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**Inspiring female engineers is key to closing skills gap**

The UK faces a skills shortage in the engineering sector and, according to EngineeringUK, the country will need 1.8 million new engineers and technicians by 2025. With the industry still dominated by men, it’s essential that we attract more female engineers to fill these roles if we’re to close the gap. [Global engineering technologies company](https://www.renishaw.com/en/education-outreach--34713?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=blogging&utm_campaign=REC315) [Renishaw](https://www.renishaw.com/en/renishaw-enhancing-efficiency-in-manufacturing-and-healthcare--1030?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=blogging&utm_campaign=REC394) is taking a proactive role in promoting careers in engineering by running work experience schemes each year for students in years 10 to 13. Here Rebecca Bound, an Education Outreach Officer at the company, shares how Evie Ford, a student at Barnwood Park school, Gloucester, was inspired by the 2019 work experience week.

“Women make up just 12.3 per cent of all engineers in the UK, and only one in five jobs are held by women in the wider engineering sector,” explained Elizabeth Donnelly, CEO of the Women’s Engineering Society (WES). According to a report by EngineeringUK, the gender disparities in engineering “in part reflects gender differences in understanding of and interest in the profession, as well as perceptions of self-efficacy and identity.”

To help encourage young people to consider a career in engineering, Renishaw’s work experience gives young people the chance to work alongside students from other schools and inspires them by showing first-hand what it’s like to work for a leading engineering company.

**Understanding engineering**

Renishaw’s scheme combats stereotypes and misunderstandings by including talks from engineers, tours of Renishaw’s facilities and workshops. By engaging students in the realities of engineering and presenting them with strong female role models, work experience can remove any uncertainties that may prevent girls from choosing the profession.

“At first, I wasn’t sure about a career in engineering, but I started reading up about it and I decided to apply for work experience at Renishaw because I found it really interesting,” explained Evie Ford, a year 10 student that took part in Renishaw’s 2019 work experience scheme. “For me, Renishaw’s work experience was invaluable as I learned a lot about the company, the products it makes and how they are tested. The week involved lots of talks from engineers and practical activities that helped me understand engineering a lot better,” continued Ford. I now know that I want to go into engineering as a career.”

**Inspiring with creativity**

As well as understanding engineering, it’s important to experience how creative and collaborative it can be. For example, Renishaw’s work experience involves students creating their own engineering projects in groups and presenting them on the final day.

“On the first day we were given a task and we allocated roles in our group,” continued Ford. “These included a person that would design the project, another that would market it and one that managed the overall task,” explained Ford. “While working on the project, we had to consider the cost of using additive manufacturing to build it, how to make the product appealing to customers and meeting the deadline we were given. Everyone contributed equally in our group and it was really intriguing to see how we could use the technology for different parts of the project, such as the design.”

Renishaw is committed to education outreach and encouraging more girls to enter engineering by running an extensive education outreach programme. Inspiring more girls like Evie is essential if we’re to recruit the 1.8 million new engineers we need.

To find out more about Renishaw’s work experience programme and how it can inspire the engineers of tomorrow, visit <https://www.renishaw.com/en/work-experience-weeks--42171>.

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Notes to editors

UK-based Renishaw is a world leading engineering technologies company, supplying products used for applications as diverse as jet engine and wind turbine manufacture, through to dentistry and brain surgery. It has over 4,500 employees located in the 36 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations.

For the year ended June 2018 Renishaw recorded sales of £611.5 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, the USA, Germany and Japan.

Throughout its history Renishaw has made a significant commitment to research and development, with historically between 13 and 18% of annual sales invested in R&D and engineering. The majority of this R&D and manufacturing of the company’s products is carried out in the UK.

The Company’s success has been recognised with numerous international awards, including eighteen Queen’s Awards recognising achievements in technology, export and innovation.

Further information at [http://www.renishaw.com/](https://www.renishaw.com/en/education-outreach--34713?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=blogging&utm_campaign=REC315)