

SW Academy

Civil Service Local's South West Academy was held at Exeter University from 27-30 August and was the fourth to be hosted and delivered by CS Local so far.

The University was an ideal location, in a fabulous setting, for what was a tiring but extremely rewarding few days. 47 eager, but apprehensive delegates attended. They represented 12 departments, including Land Registry, GCHQ, ACAS, the Planning Inspectorate and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The team which came together specifically to run the event was equally cross departmental in nature and included two 'graduates' from our East Midlands Academy which was held earlier this year.

Delegates worked within their 'families' (Simpsons, Grus, Griffins, Shreks, Flintstones, Royles and Addams) for the four days and listened to key note speakers such as Lucia Wilde from the Cabinet Office Reform Team, Jake McClure, Operational Delivery Profession, Mike Rowley, CS Learning, Bob Gaiger, HMRC Press Office, Heather Black, CEO of Somerset Rural Youth Project and Gillian Smith, Director of CS Fast Stream Programme.

Feedback from the event is currently being evaluated, but the indications so far are that it was a resounding success. In the words of one delegate - "The week was extremely intensive and hard at times but that made it even more worthwhile and made me proud that I had taken part and made the most of it. It was great to meet people you wouldn't normally come across from other departments and work with them and see what it is like in other areas of the civil service. The family teams were a great idea even though working in the teams was taxing at times I learnt a lot from working in a group with such different characters".

A formal evaluation of the Academy will be made at the end of the year.