

Sound engineer student now working with leading brands



SOUNDS GOOD: Tom Pugh at the mixing desk

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TOP brands such as Heineken, Jaguar, and FIFA are global brands young people dream of working with – but one former university student has made it a reality.

Tom Pugh is a talented sound engineer and designer and now works on adverts gracing television and [cinema](#) screens, and radio airwaves.

But the 30-year-old couldn't have got there without studying sound engineering at [Southampton](#) Solent University – then branded as Southampton Institute – and making the grade with London-based post-production facility Grand Central Recording Studios.

He started university ten years ago after taking a gap year following his [A-levels](#), in which he scoured for key contacts and experience in the industry.

Tom studied sound engineering and would provide his skills to various bars and nightclubs scattered around Southampton in the evenings.

Now he has made his way to the position of sound engineer and designer at the firm after partaking in a ground-breaking job training scheme.

It gives young people from the age of 16 training opportunities with the view of them becoming a fully qualified sound designer in around five to seven years.

Candidates do not need any level of formal [education](#) but should have a passion for sound.

Tom has now been with the firm for seven years and worked his way up from being hired as a runner.

He said: "I had a great time in Southampton.

"I am from London and found Southampton a bit of a shock – it felt smaller and more like a town.

"There were lots of opportunities for students at bars running nights. Bars were open to that and me and my friends were holding nights doing audio and mixing.

"I took that back to London with me. I sent out CVs and knew a few people from before."

He began making the teas and coffees at Grand Central Recording Studios after the company gave him a chance and he was soon carrying out his passion for sound.

He has since provided his expertise in television advertisements for Lynx, FIFA, and Powerade – just a few years after providing the sound at nightclubs like Kaos and the Lizard Lounge during his student days.

Tom added: "It's been a journey and working with top directors in the country is fantastic.

"I'm not sure where I would like to end up. Grand Central is one of the best places for what I do. Maybe if George Lucas came calling I would love to work in America!

"My advice to students is not just to concentrate on the course. There is stuff you can learn that's not on the course so get out there and gain practical knowledge and see what it's like to deal with that kind of pressure.

"Broaden your experiences and be prepared knowing that if you leave Southampton, you are going to have to move up to London and start from the bottom again and stick at it."