**Q-Step student nominated to present at prestigious Posters in Parliament event**

Fiona Powell, a student from the Q-Step programme at University of Leeds, has been selected to present her undergraduate research at the Posters in Parliament (PiP) event run by the British Conference of Undergraduate Research (BCUR).

Fiona’s research project, **Caring for the future: Investigating trends in housing wealth over time as a key driver of social care funding,**features in the event which showcases the best undergraduate research from participating universities across the UK.

PiP showcases cutting-edge research addressing real social needs and significant challenges in areas such as energy, health and sustainability.  Fiona’s work investigates long term trends in housing wealth in order to inform the planning of long term adult social care demand.

More information on PiP and the BCUR can be found on the [BCUR website](http://www.bcur.org/about/posters-in-parliment/)

Name: **Fiona Powell**

Q-Step Centre: **University of Leeds**

Programme: **BA (Hons) Sociology and Social Policy**

Placement: **Department of Social Care, Ageing and Disability , Department of Health, Leeds.**

**Why Q-Step?**

*Why did you opt for a Q-Step programme?*

Quantitative research wasn't my strongest subject so the attraction was twofold, the 5 day boot camp and workplace experience. I am a big believer in mixed methods approach to research.

*What did you expect from Q-Step and in what ways, if any, did it differ in reality?* I didn't know what to expect. I was quite intimidated by the thought of the 5 day intensive training. It differed because I was told the placement would be using R, however on my placement we used Excel, ultimately this was better for me.

*What 2 or 3 things did you gain most from Q-Step?*The most important thing that I gained was experience of using quantitative data in a workplace environment, but I also learned the value of my previous work experience. The other thing I gained was the support, not only from placement staff but also from University of Leeds staff. Lastly, confidence and self belief.

**The placement experience**

*What 2 or 3 things did you learn or gain from your placement?* I learned that using quantitative analysis methods is completely different in a workplace, things don't always work out as planned but asking for help is fine. I also learned I produce work faster than expected.

*How has/will your placement experience help you in future?* I have had so many opportunities as a result of my Q Step experience. I am through to the final stage of the FastStream recruitment process, largely due to the encouragement of my supervisors at Quarry House, Leeds. I will be presenting my research at Westminster and possibly at BCUR as well.

**After Q-Step**

*What is your current and/or planned position and in what ways, if any, does your Q-Step experience help with what you are doing now?*

My current position is I am through to the Final Selection Board for Government Social Research Stream of Civil Service FastStream. I also have a conditional offer for a Masters in Social Research at University of Leeds.

**Advice for students considering Q-Step**

*What advice would you give a student considering Q-Step?* Don't be put off by concerns about the quantitative analysis, there is support every step of the way and you gain so much from the experience. Just go for it, and surprise yourself!