

I first was introduced to MBDA from a careers fair at university and I started on the summer placement there. I did that for ten weeks last summer which was quite enjoyable. We worked on a small project – there were six of us working on it and it just allowed you to get an idea of what the company did, whether you are suited to the company and whether the company likes you. And from this I then went on to the graduate scheme from September so I've been in the company just over a year now and it's been quite enjoyable.

With the graduate scheme it's generally four six month placements but electronics like to make it a two year placement or maybe two year long placements. They do this because it's easier for you then to get an idea of the whole project from start to finish as opposed to splitting you up and doing four smaller placements. This way you can get an idea of a whole project and it allows you to be fast tracked into management at the end of it. You can possibly run your own project from that point.

MBDA has a good graduate scheme, they're taking on more recruits now than ever so there's a good support structure there for you. I think there are about fifty graduates at the minute they are taking on each year and across sites as well so there's a lot of people there for you to interact with. There are quite a few older people in the company so it's nice to have the younger generations being brought in again.

Also because there are quite a few older people in the company there are lots of people who have a great amount of knowledge so if you're ever stuck in the company you can go to them to ask for help and there's always someone who has the answer to any question you have. But there's quite a lot of communication between the departments as well so not only can you move around between the departments but there's also that knowledge structure there.

I've been on quite a few training courses since I've been here. There's the basic ones such as presentation skills, improving your negotiation and persuasion skill. I've also been on the technical foundation course which for me was a week in Germany, in Munich, which was very nice. You get to work with people from Germany, Italy, France, the other MBDA sites and you work with them in small groups, work towards a

presentation at the end of the week and it's quite hard work. There were some long nights there but it's really enjoyable and you learn a lot from it, you learn the whole lifecycle of the missile which is really useful.

When you're on the scheme you are designated a buddy which is someone who'll look after you, tell you anything you need to know really, just a casual friend in advance. And also you're given a mentor which you meet up with as regularly or as little as you want. Normally it's acceptable to meet up with them roughly once a month and they are there to give you guidance with your career and tell you anything you need to know to progress yourself. If you've got any worries or questions you can go to them and it's just that extra bit of support there that you sometimes need when you're first starting in the company.

The main benefit is flexi-time. This allows you to start between half seven and half nine in the morning and you can go home between four and six. And that's really useful because you haven't got to worry about getting up at a certain time and being late and getting stuck in traffic, which is always useful. So as long as you work 37 hours roughly in a week you are fine, you can build up flexi days and have flexi days off.