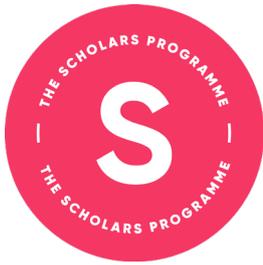


The Brilliant Club Case Study



Tutor Name:
Sophie Alexander

PhD Research Area:
Climate change 50 million years ago

PhD University:
The Open University

Tutor since: October 2018, just after I started my PhD

Brilliant Club Programme:
The Scholars Programme



Which schools have you taught at?

Lord Grey Academy, Bletchley and Harlington Upper School.

What is your Scholars Programme course title?

Climate Change: Is the past the key to the future?

What made you want to apply to be a Scholars Programme tutor?

I enjoy working with young people and enjoy my research, so The Brilliant Club seemed a great way to combine these two interests. Additionally, I didn't learn anything about geology or climate change while I was at school, so the opportunity to highlight these as potential subjects to study at university was exciting.

What has been the most rewarding moment of your Scholars Programme placement so far?

The most rewarding part is seeing the pupils' confidence in their abilities grow. Generally, on the launch trip, students are reluctant to answer questions. But by the end of the course, they're all participating in a group debate. It's fantastic to see them develop the confidence to speak their opinions and disagree with each other over science!

Tell me about being a Scholars Programme tutor. How has it helped in your development as a research students.

Pupils tend to ask you questions that you never see coming! This has really challenged me to come up with different ways to explain complicated concepts to them. This is then helpful to my research because it allows me to link together ideas that I hadn't previously considered.



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What have you gained from being part of The Scholars Programme community of researchers

On the launch trips and training weekends, it's really nice to speak to other PhD students in other fields. It's interesting to hear how different people tackle different questions and problems with their research.



How do you think you have made a difference to pupils as a Scholars Programme tutor?

I hope that I've shown my pupils that they are very capable of producing high-quality work and have the potential to go on to university study.

Do you have any advice for someone looking to apply to work as a Scholars Programme tutor?

My advice would be to go for it! I wouldn't worry or overthink what will go in your first course handbook – you'll find you have to change and adapt it as you go to fit the pupils' interests and questions. This is great, because each time you deliver your course to a new group, they get to explore exactly what they're interested in.

THE SCHOLARS PROGRAMME

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To find out more about how you could become a Scholars Programme tutor, please visit our website at www.thebrilliantclub.org