

Day in the life profile

First Line IT Support

TIME	DESCRIPTION
07:30	Arrive and check the service desk rota to see where I am sat for the day. Make a coffee and log on.
07:35	Having logged on I start loading the various tools I will need, the main one being the system where all customer queries are recorded as 'tickets' and then subsequently dealt with. I also need to load the admin tools for the various desktop systems in use and crucially the password reissue tool. (Invariably there will be other systems and admin tools that I'll need through the course of the day but I can open them up as and when required).
07:55	Just time to check for any overnight incidents and planned outages for the day while connecting to the telephone system. We make use of an Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) system to manage the incoming telephone calls, which is linked to a large plasma screen in the office so the team can see how many people are holding, what the longest waiting time has been and the total calls received (amongst other things). Once logged in I go on "Ready" and open a blank ticket ready to receive the first customer.
08:00	Bang on 8am the system switches from the out of hours team to us in the ITSD – the IT Service Desk. A call comes through within seconds – a request for an update on an incident raised yesterday. I open the ticket and let the customer know which support team it is with and advise them of the latest updates. The support team are still tracking the issue down but think they have isolated the problem with a server; the customer is pleased with the progress.
08:45	Calls are picking up as more staff arrive on site (which means someone will require a password reset). About this time the second shift of ITSD staff arrive and start to log on, ready to begin at 9am.
10:00	With the second shift logged on and taking calls it quietens down a bit. I am able to close a few tickets that have built up and check my ticket queues to see what status they are in and if they need updating with any new information. Incoming telephone calls are still steady and cover many things, from questions about Microsoft Word to bespoke intelligence systems. It's simply not possible to know everything about all of GCHQ's systems and we're not expected to – there are 'knowledge bases' which contain known fixes and workarounds, plus I can always turn to my colleagues for support.
11:45	Receive an important call from an officer serving overseas. He's supporting an operation and his system has crashed leaving him with zero information. He has tried the basic fixes but keeps getting an error message. I take down all the information needed about the customer – the system, where he is based, and what he has tried. I check the working aid and knowledge base for the system but don't find a magic fix for his issue. Through my investigations I determine this is a severe incident, so highlight it to the relevant teams to get it resolved ASAP. While all calls are important, it's ones like this that remind me of the significant role I play in supporting GCHQ's mission.
12:06	Go to lunch and relax a bit after a busy morning. (Pizza from the restaurant, with extra olives, is order of the day). It is a good chance to catch up with other members of the team and chat about projects we are working on and offer suggestions or bounce ideas around.
13:00	Apart from telephone calls, customers can contact the service desk by a variety of methods, such as online forms and emails. The team assigned to this task today have fallen behind a bit so I'm asked to give them a hand. We frequently move about in the role depending on where the work is – it's all about being part of the bigger team and supporting one another.
14:30	In addition to my service desk functions I'm also currently the point of contact for a second line support team. This role is designed to allow the ITSD to feedback about any issues customers have been having with a system, find out about upcoming outages and upgrades, and to see if there are any first line fixes we can add to our knowledge bases.
15:00	Back to the service desk and I pick up some further customer queries. I also check on the important ticket I opened for the overseas officer earlier. I'm pleased to see that it was resolved within 30 minutes of me opening the ticket – a good result!
16:00	I log off the ACD, close off the last few tickets and check my stats for the day to make sure I am meeting the target of a first line fix of 65% – I'm happy to find that I am exceeding this! I action a couple of urgent emails and submit an RFC (Request For Change) for another admin account and then head home.