarising our evaluation findings and recommendations for programme staff, donors and policy makers.

- How did your course help you in your current role?

The multi-disciplinary nature of the course was really useful in preparing me to think about issues relating to globalisation and development from a number of perspectives. Also, the strong emphasis on research methods in preparing us for the dissertation has served me well in my current role which is heavily focused on mixing qualitative and quantitative methods.

- What advice would you give to a student starting their degree at Southampton?

Read as much and as widely as possible and don't be afraid to go off-topic if you think it's relevant; try to think about your dissertation topic as early as possible by thinking about what questions interest you about how people, cultures and capital interact in our globalised society; choose essay and dissertation questions that really interest you but are also topical and could open up further study later in life; try out a range of research methods in your work and try to keep as much variety as possible in what you study as this will have massive benefits when it comes to writing job applications and having a versatile CV!