

**Full name** *Dr. Henry Fernandez*

**What subject did you study?** *Physics*

**Year of Graduation** *2019*

**Current Job Title** *Postdoctoral Researcher*

**Current Employer/Organisation Name** *Aalto University*

**What have you been doing since leaving Exeter, and what are you doing now?**

*Since I left Exeter I've been working in my current position as Postdoctoral Researcher in Aalto University in Finland. My research is focused in light and matter interactions in nano-scale devices.*

**Why did you choose this career? And what do you enjoy most about your work?**

*My passion is for learning new things, which I can do as a scientist. I learn things that are new to me every day. But more importantly, is to discover things, for which usually there are multiple tasks to complete. The rewards and the feeling of satisfaction are just great! This drives me to keep on learning and discovering more things.*

**Please tell us if you were a member of any societies, groups or sports clubs?**

*I was the president of the Exeter University Optics & Photonics society during 2018.*

**What did you enjoy most about your programme and what was the biggest highlight?**

*I joined the Centre for Doctoral Training in Metamaterials. I joined a huge group of people, we were about 60 students in different stages. I really enjoyed being part of this group of people, where everyone was doing something different, so I could learn lots of different things, which I really appreciate in my new position.*

**What did you enjoy most about studying here?**

*Thinking about after working hours, I really enjoyed playing football in the sports park, it's just amazing and I wish I could go back to play again with my friends. Actually we were doing many things around in the city, we used to play basketball and volleyball in one of the many parks.*

**Why did you choose to study at Exeter?**

*Actually Exeter uni chose me. I was awarded a full scholarship for PhD studies. I had other options as well, but what really captured my attention was the design of the PhD program. It*



*started with many hours of professional training, and a few hours of research, so I thought I could start my research in second year with more preparation, and it was exactly like that.*

**What skills and experiences have been most useful for your career?**

*I would definitely put communication in the first place. The ability to communicate in different situations with people from different backgrounds and culture is advantageous when you start moving around and visiting other countries.*

**What advice would you give to a current student who wishes to pursue your career?**

*Every person is different, so I would just advise to find your own way. Exeter uni provides strong support for training or for practising aspects of our professional performance that can be enhanced. So just have a look at what it's being offered and go. You could be surprised in different ways, either finding out that you are doing actually better than you think, or that there are other aspects to work on that you didn't pay much attention.*

**What are your plans for the future?**

*I'm constantly looking for opportunities, and one that I'm taking now is to obtain a research fellowship to become an independent researcher. This is a crucial step for becoming a research leader and to form a new team. This is how I picture myself in the future, leading a research team.*