

VSS Attendee Testimonial – Pauline Côme (Sept 2022)

Lynsey Sampson: Hello! We are welcomed by one of our regular attendees of our library lounge virtual study sessions, who will be talking about her experiences of attending these sessions. Hello, what is your name?

Pauline Côme: Hi, my name is Pauline. I'm in the final year of my PhD. Which has been about 3 years.

Lynsey Sampson: Excellent. So you're in your final year, which is three years. And lastly, what subject are you studying?

Pauline Côme: So my main subject is Translation Studies with French. And then my piece also incorporates elements of heritage and museum studies.

Lynsey Sampson: Okay, And that sounds really interesting, and sounds like a really good topic/ Course. And so to start with, then why did you initially sign up for the virtual study sessions?

Pauline Côme: So the study sessions were recommended by a friend of mine about a year ago, when I was struggling with working from home and feeling a bit isolated, and she suggested that I attend, see if I liked it. And so I did!

Lynsey Sampson: Excellent! So this friend had she attended these sessions herself?

Pauline Côme: She's one of the Facilitators.

Lynsey Sampson: Oh, fantastic! That's great! And I'm really glad you found the sessions, so that it helps you with feeling less alone and less isolated when you're studying at home.

Pauline Côme: Yes, exactly. It's been very helpful in that way. I was looking to get some accountability and support. Yeah, just the idea of being able to share my goals for a session and reflect on them at the end of a session. It just seemed like a very good idea, so I was I was quite happy to try this out.

Lynsey Sampson: That's great. So you have a goal or a few goals at the beginning of the session, and then you reflect on them at the end, and that, I suppose, is a good motivator, to keep you going throughout the session with your actual coursework for research or studying that you're doing.

Pauline Côme: Exactly. It's definitely a way to keep me going and at the same time It's also knowing that it's done in a non-judgmental way that if for some reason I don't achieve what I had set out to do, I can say it openly. But no one is going to judge me for it. And so I'm also giving myself less grief for not doing what I wanted to do. So, In that way I find it very supportive as well.

Lynsey Sampson: Excellent! It's really good how it is so supportive! And what did you hope to get out of the sessions?

Pauline Côme: So that that was mostly the accountability I was talking about, and also the idea of connecting with other people from across the University as well. Maybe people I would not have had the chance to meet during my time at Strathclyde if I had just stayed at home, or even if I had been working on campus. Socially, that was a very good experience as well.

Lynsey Sampson: Yes, to connect with others that you wouldn't normally actually meet in a university environment, but virtually instead.

Pauline Come: Yes, exactly.

Lynsey Sampson: That's great. And what did you get out of the sessions?

Pauline Côme: I think I got exactly that. I got the accountability. I got the ability to connect with a group of very supportive people, and it's really good to see that there's a small core of regulars, so always standing out. Because, even if we don't really know each other outside of the study sessions, we can also see how everyone's progressing from one session to the next, and as months go on and yes, I've managed to connect with other students from other faculties that we probably never have run into on campus, even with information services stuff in your team. That again, people I would probably, or maybe not have dealt with during my time at university, and I got the accountability, as I was saying, and it's also yeah, not judgmental.

Pauline Côme: It feels like a safe space in the end, like somewhere where we can talk about what's going well in our work, but also if something isn't going according to plan, we can also see it, or we can have a little bit of a vent. So yeah, it's good for that. It's been really good.

Lynsey Sampson: Oh, excellent, That's really good, and it's nice how you've summed it up as a safe space. And that's my feelings, too. It's really good. And finally, is there anything else you would like to say about the sessions?

Pauline Côme: Not much. If I only say that in the last few months since I've started it regularly, I've found it really useful. I've been able to progress with my writing for my thesis a lot better by dedicating scheduled time for it. That's been one also very good element about this. And yeah, I've just been very happy with the sessions, and it's really good to know as well that there's staff facilitating the sessions, that we can ask questions if we need, and that someone is going to follow this up and come back with an answer. So yeah, for all these reasons I've really enjoyed it.

Lynsey Sampson: That's great. It really gives you that time to actually work away. And know that there is library staff there to ask any questions while you're working away, too. Yes, and that's fantastic.

Lynsey Sampson: So Pauline, thanks for joining us to talk about your experiences as a regular attendee at the Library Lounge: Virtual Study Sessions. It's very much appreciated. Thank you.

Pauline Côme: Thank you very much.

Lynsey Sampson: Thank you.