

Inspiring The Future- Women In Engineering Awareness Day At Northern

In engineering, women are in the minority at just 16.5% of the workforce, and upon closer inspection gender disparity is seen throughout all educational pathways into engineering. Despite the high levels of women studying Engineering subjects at secondary education level, the numbers drop off sharply when reaching tertiary education. This is likely to be because of the lack of awareness of opportunities available within sectors like ours.

****“If the sharing of my life and work experience gives just one young person the confidence to believe in their own abilities, and seek out the opportunities that exist to everyone then I shall be very happy”.** Julia – Head of TRU Performance Director. **

This is why Northern Rail’s engineering team, especially the women across engineering, have made themselves visible in a Women in Engineering awareness day, to those in attendance from higher education. One of the speakers attending the event was Julia, Head of TRU performance Director at Northern. Julia gave an exceptionally inspiring talk on how she started her railway journey straight out of education on a training scheme (A precursor to the modern day apprenticeship), allowing her to test capabilities and strengths to create a career path within our vast industry.



“It’s vitally important to help everyone understand that the only barrier to entering a career in Rail or Engineering is our own beliefs as women”.

Amongst those supporting the event was Jamie, a 3rd year apprentice here at Northern. She explained how she would not have been able to pursue this career without the apprenticeship, and by following this opportunity she is not only able to challenge herself and understand her own personal capabilities, but it has enabled her to follow her

career and thrive in it. Jamie went on to describe; *“The thing I most love about my job is coming into the workplace and being part of a team that are encouraging me to thrive as a female in a predominantly male environment and who are accepting of me, but also are willing to mentor and teach me to develop skills I never knew I possessed. I can be hands on right from the get-go and feel as if I contribute to the day-to-day objectives of the business”.*

Jamie explained that she spoke with those in attendance about what an amazing, supportive and door opening opportunity the apprenticeship offers, and has expressed the desire to take on more of an active role in seeing more females recruited into the technical world of rail engineering.

“At Northern Trains I found endless exciting opportunities in Electrical and Mechanical Engineering which would tick all my boxes in one single package and I know I could make something of myself within the business and also myself”.

We are incredibly proud of our apprenticeship programme, which offers a route into a career by gaining a nationally recognised qualification whilst earning on the job – something that is vital for so many. An apprenticeship provides opportunities and experience and at Northern, we ensure this alongside extensive support that demonstrates the commitment to seeing our apprentices succeed and thrive.

Northern is committed to growing the representation of women across our business; by showcasing the STEM roles in the industry and specifically aiming to break down stereotypes around employment opportunities, we hope to attract a wealth of new talent into our business and the wider industry.