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Five favourite things about being a graduate trainee

From 'badass' Melvil to librarian hang outs and the cake table, **Jennifer Bayjoo** finds much to love (and/or hate) about being a graduate trainee. Here she shares her 'top five'.



Jennifer Bayjoo
(j.bayjoo@mmu.ac.uk)
is Graduate Trainee,
MMU Library Services,
Didsbury Library.

WORKING in a library has got me interested and excited in things I never thought I would be, from post-it notes to information literacy. But above all, my role as a graduate trainee has given me a love stronger than anything I have previously experienced for a simple and ordered list. These early career opportunities, such as my role at MMU, are vital to those of us just starting out and so I thought I would combine the two and write a list of my top five favourite things about being a GT.

1 The Dewey Decimal System

The DDS is in my top five because not only do I love it, I also hate it, really hate it with a swelling and gnashing horror that keeps me awake at night – and anything that can arouse such passion deserves a place in my top five. Starting with the love (and never let it be said that I would pass up the chance to do a list within a list), how can I not love something that classifies everything in the universe with such logical panache. As for Dewey himself, he removed the extraneous letters from his name and was thus called Melvil, which is pretty badass in my book. The hatred stems from shelf marks with strings of 20 digits and the students who assume we have memorised the entire system. In these situations, I either point them towards the catalogue or point them towards a random shelf and leg it.

2 Library mysteries

Working in a library does involve a great deal of detective work, or at least that is what I tell myself when I am foaming at the mouth trying to get my Excel formulae to behave. Whether it is simply hunting down a wayward journal that is not where it should be or dealing with an attempted book napping, these mysteries keep my job varied and give me a chance to flex my mental muscles. When I was a child, I assumed my career would begin with Nancy Drew and end up with me being a Spandex-clad super spy. It pleases me no end to think that although my clothes are made of more breathable fabrics, the elements of the job are the same.

3 Social Media

As a be-pimpled and bookish teen, one of my favourite TV shows was *Ally McBeal*, in which the characters were dazzling grown-ups who met up every night at a bar favoured by lawyers. Naturally, I assumed all professions had their own watering hole and when I too was grown-up, I would enjoy socialising in a specialised bar with my colleagues. Sure, there isn't a dedicated librarian pub called perhaps 'The Boolean' or 'The Stamp and Issue.' However, I can still keep in touch with my fellow



A stapler plus Swiss roll nirvana... there is also luxury Sellotape.

GTs and hundreds of other library people through the magic of social media. This has massively expanded my professional network and I look forward to meeting my fellow tweeters in person.

4 Fringe benefits

Oh my word, I do love the fringe benefits of working in the library. Access to all the books and resources would be enough, but we also have a dedicated cake table overflowing with everyone's Mary Berry best. There is also luxury Sellotape and what seems to be unlimited access to the stationary cupboard. It is a stapler plus Swiss roll nirvana.

5 Library staff

When I go home after a hard day's frowning, I like to rest my little feet and tell my boyfriend about my day but he never seems to share my enthusiasm about meta-data, fines and photocopiers.

Yet when I am at work, there is a whole building full of engaged and friendly people who are interested. I am based at a site library in Didsbury, which is especially tightly knit, and I am delighted that my terrible preconceptions of librarians having buns and shushing people were completely unfounded. Indeed, it really has been the people that have made this traineeship above and beyond what I expected – and I'm not just saying that because they bring in lots of cake.

● Follow Jennifer at @epicbayj and her blog is at strixinsilva.wordpress.com [T]