UAL Student Voices: Jhullya

SPEAKERS
Jhullya, Victoria (Academic Support),

Victoria 00:00
Today I'm talking to Jhullya. Thanks very much for coming along. And I don't know what she's going to say, but I'm really interested to hear. So, thank you Jhullya. If you could just introduce yourself and say a bit about how you came to UAL.

Jhullya 00:15
Hi, everybody, my name is Julia, I'm 24 years old, I do MA Industrial Design at Central Saint Martins. And the way I actually came to study at UAL was through a friend of mine that actually studies here at LCC. And she actually gave me the motivation to, you know, apply for a Masters further my studies, professionalise myself even more, and I did it. And that's how I am here today.

Victoria 00:42
So, tell us a bit about yourself.

Jhullya 00:45
So, I was born in Brazil. And then when I was three years old, my parents made the decision that they wanted to move to Europe. So, we lived in, for four years, in Portugal. And then for nine years in Italy. And now we're here in the UK, in England. And we've been living here for around eight years, maybe nine. And it's been a very long ride, ups and downs. A huge learning experience for sure. New cultures, different views, lots of new friends left behind, family far away. And a lot of growing up and learning about myself. Moving was was quite hard for sure, especially when I moved here to the UK because I had to learn the language at an older age. And the result to that was little bit of a trauma, which made me forget, a lot of people in Italy, a lot of my classmates and close friends.

[01:45]
The area where I lived in, I literally only remember a very, very small area of a very small town, which is the road where I used to live, the little plaza close by and the swimming pool where I used to spend three months of my summer in there. And I realise this only after I've met my best friend from Italy in the summer. And that was very shocking for me that the move was so strong that my brain my whole body had to you know, resort to this for me to be able to go on through. But I did it and I'm and I'm here. And I think I've been doing pretty well. Not too bad.

Victoria 02:28
So, tell us a bit about your choice of an MA, and also what the experience has been like, and now you're just about to finish your second year. So tell us a little bit about that.

Jhullya 02:41
Yes, so I previously did industrial design, my BA in Bournemouth University. It was great. I've learned a lot. And I've developed a lot with software. But I wanted to have the hands on with the making, and with the designing. I wanted to explore my horizons, and I wasn't able to do that there. My close friend of mine, she told me that UAL has great facilities and resources. I went through the application process. It was a long one, for sure. But it was really worth it for me.

03:13
I've had a really good time, especially thanks to my course leader, he was the main reason as to why everything went on smoothly, especially because my first year was quite a shaky start with COVID and everything. They allowed us to start with a blended mode. So, we were in Mondays and Tuesdays from 10am to 8pm. They were extremely long days. But they allowed us to meet with our coursemates get work done, have partially a normal university life.

03:44
And then the second semester came, and COVID and everything closed. Because of that I had to go back home and try to do work in this tiny space with, you know, children running around, parents trying to do their job. And it was very hard, especially because when you move out you have a very different lifestyle. And even through that, or course leader was very helpful. He was very understanding, you know, he gave us the course to be able to just do work and just do our best, because he understood the conditions. And he just said everything that you've done everything that you can do just submit it, and we can work with that. And that's good enough. And those words were very comforting, especially because there were people that were struggling through those times.

04:32
And another third semester came universities open. Unfortunately, I was not able to go back because of financial reasons. And I continued my third semester at home, and then I'm now into my second year and it's wonderful. I was able to after a month actually a month after university started. I was able to find a little room which was luckily 10 minutes away from Central Saint Martins. So, it made it really easy for me to commute to uni, and really make use of the facilities in there. And it's been great. The workshops have been open, I've been able to go, try, make, use the 3D printers, use the word machinery, the metal workshops, and kind of explore with it. And it was very interesting and very playful is something that I've never done before in my life and in kind of like, open a couple of areas that are could have, maybe maybe work in the future, I realised that I really like making. And I was, oh, maybe in the future, I could be in the workshops making the these designs that other people have designed.

05:37
So, it was a very interesting path that had opened up for me over there. It was interesting, also collaborating and meeting people in CSM, when it opened up and different people from different campuses were able to meet again, the kind of connections and people that you make there. It was really helpful and it was really interesting. I'd say that my second year has been a very good experience. Yeah.

Victoria 06:04
What made you decide to come and talk today, because I think that's really important that you have?
Jhullya 06:13
I was reading the previous experiences that people had. And I started reading even like the short, brief explanations that they had under their names, which actually led me to opening the page and reading some of them fully. And it was very encouraging. I felt that, oh, I wasn't the only one that had a hard time and had to grow up and had to become stronger, to be able to confront those challenges and be able to overcome them. Because it wasn't easy, having to go back home, having to be commuting my first year back in between London and Bournemouth because of financial reasons.

[06:54]
Financial reasons was a huge issue for me. And I kept telling myself, why me? Why am I the only one that is struggling so much, has to work so much harder to have the same level of comfort? And reading those short descriptions, I realised that maybe I'm not the only one that is actually really struggling. And so I thought maybe my experience would be comforting to people out there that are listening. If you're having a hard time you're not alone.

[07:24]
And I've also learned to be able to open up to others. I've made really good friends in my course, they've become like a second family to me. That's one of the things I've really loved about these two years I've had here at UAL, I've made family. And they've taught me to open up and communicate. And that will really help you come to terms with certain situations and certain challenges. And it makes you feel a lot lighter makes you feel more supported. So, reading those small stories on the website made me feel better. And I thought maybe there is somebody out there that also needs to hear it as well.

Victoria 08:05
So, tell us, if you are okay to, some of the challenges that you had, and what it took to overcome them. You mentioned about financial challenges. And there are students who don't think they can come because of the financial challenges. So what could you say to them?

Jhullya 08:28
I think I was more on the luckier side, because the friend that actually recommended me to come here, also, she gave me the option to share a room with her. So, we split a room, which can be very hard. But that really allowed me to be able to live here. I didn't think about what financial costs I would I would need, I did very, like rough calculations. And I thought, well, that's the amount of money that I need to be able to support myself there. I'll just make it happen. It's a good opportunity, and I cannot let it go by and I'll do the best I can. I was very stressed, for sure. But I was able to get in contact with my old job. I was able to get contracted by them as work transfer. And then I was able to find a job here in London. And that already helped me very much.

[09:26]
So this year, I am able to afford to live here a little bit because my parents helped me. Also, because I work and a small portion because of student finance. All these three factors together allowed me to live here. If one of them wasn't there, I wouldn't be able to actually be living here in London, and having all these opportunities and experiences.
The hardest part for me was during the first year, for the first semester that I was here in London, I rented a room with the same friend. I would be here in London Monday to Wednesday, for my university days, and I will be working Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and then a Sunday will be my rest day. And I did that for the whole semester. And it was incredibly, incredibly exhausting. After that semester, I was telling my parents, I can't do this anymore. I'm physically exhausted, and I get home, and I need to do all of my assignments, I don't have the strength for it. And they were there like supporting me emotionally saying everything that we can do, we will. And I was really grateful because if I didn't have that emotional support, I don't think I would have been able to go through it. I'm also Christian, I have a lot of faith. And my faith really helped me just keep going. You know, Wednesday to Saturday, take that break on a Sunday and being in Uni on Monday and Tuesday, because it's going to be worth it, it's going to help me. So... yeah.

Victoria 11:00
It also meant that you had to be very organised with your time. And I wonder how that affected your practice, whether that helped towards the direction that you went?

Jhullya 11:19
I really struggle in the beginning, because I'm actually not very great at time managing at all. And because I really did not have any other possible time I could have squeezed in, I realised that this is it, if I don't do it here, I will literally fail. I have to, it forced me in understanding and actually being able to do huge amounts of work in very little time.

If I really concentrate and put my mind to it, I can really do a lot more than I thought I could have. But it was hard. I really struggled. Because I'm the kind of person that does very little amounts of work over time, because it just makes me less stressed. It gives me more time to think about every step that I take every decision, every line, every design, every colour, every shade, I have the time to process it, just think about it. But within those two days, no quick decisions. Now let's do this. And that's how my course leader actually teaches, he's like, you need to be quick, you need to decide it. That's how the industry is, you actually won't have as much time as you think that you do. So this is good practice for you. And I was like, oh my god, this is insane. But also it was it was really very industry-like which I thought, you know, I'm more prepared. Now, when I actually get into the workforce, I'm not going to be as scared or as shocked, as I think that I would have been if I never had this experience. So it was really helpful. I actually grew a lot.

Victoria 12:50
What do you think an MA offers? There is a financial outlay, there's a personal outlay. But what do you see an MA being for?

Jhullya 13:02
There were a lot of moments in the MA where my course leader made us reflect. A lot of moments of reflections, a lot of moments where we had to look back on our work and our work method. And I've
never had to do this before, it was a very new experience. For me, it was very hard, especially because I don't have the greatest memory ever. And by doing this, I've realised that I've never really looked at myself as a designer, I've never really looked at my strong points and my weak points what I'm able to do. And this MA was like a huge eye opener for me. I've really realised who I am as a designer.

Based on the first and the second year i've had, we had a wide variety of different projects, different practices, working with clients, working in making, working in collaboration, we've had such a diverse course, that we've really been tested in everything that we can do, and we can try and we've had to learn. We've been told to learn from our peers, which was something completely brand new. If you don't know how to do it, learn it from the one next to you. And we're doing that, we realise, oh, he's really good at that. And we've found little shortcuts, little ways of doing things faster. Like I think it's, I mean, it's not just studying, it's, it should be considered like two years of industry as well because you're working with clients, people are winning competitions, your ideas being recognised, you're getting proper feedback. You're learning more of yourself as a designer, you're also preparing yourself to get into the industry is like to pre industry years. Like, when I graduated my BA, I really was not ready to go into the work industry. But now that I'm graduating right now, after my MA, I feel so much more confident when I'm going to go into the work industry.

Victoria 15:01
It sounds like it's been a really intense and emotional roller coaster of a two years with a backdrop of COVID and closures and online learning and but it sounds at the end, you come out with a really positive view.

Jhullya 15:19
Yes, I do. I like to think of life in a very positive light. You're into the hardships, because the hardships bring you more learning and new points of view. I was really struggling during the time at home. And when I first came back the changes of environment were so quick that I was starting speaking with my friends, I'm like I'm not able to do work, I'm not able to concentrate, I'm not able to do this. And through UAL I was able to get some counselling. And I've been able to be recommended to my GP to then go through the process of actually getting a referral for ADHD. When I did a pretest with the university, I've gotten like an 100%. So, they said you have really, really high chances of having ADHD. So I've had a really rough year. And now I've actually made a huge discovery about my life. And as to I had some certain ways of thinking ways of doing things that I could really not change. And I don't think I would have realised this, if I hadn't done this MA,

Victoria 16:28
How does ADHD manifest itself for you?

Jhullya 16:32
It really depends from person to person. But for me it you really unable to concentrate and stick to specific tasks. There's been moments where I've been looking at the screen, and I've been trying to sit down and concentrate and do my work because I have a limited amount of time. And I've had really
hard times going through my project, not just because of what was happening around me. But also because of the way I've been thinking and trying to concentrate.

[17:01]
Also, it affected my relationships as well with people I have around. Because of my lack of concentration, there are sometimes that my brain tends to filter some things people have said, and it comes off as I've never heard them. And people have come back to me and said, but I've told you that already. And I’m like, have you? Oh, I'm so sorry, I've never thought you told me that before. And that really affected my assignments. Because I've been there, you know, in lectures, and I've been listening, and I come out and I have this discussion with people. And I was like, oh, I didn't hear that. I swear, that was different from what I've heard. And I had to go back to my teachers and kind of ask them. So can you recap for me? Can I just ...can you just repeat it very quickly and very, to the point so that I can understand. So, it's little things like this that have really pulled me back sometimes.

Victoria 17:58
But now you know it?

Jhullya 17:59
Yeah. But now I know. And I've started using some techniques to be able to help managing it really. And some of them have been helpful some of them haven't. And it's just through trial and error, really.

Victoria 18:14
Is there anything else that you would like to add? Any other thoughts?

Jhullya 18:21
I think an MA is very important, you know, in realising who you are, and finding who you are in your practice, what are your weaknesses and your strengths. But you also have to remember, it’s also the last time you're ever going to be... maybe not not the last time unless you do a PhD, you’re going to be in a university, you’re going to be in a kind of environment that's going to have lots of cultures, lots of different peoples, a lot of networking. And I really want to tell people, no matter how shy you are, no matter how awkward you are, just really go out there. Just really experience it, make the most of it. And you are a lot stronger than you think. And by pushing yourself to do things that you wouldn't normally do. Maybe you are going to struggle, maybe you're going to have a challenge, but you will be thankful for it. So just do it.

Victoria 19:14
Well, I think you're a really good example of that. So thank you so much.

Jhullya 19:19
Thank you for having me here.