

My internship abroad in the ‘University of Glasgow Library’

26 September 2016 – 18 November 2016



I already knew at the beginning of my apprenticeship as a specialist in media and information services that I wanted to do an internship abroad. Fortunately my employer the Free University of Berlin supported this and I am very grateful therefore because it is not obvious. While communicating with foreign students in English at the circulation desk and feeling one or the other time insecure, it was really clear for me to go to an English-speaking country. After getting the confirmation of the Glasgow University Library I was absolutely excited. Then I watched some YouTube videos with people talking in strong Scottish accents and I was rather nervous. But I have to admit that the real excitement started quiet late. After preparing and organising for nearly a year I finally flew to Glasgow in September 2016.



main building of the University of Glasgow

The Glasgow University was founded in 1451 and is therefore Scotland's second oldest university. The Glasgow University Library is close to the University's main building and has 12 floors. As you can imagine the library is very large, very busy and I got lost one or the other time. The library has three different zones, the group study area, the silent study area and the quiet study area. The higher you get in the building the quieter it gets. In the eight weeks in Glasgow I went to every department within the library and also visited some external institutions.

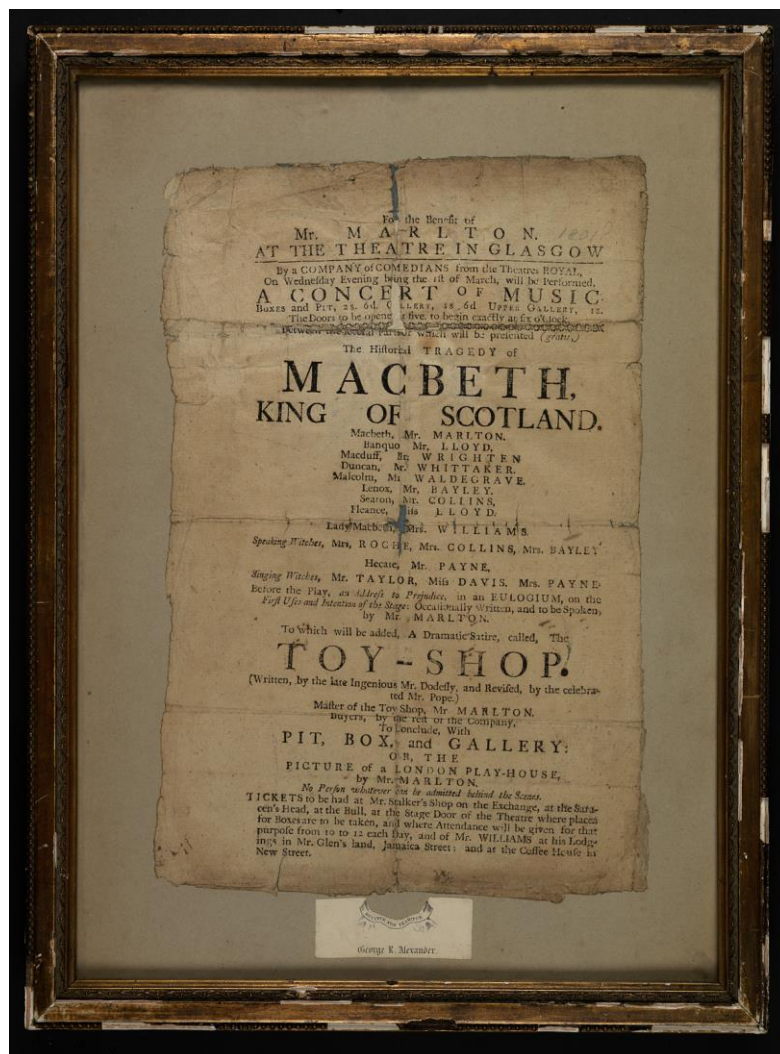


University of Glasgow Library

My **first week** was quiet relaxed. I was shown around and made myself acquainted with the building, the university structure and the website.

Thursday and Friday I visited the Digital Library Team which is responsible for any IT matters of the staff and is the equivalent to the IT/ computer centre of the university library of the Free University. We talked about the library website, social media, the library management system 'Sierra', 'summon' which is the equivalent to Primo and also a discovery service, the job management system 'support works' and a lot of other things. It was very interesting to see a lot of similarities but also differences between the Glasgow University and the FU.

The **second week** I've been with the special collections and the archives. The team of the special collections is primary located at level 12. Monday I was shown around and saw some examples of treasures in the stacks. Obviously normal users aren't allowed to enter the stacks so I felt much honoured to be there. You can find different collections there such as the Hunterian Collection, the Murray Collection or a novel collection which focuses on the fiction of the long 19th Century. For example I saw the first edition of the Frankenstein novel. I also had a look on the conservatory studio and spent some time in the reading room. Tuesday I got to know the Scottish Theatre Archive which comprises a lot of interesting stuff for example a playbill of Macbeth from about 1801. Furthermore I helped with fetching books and labelled some boxes.



playbill of Shakespeare's Macbeth



reading room special collections

I also spent some days at Archive Services which is the central place of deposit for the records of the University. I got a little impression and was reminded of my internship in the city archive in Munich. I got to know the document delivery and helped in the reading room. There are a lot of genealogy enquiries which needed to be worked on. I catalogued some photographs which are part of the Erskine collection. Erskine was a Hospital which opened in 1916 for Limbless Sailors and Soldiers. Furthermore I dealt with the Finlay project and repackaged photographs. James Finlay & Co was a company in Glasgow which was highly successful, operating in overseas and UK markets and opening textile mills all over the world.



The **third week** I've spent within the Library Services Team which is responsible for Lending, the Inter-Library Loan and providing the Enquiry Services for Library users. It was very busy there at this point of time and they were happy for every helping hand. I shelved books in the

high demand collection which includes books with 4h and 24h loan periods and the hold shelf. The hold shelf is free accessible for the students which is different to most libraries at the FU campus (as far as I know).

Furthermore, you only have self-check-out machines and no issue desk at all. I also helped with finding missing books in the stocks. As a special task I did a furniture survey and counted all seating furniture within the library. It was kind of funny to walk around in the library and look at those confused student faces while I counted their chairs. It was a good way to get to know more of the library because I really went through every level and explored some new things. I guess I won't have seen everything until the end of my stay within this large building. I also visited the library research annexe which is a large external store for some media which is not in high demand. There's a transport service between the so called LRA and the university library but you can also access the media there. I also learned something about the Inter-Library Loan and it was really interesting to see the differences.

The **4th week** I joined the research data management team which supports and manages the Open Access service and is responsible for the research data management and research outcomes reporting to funders. I got a really good impression on what you need to consider when doing a funded research and publishing a paper about it. For example most funders want the researchers to work out a data management plan in which they describe e.g. which kind of data they will produce and how they intend to store it. Also there are often problems with the requirements of the funders and the publishers. The funders usually want their supported papers to be as fast open accessible for everyone as possible. However the publishers obviously want to make a lot of money and often put embargos over the papers. These are some aspects researchers have to deal with before and while working on a paper and the task of the research data management team is to support them.

One special task was to mediate a German article about the publishing of scientific articles and the increased requirements related to data storage. I even had to look up some German words so as you can tell it was a challenging task but just because of that somehow very interesting.

The first part of the **5th week** I joined the Metadata Team which is divided in the Cataloguing unit and the Enlighten unit. Two years ago – in 2014 – RDA replaced the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2 (AACR2) at the library so they started to work with it a little earlier. I assisted with cataloguing some new books. We had a really nice case of a book being in the wrong binding. Furthermore I worked with the Enlighten repository which is similar to the Dokumentenserver of the FU and completed some records.

The last two days of week 5 I spent with the Collection Services which are there to manage and promote the physical and digital collections. I visited the Library Research Annexe (LRA) again and met the two interns there who showed me what they are doing. Friday I spent the day in the processing office which means: book labelling, book stamping, book securing (with the same green tinsel stuff we use at the JFK library) etc.. We would call it "Medienschlusskontrolle". I also shelved some books. It was really nice to do something physical because obviously it can be really exhausting to just listen all day long.

The University of Glasgow has four colleges (College of Arts, College of Medical, Veterinary and Life Sciences, College of Science and Engineering & College of Social Sciences) which contain several schools and institutes.

The **6th week** I met with several College Librarians which are responsible for the collaboration of their assigned college and the library. For example, they acquire the needed media or help students with their research. I also stayed with the College Library Support Team which is responsible for all of the induction sessions referring to database use, information literacy, referencing etc. The College Support is rather responsible for the undergraduate students whereas the College Librarians are there for the postgraduate students with more experiences.

I also visited the four branch libraries which are all one-person libraries and therefore quiet small. I visited the James Ireland Library (Dental Library), the James Herriot Library (Vet

Library), the Chemistry Library and the Adam Smith Library. The James Ireland Library is located in the City Centre, in a hospital. The James Herriot Library is located on garscube campus which is a wee bit off the beaten track and comparable with the 'Düppel'-Campus of the FU. The other two mentioned libraries are very close to the main library. The Chemistry Library is very old fashioned and was therefore one of many settings in Scotland for the series 'Outlander'.

They have a really interesting system here: The library staff rotates weekly between the branch libraries so that they are well versed in each branch and get a lot of variety. I would probably confuse the rota all of the time and show up in the wrong library, but I really like the fact that you don't get stuck in a routine.

Another part of the department is the MOPS-unit – Maps, Official Publications and Statistics. The maps collection of the Glasgow University Library shall be arguably the best academic map collection in Scotland and, as you can imagine, the maps collection was the most exciting thing within this unit. The team offers a reproduction service which means that it is possible to get reproductions of primary the maps but also other material. Therefore the uni library owns a huge printer and a specific scanner. Highlight was that I could help with finding a historical map of the Glaswegian district Maryhill, where I stayed. We reproduced it and I was allowed to keep it.

The **7th week** I spent with the Access and Acquisition Team which is basically there to acquire the needed media and make it accessible. I've been introduced to the acquisition of print media as well as to electronic media regarding suppliers, method of payment, reading lists. The A&A team is a really large team and at this time of the year really busy.

In the **last week** I've visited the Edinburgh University Library, the University of Strathclyde and the Goethe Institut Library. It was really interesting to get an insight to other Libraries in Scotland.

On my last day I made some muffins for all of the colleagues in the library and said goodbye. No one could believe that my internship was already over. Me neither.



Edinburgh University Library: Adam Smith's library

I stayed in the Murano Street Student Village which is an official student accommodation of the University of Glasgow. There I got a studio flat on my own. I had to share the bathroom with one other person. I was not content with this accommodation at all. It was way too expensive and definitely not worth the money. I had to move two times because of a leaking ceiling and resulting mould. There were several other problems e.g. no warm water and no heating. The communication with the staff on site was rather bad. To summarise it: I would definitely not recommend this accommodation.

All in all the internship was a unique and very nice experience and I can only recommend to everyone to take this opportunity. Every good and bad experience I made, gave me so much. I am way more independent, confident and open for new things now. I learned a lot of, met a lot of interesting people and got to know a new country. Scotland is very nice and has a beautiful landscape and I will definitely go back there, because in these eight weeks I only saw a fraction of the country.