

Doreen- Senior research leader

Doreen Boyd is a Senior Research Leader at Ordnance Survey

What A Level combination did you study?
Geography, Chemistry, Biology

Why did you choose Geography at University?

The subject really interested me and captured my imagination. The more I studied Geography the more I realised that Geography is everywhere; almost all decisions made are both affected by geography and effects geography. To fully understand the world in which we live, what things are combined in different places to produce the complex characteristics of the world's landscape and how best to approach a particular problem facing society requires geographical understanding, perspective and analysis.

At which University did you read Geography?
University of Wales, Swansea

When?
1989-1992

Do you have any post-graduate qualifications? Please list:
Post-Graduate Certificate in Secondary Education
PhD in Environmental Remote Sensing

Please give an outline of your employment history after graduating (most recent at the top):
Ordnance Survey- Senior Research Leader
Kingston University- Lecturer in Geography and Environmental Science
University of Manchester- Lecturer in Geography

What skills do you think you have developed through studying Geography?

A real appreciation and understanding of how society works, thus providing me with a firm foundation for anything that has been thrown at me during my career. Apart from the knowledge base gained through studying Geography I have developed my transferable skills (such as computational, oral and written communication skills), again providing me with a deep resource base.

Do you think Geography has helped you with past/current jobs? How?

My jobs have enabled me to specialise in the particular field of Geographical Information. Although this field is not exclusive to Geographers, I feel that my geography background has enabled me to build knowledge in the application of geographic information for the benefit of our society. My current job demands that I have knowledge and skills that enables me to make decisions with a mathematical focus one minute and a psychological focus the next – I really feel that studying geography has helped me to do this.

What advice would you give a 6th former who is good at Geography and considering studying it at degree level?

Go for it! Increasingly we see problems around us that require a deep geographical understanding. Geography and geographers provide the holistic understanding of what, how, where and why our world is complex and ever-changing. Geographers are crucial to complete the picture of how to manage, mitigate and prepare for critical issues and decisions. Geography and geographers are at the heart of some of the most urgent questions before decision makers today. Do you want to be one of those decision makers?

Are there any other ways you feel that geography and your career structure may be linked?

By providing an understanding of the world, geography has been very useful when working in other parts of the world; people respond to those who are interested in their way of life.

Do you feel that studying Geography has meant you could reach your career goals? Why/why not?
I wouldn't be where I am today without it. But it is also fair to say that, many of us do not know exactly what our career goals are, in these cases geography provides a good starting point for you to help you make that decision.

Education Department
Careers poster
2005