

## A Day in the Life: **Mechanical Engineering** Apprentice



**Name:** Katie Ellicott

**Introduction:** I'm Katie and I'm 22 and I'm a mechanical engineer apprentice.

### **My apprentice trade, why I chose it and why I chose Babcock:**

It wasn't a hard choice for me to go into the mechanical trade as I've always had a passion for mechanics from engines to simply getting my hands dirty.

From a young age I grew up with my dad who always had projects with cars and bikes on the go and he encouraged me to go outside and help him. My grandad was also a car and bike mechanic by trade, so even as a young kid my grandad would tell me stories about work and would explain how things worked as I wandered around his workshop and garage with a couple old military bikes and his tilly amongst all the vehicle parts he had acquired over the years.

As I got to school leavers age I didn't exactly know where I wanted to go with my career so ended up working in retail for 4 years which funded my own car, modifying it and going to shows. After 4 years I decided to leave and went to be a delivery driver for a car parts firm. This was great because I was able to get discounted car parts to fit to my car and it also gave me more free time to attend track days and more shows and I also loved going into all the garages, having a nosey at the cars and to have a yap. At this point it was clear what I wanted to do and decided that, this was it, I wanted a proper career in something I've always been passionate about.

My dad had actually done his apprenticeship many moons ago in the dockyard and I grew up with the saying that 'A job in the dockyard, is a job for life,' this ultimately helped me make my decision to do an apprenticeship

with Babcock whilst allowing me to earn whilst I learn with a company with a very good reputation.

### **My Typical Day:**

Being a first year apprentice, I've spent this year in college learning new skills and improving the skills and knowledge I already had. I have also completed a term working on pumps, valves, compressors then diesel engines including working on a Paxman engine, a term doing machining on mills and lathes and finally hand skills. No matter what I was doing, I was always early for the session to start, ready in my overalls, keen for the day ahead.

### **My favourite part of the job:**

My favourite part of the job is facing new challenges and gaining new skills. There's nothing better or more rewarding than when a problem arises and you successfully work out a way to solve it.

### **Most challenging thing I've ever done to date:**

The most challenging thing I've done to date is probably grasping machining as it was a completely new experience to me. I can be a little heavy handed at times so it would get slightly stressful when I had very small amounts of material to take off to reach a tolerance required and occasionally would go under by 0.001 of a mil but practice makes perfect and I thoroughly enjoyed it even from the start...I enjoyed it even more when I realised I actually wasn't that bad at machining.