

The Honorary Graduate: Aimeé Skinner

The Orator: Dr Lyn Newton

Aimeé Skinner is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Masters of Science

Aimeé Skinner is Innovation Manager at Bristol Water, having joined in 2017. In her current role, Aimeé is responsible for developing and implementing the business' innovation agenda, including Robotic Process Automation (RPA), and managing the newly-formed business incubator – The Workshop – which aims to grow innovative start-up businesses.

This year, Aimeé organised an innovation event to officially launch the business incubator. Held at Future Space at UWE, this demonstrated Aimeé's commitment to local collaboration and start-up growth. More than 100 people attended, including university students, Bristol-based start-ups and innovation experts.

During 2018, following continued work with UWE's Applied Sciences department at careers talks and open days, Aimeé forged wider connections between UWE and Bristol Water to help deliver part of a new degree module. This provided UWE students access to a Bristol Water site to collect and analyse water samples, with Aimeé and her colleagues guest lecturing during the term.

Aimeé continues to find ways for Bristol Water and UWE to collaborate, and has also recently expanded Bristol Water's academic connections by mentoring students of the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Masters degree at Bristol University.

Aimeé is an advocate of working with all employees to surface new ideas and find innovative ways of working. For example, Aimeé has overhauled the internal employee innovation forum – Brainwaves – which is an open platform for all employees to share improvement ideas. Aimeé was nominated by colleagues and won the 'Innovative Thinker' award at the company awards, in part for this work.

Aimeé started her career with Thames Water in 2012 as part of the Graduate Leadership Programme. During the intensive 18-month period, Aimeé gained experience in asset management, operations, and transformation and change, alongside studying for a Higher National Certificate and completing an internal Management Development Programme.

At Thames Water, Aimeé was recognised as a leading talent and received multiple awards for her work, including employee recognition from her colleagues and participation in the business' talent programme.

Aimeé originally studied at UWE in 2008 as part of the Foundation Science course, leading on to a First Class Environmental Science Honours Degree, awarded in 2012. During this time Aimeé worked as student rep for Applied Sciences, as well as volunteering for the university at open days, widening participation groups and other science events in schools and the local community. Aimeé was awarded the 2012 UWE Student Rep award and the 2012 Achievement in Science Prize.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Aimeé's ongoing contributions to the University and commitment to the environmental sciences