

THE YPN INTERVIEW:

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**YPN MEMBER SINCE:** 2008



**What do you do on a typical day at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO)?**

There's no such thing! Given that we lead on the UN, particularly the Security Council, my work centres on what is happening in 'real time'. I spend a lot of time briefing FCO ministers on issues in the Council, providing advice to colleagues in the UK and overseas posts (especially the UK missions to New York, Geneva, and Vienna) and other government departments. I also attend meetings with foreign officials, overseas visitors, colleagues and external contacts like UNA-UK.

**In what ways does the FCO's International Organisations Department (IOD) strive to make a difference?**

IOD is at the heart of one of the FCO's four strategic objectives: developing effective international institutions, particularly the UN. This departmental objective underpins our work on other FCO objectives e.g. conflict prevention, human rights and democracy, and international security. By working to strengthen the UN to deal with the challenges of the 21st century, we are also strengthening the UN's performance in, and ability to, deliver on promoting peace and tackling human rights violations.

**Why did you join the diplomatic service?**

I actually didn't plan on having a career in the FCO! I joined part-time while I was in my second year at university and by the time I'd graduated, I had been there for over a year. I thoroughly enjoyed the work and the variety of career opportunities it offered, for example, policy, consular, finance, trade and investment. I also found that I had developed so much in that one year. I love travelling overseas, and I get to work on high-profile issues with a wide range of people from diverse backgrounds. So, I decided to stay on to continue to develop and embark on a career in the FCO.

**What do you enjoy most and least about your job?**

**MOST:** The variety in my day-to-day work. Being centrally placed to advise ministers, as IOD is at the heart of British foreign policy. Working on fast-moving, exciting and very relevant issues. Being able to work with people from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures. The opportunity to travel to countries I've never thought of going to.

**LEAST:** it is relentless! There are very few quiet days. Anytime an international crisis arises my team is usually involved right from the start.

**What advice would you give to people interested in a similar career?**

Get in touch! You can find out more about careers in the FCO on our website [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk). If you are a student you can do an internship at the FCO through one of the programmes we run. The things I find most important are: having an interest in foreign affairs and in overseas travel.