Student employee case study

Name: Sophie Ainslie

Job title in the Information Services Group:
SharePoint Solutions Associate, Service Management

Describe your role and responsibilities in the department you worked for within the Information Services Group?

I first began working for the information Services Group (ISG) in March 2018 as a student EqIA Assistant. After working over the summer, taking on extra responsibilities across Service Management, I was given the opportunity to work full-time in the SharePoint Service team.

My role was to assist SharePoint projects, as well as support the development of the service. My main responsibilities were researching and setting up the SharePoint webpages and working on SharePoint projects across the University - such as for the Estates Department. Project work involved; conducting requirements gathering, data analysis and report writing for key stakeholders.

I also assisted colleagues throughout Service Management with the organising and running of the UniDesk Annual Conference. This included coordinating catering, accommodation and the delegate gift bags.

I also supported the rollout of a new service, Microsoft Teams. My responsibilities were engaging and receiving feedback from our Pilot Users during the ‘Pilot Phase’. This took the form of meetings, surveys and the writing of ‘Use Cases’. I also set up the Teams webpage. This was all to support the ‘soft launch’ of Microsoft Teams in summer 2019.

What interested you in this specific role?

I was extremely interested in this role as it was a great development opportunity for me. I was keen to learn how the University manages its IT services and the process of creating and deploying a bespoke SharePoint system. Having only had a background in law, this was an amazing opportunity to broaden my knowledge and experience. Having already worked in Service Management over summer, I already knew ISG was a great place to work.
What have you learnt from this experience and what impact have you made?

It would take me too long to list everything I've learnt from working in Service Management as I have gained so much!

Some key lessons I've learnt, which I will take with me into my future career, is the ability to analyse vast amounts of data and condense it into readable reports, the interview techniques I learnt through my work with UX and how to put the needs of customers at the forefront of everything you do to ensure the service or product you deliver will be a long-term success.

A bonus for me was learning about the running of IT services across the University and the opportunities I was given to learn about web design and creation through various training workshops and online support.

My work on the Estates SharePoint project has helped shape the design of the new document management system, which has been based on our user-centred research and the one-to-one interviews I conducted across Estates. I hope this work will ensure what is delivered to Estates will fit their needs and be a long-term success.

How do you plan to use this experience to benefit your future career objectives?

This role, with the vast range of experience and responsibilities offered, has allowed me to gain a number of transferable skills; organisation, project management, client/customer engagement and events management. I have also vastly improved my IT knowledge!

As a soon-to-be trainee solicitor, these skills will be invaluable to me, as I engage with clients and can use my understanding of projects when I am involved in lengthy legal processes.

What advice would you give fellow peers/students or graduates looking to get a job with the Information Services Group?

My advice would be to approach everything with enthusiasm and understand how your role will positively affect the University community. I came from a law background before starting this role, but if you work hard, take initiative and are eager to take on new challenges then you will do well - regardless of how tech minded you are. ISG have a great support network and colleagues who are friendly and always ready to lend a hand. They allow you to take on exciting challenges and develop a wide range of skills.