

I first heard of MBDA through my university, it was actually through colleagues who'd had undergraduate placements at MBDA. So really it was directly through my university, and through a couple of lecturers who were mentors to students while they were on their industrial placements, they told me about the company and gave me a bit more information and background.

From there I went to the website. I didn't actually see MBDA at a careers fair to be honest but I got more details off the website and through people I knew that had worked there. So that's how I initially heard about MBDA and then started going through the recruitment process.

The recruitment process at MBDA is all really online so it's quite easy to deal with. You go online, you go to the careers website part and you just apply through...It's quite obvious what you do really it's just stage by stage. You then get sent an invitation if you get through, to take some psychometric testing online – numerical and verbal testing.

You do that within a certain amount of time, you get quite a lot of time, I think it's five or seven days to complete the tests. You hopefully pass them, after that you go on to an interview date where you'll get told what day to come along, and it's quite informal compared to a lot of other recruiters, it's really just a day where you get to meet a lot of other people, learn about the company; I think that's the main part about the recruitment process is, its really learning a lot about the company – it's whether you'll fit in the company, because there's no point in employing people who aren't going to fit.

So that was good and then after the interview day you get called, normally the next day or within a couple of days, and told whether you've got the job or not.

In terms of the graduate scheme it's a two year placement scheme. For me and normally, engineering graduates do three internally and one externally. The external one can be anything, it can be commercial, HR if you really want, you can even go external to the company.

Recently we're looking towards trying to get better communication with the MOD so there's a few MOD placements available. So really it's up to you what you do with your

external placement. So I'm on my second placement at the moment so I've already completed one placement.

My first placement was on quite a new project to the company actually, it's only been running about two years now. It's called Fire Shadow, it's a loitering munition, it's part of the new team complex weapons, it's a new way the company's trying to work; it's a lot of rapid development, very quick turnaround.

So from my background it's actually really useful, I did aeronautical engineering at university so a lot of the concept stage, my background actually helped me get into that, and I had a lot of responsibility on the project. After that I moved into a project called Meteor, it's been running a lot longer, a lot bigger project. It's a different part of the whole missile life cycle which is really interesting, you get to see the beginning and the end and that's a good idea with your placements.

But at the moment I'm in a facility called Hardware in the Loop, which is a ground based trials facility which helps you learn about the missile, get rid of bugs before you actually send it up for an expensive firing trial.

Through MBDA I'm working towards accreditation with RAeS, the Royal Aeronautical Society. For me doing aeronautical engineering at university, it's quite obvious what accreditation path to go down. MBDA cover a lot of different accreditation paths, whatever you want to go with, whatever society. And they've got a lot of contacts within the company to help you go through that process. Hopefully within four years I'll be accredited, I'll be a chartered engineer, which hopefully will help me within the company.

The best thing about the scheme for me has been just the way the company actually works, not very rigid structure, it's quite open. Certainly the placements I've been on so far and my exposure to the company so far has been really great in terms of how open people are to helping you. You're going to come into a new company, you're going to think you know everything about your course, but in reality no matter what course you did it's going to be such a small part of the whole life cycle of missile design.

What you realise is that you're going to have to learn a lot in a short space of time. But the way that they keep the pressure off of you, they give you certain placements and work that kind of fits to you. So no matter what role you go into, no matter what sort of person you are, they will cater the work that you're doing to you; which is really really great.

And the supports out there, literally anybody I can ring up in the company and say "Have you got ten minutes? I'm interested in this part of your job." And so far everyone's been really helpful, really helped me to learn. So far the biggest thing is actually being able to stay technical and really learning so much about how missile systems work and that's only going to help me in the future.

Apart from the actual work itself, there's a lot of remunerations and benefits that are available to you. The biggest one for me is flexi-time. Flexi-time allows you to work within core hours, and a lot of time outside of them. So as long as you make up 37 hours a week you can choose when and where to work. You can finish at half 12 on a Friday, which is really useful if you need to do anything. You can leave early weekday afternoons, it really just gives you that flexibility to kind of work around your life.

That's a big part of MBDA; work life balance and it really helps you to try and decide on how you want work to work. Because there's no point having people who are just obsessed with work in this company, it's just not going to work.

At the same time as well there's lots of other benefits, there's a cycle to work scheme we're running at the moment, it's just about to finish. I actually went for this. So you get up to a thousand pounds on biking equipment and you get essentially about 40% to 50% off which is really good. We're trying to promote people to ride to work, get a bit healthier and save money on petrol.

As well as that it's got a great pension scheme and there's a lot of other benefits. There's a car scheme where you can get cars slightly cheaper so really there's lots of benefits, you can see them all on the website. But the biggest one really is the way that MBDA deals with your working life balance, it's a really caring company which is good.