



Student: Sophie Bashforth
Royal Holloway

Placement: Culham Centre
for Fusion Energy (CCFE)

Role: Research into tritium
plant analytical spectroscopy
techniques

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Describe a typical day:

The work I did each day varied quite a lot which meant I got to experience a lot of the different sides to working at CCFE. I typically spent most of my day working on a written report for the Active Gas Handling System (AGHS) operators, which focused on useful spectroscopy techniques that could be implemented in their subsystems.

Why did you decide to do a placement?

I wanted to get some work experience in a physics-related environment to help me decide whether to pursue a career in physics. I knew that it would help me to develop a lot of valuable skills, as well as give me an opportunity to learn first-hand about an area of physics I had not previously studied in much detail.

Would you recommend doing a placement?

Most definitely! I had no idea what to expect of my placement before I arrived, but it has been incredibly useful to me in so many ways. I have a much better insight into what it would be like to work in a research-based environment, and it has really encouraged me to pursue a career in physics. I have also met a lot of really lovely people who I hope to stay in touch with in the future!

How do you think doing a placement has benefited you for the future?

Having this work experience on my CV will be highly beneficial. It enables me to actively demonstrate a lot of valuable skills to a potential employer in the future. I have learnt an incredible amount about fusion energy as well as a wide range of spectroscopy techniques which I imagine will be very useful to me in the future.

Employer perspective:

Sophie has surpassed all of our expectations, completing a very large amount of high quality work in the short amount of time she's been with us. The report that she has completed will be extremely beneficial to the whole group and will influence changes we plan to make to the JET tritium handling plant. Overall having Sophie with us has been a great experience.

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