



Student: Zena Patel
University of Surrey
Placement: Adaptix
Role: Scientific Research Intern

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Describe a typical day:

I spend a lot of my day working in the lab carrying out tests on different emitters in a vacuum chamber to generate X-rays. I also spend time upgrading our vacuum chamber so that we can reach a lower pressure. I have led several experiments which involves planning the experiment, ordering parts, running the experiment and analysing the results.

Why did you decide to do a placement?

I wanted to stay in a radiation-related field as this is where my interest lies and Adaptix is developing a new X-ray source for medical imaging. I had decided that I wanted to move into industry and this seemed to be a good way to experience scientific research in an industry setting.

What skills and knowledge do you feel you have learned during the placement?

I have relearned and put onto practice some aspects of physics that I hadn't used since my undergrad degree, such as making and using electromagnets, and electronic circuits. I have gained a lot of hands-on experience in using and improving vacuum chambers. Adaptix is a start-up company and as such I feel I have gained more knowledge about how a company works in all aspects and it has made me think about the type of company I want to work for, not just the job.

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

This placement has broadened my skill set and has given me more confidence in decision-making. My PhD experimental work was generally part of a large collaboration whereas here I am responsible for experiments from start to finish. I also have more insight into how companies work from a business point-of view.

What advice would you give to a PGR student who might be interested in seeking a placement?

If you are thinking of moving into industry a placement will broaden your skills and give you a taster of the types of jobs you could move into.

Where are you now?

I managed to find a job at Diamond in the Insertion Devices group. I would say the experience I've gained from the placement definitely helped.

Employer perspective:

Adaptix has hosted interns since its inception: they bring a vibrancy and fresh approach to our development work and contribute to ongoing and new projects. In turn we hope that interns gain deep insight into what R&D is like in an industrial and start-up setting.