Before I began my placement with Newcastle University’s SAgE IT team working as one of the School ICT Assistants for the School of Engineering (CEAM), I didn’t think that I would’ve been in the same position as I currently am in now.

At the start of my placement, I lacked the confidence in myself to handle my role as a School ICT Assistant because I felt that both my communication and people skills were quite inadequate. However, despite my doubts and concerns, I continually tried my best to assist my colleagues and the School’s students and staff, whenever possible. Gradually, this was where I started noticing that I became more confident in my role and also in myself.

Throughout my placement, I thoroughly enjoyed every experience that I had mostly thanks to my team, the SAgE IT team and the members of the School. There were certainly a lot of work that were stimulating and different every day, ranging from fixing printer problems to even installing lab equipment on to computers – all the while, juggling through all the many requests that I had in the background and the ones coming in. Additionally, I had also completed other types of work around the school including student committee meetings, management of the computer refurbishment project, maintenance of the computer clusters, the setup and manning of the IT clinic service and much more.

In addition to my placement, I had also completed a substantial project with Newcastle University’s Infrastructure Systems Group (ISG) to develop the University’s Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) – which, essentially is a piece technology that holds a set of rules, policies and procedures for managing certificates for all client (machines) throughout campus. Today, the PKI is still being used and has contributed to various projects like the setup of the University’s Direct Access service.

Now, after 2 years since completing my placement, along with the help and support of my fellow colleagues in my local IT team, in the SAgE IT team, in the ISG team and in the School of Engineering, I feel that I have not just gained an outstanding amount of experience, but also have made many good friends along the way and had even grown as a person.