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Big Bens and time beings – freshers’ festival 2007 at Leeds Met

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It’s amazing what you can find on the Internet! That was the response of many of the visitors to our 2007 Freshers’ library stall as they enquired about the origins of our blow up ‘Big Bens’.

Promotion of the all year round 24 x 7 opening of Leeds Metropolitan University Library was the theme for our stall, comprising a spinning clock, prizes including alarm clocks and booklets on time management and, of course, lots of glitter.



The message was simple – spin the clock, land on a 24 or 7 and win a prize.

But the planning behind was more involved. Our favourite maintenance joiner produced the clock for us as his last job before retirement and it was painstakingly decorated (as relief from resetting student passwords) by one of the publicity group. We then harnessed the help of a Key Skills tutor to ensure that the ‘random allocation device’ (still a spinning clock to us!) wasn’t biased. We learnt

that we were using a technique called 'sampling with replacement' and could confidently point those students who challenged our honesty (as if they could do that to a librarian!) to the numeracy and statistics workshops being run by our Skills for Learning team, as well as the time management resources to be found on the website.

This was our second highly successful freshers event (some of us only just recovering from the fish last year), enabling us to positively engage with a large number of students, reinforcing our message that the library is more than a place just for books. We also hope it will be the first in a series of events planned in partnership with Faculties and the Student Union this year to promote the new opening hours.