



Cain Elen Thomas

Operations Engineer

Age 23

What's your current role?

I'm an Operations Engineer working within Horizon's operations department and pursuing my ambition to become a future control room operator at Wylfa Newydd on Anglesey, where I grew up. I've always been passionate about electricity generation and, after a placement at the existing Magnox Wylfa power station, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in the nuclear industry as an operator working in the control room.

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

After completing my GCSEs, I attended Ysgol David Hughes where I studied my A-levels, including; maths, physics, chemistry, French, further pure maths and the Welsh Baccalaureate. I really enjoyed maths and physics at school, so I chose to study a master's in engineering at the University of Bath; I achieved a MEng (Hons) in Integrated Mechanical and Electrical Engineering.

Your career path so far...

I completed several work placements before joining Horizon, including three months at the existing Magnox Wylfa nuclear power station where I shadowed reactor operators on the reactor control desk in the control room. I spent another three months with Scottish Power Energy Networks as part of the operations department, where I worked with engineers and linesmen to carry out isolation on high and low voltage networks (testing direct current resistance). I also spent a year with Horizon's engineering department supporting the Generic Design Assessment (GDA) team for a year's practical experience in industry.

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

I've been lucky to have built a solid foundation for my engineering career through my experience so far and gained a holistic view of the power industry. My 'year in industry' with Horizon gave me a more detailed understanding of the Advanced Boiling Water Reactors (ABWR) – the technology proposed for Wylfa Newydd – and the GDA process.

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

- Get relevant industry experience! Securing real-life experience will allow you to develop your knowledge of the industry and could help you decide which specific departments you're most interested in.
- Do something you're passionate about! I studied Integrated Mechanical and Electrical Engineering at university because I enjoyed A-level maths so much, and I've chosen this career following my work experience at Magnox Wylfa.

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

In 10 years' time, I hope to be qualified as a reactor operator and working my way towards becoming a control room supervisor. My ultimate ambition is to become a Shift Manager in the control room at the future Wylfa Newydd station.