



Olivia Collier
Chemist
Age 24

What's your current role?

I have recently completed an 18 month graduate scheme with Horizon. This scheme gave me the opportunity to work on three six-month placements, before taking on a practical role that best uses my skills and technical knowledge. I spent six months in the Chemistry team, commissioning and system engineering team, and my final placement was with the Waste and Decommissioning team which I really enjoyed. The Graduate Development Programme has been so flexible, which has been fantastic, as it's allowed me to gain useful, hands-on experience in the areas I find most interesting. I am really looking forward to using this experience now I have started my substantive post as a Chemist.

What did you study when you were at school and what qualifications do you have?

I studied maths, chemistry and physics A-levels at Ysgol Gyfun Llangefni. It was also compulsory for me to study the Welsh Baccalaureate during sixth form, which included numeracy, communication and Wales and the world around us. I then studied for a master's in Chemistry at the University of Sheffield. I enjoyed this so much that I knew I wanted a job that utilised the skills and knowledge I learnt in my four years at university.

Your career path so far...

As I grew up on Anglesey, I recognised there were few career opportunities on the island that would suit my ambition of becoming a scientist or engineer - Wylfa (Magnox) was one of them - so I wanted to gain as much experience as I could to strengthen my CV. I was successful in securing work experience in Wylfa's chemistry lab when I was younger, which kick started my interest of working in the nuclear industry. Once I became aware of Horizon and the Wylfa Newydd Project on Anglesey, I knew this was where I wanted to be.

Where do you see your career in 10 years' time?

I would definitely like to return to Anglesey and work at the Wylfa Newydd Power Station. My current aim is to become Station Chemist, but who knows what the future may hold - I might find another job on the Project I love doing!

How did the knowledge you've gained through previous roles help you to get your job at Horizon?

This is my first job since finishing university but from the age of 16, I worked in retail. Even though the job wasn't technically relevant to my chosen career, working in retail allowed me to build my confidence by helping customers and working within a team. Combining a job alongside studying is difficult, but I believe it promotes a good work ethic and the social skills I've since developed have helped me get to where I am now.

What are your top tips for somebody who wants a job in the nuclear industry?

- Study the right subjects - STEM subjects in particular will allow you to follow a variety of career paths in the industry.
- Be able to demonstrate soft skills - communication, presentation and team work are just as important as STEM.
- Work hard - improving technical skills and confidence will come naturally with a good work ethic.