

#StudentofKBS

Caoimhe Lalor

"Thanks to my Co-op, I was offered a full-time job back in Axis Capital after graduation"

**Bachelor of
Business Studies**



What is your full name?

Caoimhe Lalor

What was your first impression of UL?

My first and current impression of UL is a positive one. The University of Limerick was very appealing as it had:

- The course of my choice,
- Facilities of interest,
- Travel convenience.

Though U.L is a huge University in terms of student capacity, I enjoyed that the campus was very compact. I was not going to be rushing from one side of the campus to the other between lectures.

The campus was also well equipped; once you went into college for a 9 o'clock lecture, there would be no reason for you to head home as you had everything you needed at your fingertips; study space, access to the library, restaurants, Bank of Ireland, UL Sports Arena to name a few.

I was fortunate enough to live on UL campus in Thomond Student Accommodation in first year. I felt extremely safe in and to and from that environment as there was public lighting on the pathway to and from the college itself.

Why did you choose the BBS in the University of Limerick, over other universities?

The main reason I chose BBS in the University of Limerick, is that they offered co-operative experience in your third year. From hearing stories from older students or even applying for part time jobs before university, everywhere required several years 'experience'. In courses such as BBS it is difficult to secure a part-time job in your field of study without prior

experience as a secondary school student, therefore I knew this course was the course for me. By undergoing 6-8 months placement in your field of study, you were guaranteed to experience 'real world' scenarios and finally put your knowledge and studies to practice. Whether you enjoyed or disliked your time on placement, I found it extremely beneficially knowing if this is the right job/ area of work for you before completing your final year in U.L.

Also, the fact that you got to study a wide variety of modules in first and second year before choosing your Major and Minor was extremely beneficial; it took the pressure off knowing exactly what you want to do after secondary school, which isn't something I knew as an 18-year-old.

What Major and Minor did you choose and why?

Major in Risk Management and Insurance and a Minor in Financial Services.

Firstly, my major Risk Management and Insurance; I didn't have much knowledge in this area before college. Having not studied Business Studies and Accountancy in secondary school, risk management and insurance weren't a topic of discussion going into first year in U.L. My views quickly changed when we studied modules in relation to this Major in second year. From the start I was engrossed in this field of study, I enjoyed the broadness of the modules and the unpredictability of the risk and insurance world. In one sense I felt like whatever career I chose in this area of study, I would be presented with something new every day. I was extremely lucky to have had brilliant lecturers over the course of these modules, they made the topics exceptionally interesting and were always so facilitating if I wished to meet to discuss any queries or concerns on certain topics. It was encouraging knowing that there was a strong support network around the modules, that my tutors and lectures genuinely cared about my questions and understanding.

On the flip side, I too excelled in modules in Accounting and Finance in my first two years. I knew a career of such would be too monotonous for me personally, nevertheless I put my aptitude to the test when I chose Financial Services as my minor. I chose a module I knew I could achieve high marks in as well as choosing something I felt correlated with my major. We were blessed in the sense that there are several minors to choose from, something to suit everyone.

Where did you work for your co-operative education (Co-op)?

Axis Specialty Europe SE / Axis Capital,
Mount Herbert Court,
34 Upper Mount Street,
Dublin 2.

What did you learn from your co-op experience?

Personally, I had high expectations starting placement as the co-operative experience was the selling point for me when deciding what course, I would choose. My 7 months in Axis Capital surpassed all expectations. From the interview process up until my final day, I knew it was a job that ticked all my boxes.

I benefited and learnt from employees in the Dublin office who too had studied their Undergraduate degree in U.L. It also signposted a strong career prospect which was comforting

to know heading into my final year. The saying 'no question is a stupid question' really stuck with me on placement, at first, I felt like I was annoying or bombarding my team or managers when I asked several questions, however that was not the case, I quickly discovered that the more I asked, the more I learnt which enabled me to take on more work which then benefited my team and manager. Placement allowed me to fully understand the knowledge I had gained from books and lectures as I was applying that information to real life scenarios.

If I could pass on one thing to any student about to start placement or even if you are thinking about courses in college, you get out what you put in, if there was work that needed to be completed or events that were optional to attend, I dove straight in, completing as much as I could. In a business environment, it is all about communicating and interacting with others, therefore it is important to put yourself out there and get involved as much as you can.

Thankfully, my seven months on placement proved to be a success as I was offered a full-time job back in Axis Capital after I graduated in 2020.

What was your best memory of UL?

Where do I begin. In the greater scheme of things, I am so grateful that I have secured such an incredible job after my four years of university, giving credit to my co-operative education in third year.

I am forever grateful that my college journey was made easier and more enjoyable with the help of several lectures I reached out to, the support network is immense in U.L when you take the leap and look for help.

While the purpose of college is to learn etc., it goes without saying that the friends you make in college are the friends you will have for life. From friends in your course or students in your shared accommodation, you meet likeminded people wherever you go. From college sports, clubs, student parties, a few beverages in the Stables of a Wednesday or lecture hall conversations, I have plenty of memorable moments over my four years.

What career did you obtain upon graduating from the University of Limerick?

I was fortunate enough to be offered a full-time job in Axis Capital after my four years in the University of Limerick. I completed my co-operative education in the Underwriting department in Axis, whereas I am now currently an A&H (Accident and Health) Claims Handler in the Claims Department much to my contentment. I am extremely grateful for securing not only a superb job after college, but a job that allows me to progress and grow as an employee and an individual in an environment where I feel valued.