



Shannon Lynch

Chassis Engineering Degree Apprentice - Suspension Systems Architecture (SSA), Jaguar Land Rover

After taking part in a Jaguar Land Rover JLR Young Women in the Know experience week in year 11 at school, I was convinced I wanted to do an apprenticeship. I never fancied university and this seemed like a great opportunity to get into work, but also to continue learning and get a degree. I studied chemistry, physics and maths at A-level and joined the degree apprenticeship in September 2014.

My current role specialises in Chassis Associate Vehicle Architecture (AVA), which combines the skills of Computer Aided Design (CAD), Computer Aided Engineering (CAE) and Scripting to automate design processes that save time and increase robustness. Communication is a huge part of my role and I do this at 7am primarily through my emails. This involves understanding technical elements of designs and how users interact with the tools and software used in engineering. Then, I usually spend a few hours developing CAD or coding for projects I am working on.

As well as being involved in large-scale projects, I also run personal "Quick Win" projects. I have had the opportunity to mentor a fellow chassis apprentice, from brakes, in an AVA project to create a parameterised brake disc model to speed up the initial design phases. At the end of the day, I take some time to work on my university projects, which I enjoy as it enables me to apply theory to real examples at work. My extracurricular activities include planning apprentice events and school visits as a STEM ambassador.

As well as my day job, I have had the opportunity to become a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) ambassador and WISE (Women in Science and Engineering) role model, volunteering in schools and at career events that focus on inspiring young people to consider careers in STEM.

I love the problem-solving side of my job; I am challenged every day, so I never get bored. I enjoy working on both individual projects and in a team, as it is a good mix of personal responsibility and teamwork. I also enjoy the fact I am constantly learning. Whether it is new skills, or learning about other departments and how the business works, at the end of the week I feel like I have achieved a lot.

Above all, my parents are really supportive of me doing an apprenticeship within engineering, especially for JLR. At school, I was discouraged from apprenticeships: "If you're smart, go to uni." But it has been the best option for me; I can work and study at the same time, getting lots of experience, my degree is paid for, and as I earn my own wage I have been able to move out and become financially independent. I am passionate about changing perceptions of apprenticeships and making young people more aware of the

options so they can make more informed decisions about their futures. To the student considering a career in engineering, I would like to reassure you that exam results aren't everything. Skills such as communication, presentation, time management and organisation are essential to success and you should take any opportunity to work on these. If possible, identify mentors. This has been so valuable in aiding my personal development and my confidence, and most people are happy to take the time to share their experience with you.

I am aiming for a first in my degree and hoping to achieve my 6 Sigma Black Belt and a Masters in Engineering and Process Excellence in a few years. I am also aiming to work towards my incorporated engineer IENG Chartership with the IET on the completion of my degree. I can see myself having a long and successful career with Jaguar Land Rover and I am excited about my future in engineering.

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