

Case Study: Internship

Nigvi Tam, First Year Aeronautics Student

Which company did you undertake work experience with?

My summer internship was with Rolls-Royce.

How did you go about finding the internship?

I learnt about it through the Engineering Careers Fair early in the academic year as well as doing some research on summer internships on my own.

What was the timescale for your application?

This was my first internship I applied to as I had previously planned to return to Hong Kong for an internship in the aviation industry. I was aware of the internship at about late-September/early-October of 2013, and put together my application by mid-October. After double checking my cover letters at the Careers Service, I put forward my application at late-October. My interview invitation came at about mid-November and I went to the interview on December the 3rd and 4th

What was the application and interview process like?

The application process was of several stages - it started with an online application submission (which required the standard CV and cover letter). All applications were screened by the HR department, and shortlisted candidates would be invited to the interviewing process within 8 weeks. The interview was an intense, full-day process at their Assessment Centre (in Derby, about 2.5 hours ride from London) which included an aptitude interview, a technical interview, several quizzes and essays on mathematics/critical thinking/problem-solving and a team exercise. After the interviews, chosen candidates would be called and sent a congratulatory email, and I received this at about mid-late January of 2014. My internship started on June 23rd and ended on August 22nd.

How big was your team and where did it sit in the organisation?

I was assigned to the Global Central Manufacturing Team and was working with Manufacturing Engineering experts within Rolls-Royce. The general role of the 50-man team was to oversee all manufacturing processes across all sectors in Rolls-Royce, and attempt to improve such processes in terms of efficiency and cost.

What was your role and what did it involve?

My official role at Rolls-Royce was Manufacturing Engineering Summer Intern. My specific role in the team was to overlook and encourage the creation of a training course that is aimed to improve the quality and



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cost-efficiency of a certain aspect within Manufacturing Engineering. However, I was also assigned to other roles such as writing economic forecasts, facilitating weekly meetings and meeting clients.

What was the most valuable thing about your work experience?

Personally, I thought this internship was invaluable as I honed up on a lot of soft skills such as confidence, communication skills and general problem solving skills during my time at Rolls-Royce. I say this because my jobs required working with a lot of experienced staff (many of which worked 20+ years in the field), and I had to find an effective communication method that would respect their experience, but also find the answers to my questions without going into too much detail. Also, as expected from an Engineering internship, my job required solving a lot of problems that were beyond my grasp, so the main thing I learned about problem solving was making solid and sensible assumptions, as well as revising the validity of the assumptions on a constant basis.

Do you have any tips for future Imperial students looking to make the most of their summer?

My tips for future Imperial students would be to:

- 1) Do your own research and be clear on what type of internships you would want to do.
- 2) Apply as early as possible to take advantage of 'rolling applications'
- 3) Don't be afraid to ask the Careers Service for help, their advice on my CV and cover letter was immensely helpful.
- 4) Enrol onto the Careers Service mailing list for their weekly updates - this was tremendously helpful in my application process because the week before my interviews I was notified of a Rolls-Royce mock interview workshop at Imperial... and 70% of what came up at the workshop came up in the Assessment Centre! Needless to say my life was made a whole lot easier.

