



Ben Foster completes River Capital work experience

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Second year university student, Ben Foster, recently completed a work experience placement with River Capital. We sat down with Ben and spoke to him about his time spent with us.

Ben, tell us a little bit about your university career to date, what are you studying and what made choose this?

I am a second-year economics student at the University of Bath. I chose this degree as I enjoy mathematics, but also like applying the maths and solving problems. I also have an interest in finance and therefore, when given the option to, I have chosen to study numerous accounting and corporate finance modules.

How did you hear about River Capital, and what made you want to undertake work experience with us?

I had been doing some work experience at a Bank, in their Corporate Banking team which gave me an insight into their approach to and management of risk, their debt appetite and funding structures. The Bank have a close working relationship with River Capital and when I explained that I was keen to broaden my understanding of the wider range of funding solutions available to businesses, they introduced me to Jeff Cummins, Investment Manager.

Jeff, told me about River Capital, their mission to help Liverpool City Region SMEs realise their ambitions and be an enabler for businesses to access finance via early-stage funding, debt finance, angel support, private equity, and general business planning advice.



It was this broader approach to funding solutions that interested me and thanks to Jeff he arranged a week's work experience for me.

What were some of the highlights from your time spent with River Capital?

The team had organised and planned out the week, which not only gave me an insight into all things River Capital but also allowed me to attend and sit in on a number of client meetings which was fascinating. Some of the key highlights were spending time with the investment managers, gaining an overview of the various debt funding solutions available and the key drivers for when considering support to businesses.

The portfolio management team explained how they helped support local business, how they approached and assessed financial information, and also gave me an insight into River Capitals approach to equity investment. All of these insights, and bringing the theory into reality will really help me in my next year of studies.

If anything, what was something that surprised you about spending time with a fund manager?

A few things stood out to me. Jeff had already briefly touched upon the breadth of support available from River Capital so that was not a surprise, but the experience and knowledge of the team and how they worked together, with their (what seemed vast) professional network for the benefit of local businesses, is what stood out to me. What did surprise me was the amount of "signposting" – if for whatever reason River Capital were unable to help, they didn't just explain to the business owner(s) why their proposal wasn't for them, but they actually signposted the business to other organisations that would be able to help. There's an obvious constructive desire within the team to help in any way they can.

Do you think this might be the kind of role you would look at in the future and why?

I am keen to pursue a career in finance and my time at River Capital has served to reaffirm that desire. Helping support the growth and ambitions of businesses, and helping add value to clients, interests me and is certainly a career I would want to follow after university.

How insightful and helpful were those you shadowed throughout your time with River Capital?

Although the team at River Capital were busy, nothing was too much trouble and everyone was prepared to make time for me and to answer any questions I had. I was given the opportunity to contribute and was made to feel welcome and involved. The work experience was well organised to ensure I got a fuller appreciation of River Capitals capabilities and was an insightful experience in terms of my exposure to, and understanding of, the wider range of business finance support that is available. I'd definitely encourage others considering a career in finance to enquire about opportunities at River Capital.