

Title: **Case Study
Retail
in the West of England**

Dawn Noble-Mackie is assistant manager at The Works books, craft and gift shop in Bath city centre. She loves the responsibility and the buzz that comes with her job.

“You’re always on the go,” she says. “There’s always stuff to do – it’s always busy and every day is different.”

As assistant manager her responsibilities include everything from shop floor, to paperwork, the legalities of health and safety, security issues and making sure the staff provide the best possible customer service.

“I also do staff training and appraisals, company paperwork and helping out in other stores,” she says. “Just everything that’s involved in running a shop.”

Dawn, aged 23, was brought up in Fareham, Hampshire and moved to the Bath area when she was 16. She took a part-time job at The Works while studying at City of Bath College.

After gaining ‘A’ Levels in Psychology, Business Studies and History, she joined the company full time and was soon promoted.

“I decided university wasn’t really for me,” she says. “I didn’t want to spend three years sitting in a classroom when I didn’t really know what I wanted to achieve out of this.

“I had already been given the assistant managers’ job at that point. I was doing alright where I was and enjoying what I was doing.”

Her job has involved regular training. Because she has ‘A’ Levels, Dawn was able to fast-track to an NVQ Level 3 in Retail Management. And she has to keep updating her skills by taking the same ongoing training programme as the shop’s sales staff.

The job also offers real career progression. Eventually she would like to work her way up to become an area manager, managing a number of The Works stores.

“I do enjoy it, but retail isn’t for everyone,” she says. “You need to be very flexible, a very approachable person.

“And you have to be hard-working. You have to be friendly, you have to be able to get on with everyone, and you have to be able to take the unexpected because you never know what’s going to happen.”