



**AIRBUS**

## Placement Position at AIRBUS

Name: Tom Williams

Degree Course: Aerospace Systems Engineering

Who did you do your placement with? Airbus

How did you get the placement position?

General application process and then a formal interview with my target area. The placement was offered to me a few days after.

What do you see as the benefits of your year out on placement?

**The placement has been an 'eye opener' to me, giving me an insight into future job prospects within the industry.** It has also taught me to keep an open mind and to keep all options open for as long as possible. **The benefit of working with people that have been doing your 'future' job for many years is invaluable;** these are the people that can give you the best insight into what it is really like as a long term job prospect.

What work did you have you do?

I was involved with the A380 landing gear monitoring systems team in the Filton design office. We worked on the in-service development of the systems that are currently in use. This includes investigations to fix known problems, upgrades to equipment and day-to-day in service events where the customer support team needs the help from the design office to fix any issues that the airlines are having.

How did the work vary over your placement?

The work was varied with short and long term tasks. I was asked to support our suppliers with an on-going investigation; this meant getting specific equipment installed on flight test aircraft in Toulouse and having to provide justification for the installation to some of the chief engineers which made for some interesting phone calls!

Other tasks included questions from reactive support and customer services. If an Airline has a problem which they cannot fix, they contact customer support. Eventually this filters through to the design office where we help to provide a fix. This can be done through asking system specialists but more often than not we would go to the systems test rig and replicate the scenario on the full scale rig.

What was the most important thing you learned from your placement?

I have learnt that time management is key! You often have many different activities to do in parallel, all with different deadlines. Keeping track of everything in a log book is essential as you often have to put tasks on hold due to a lack of information available at the time. When you re-start the task, your log book is all you have to work from.

I have also learnt that it is not what you know, but how well you can extract the information from various sources. I would say that people skills are a lot more important than intellectual ability: You could **be the world leader in your chosen subject, but if you can't convey your work to other people then it can be pretty useless!** Keeping up good communications with your team is key, as in an industry like this and in my experience, 99% of the time there is someone who can either tell you or can point you in the **direction of the information you are looking for, and it's all about finding that person.**

Would you recommend doing a placement to other students?

**Yes! It's a good idea to take a year out and really assess what you want to do in the future.** Most students come back from placements with only one year left in education before they get a full time job that they will most likely do for the rest of their life: you should do everything you can to make sure that you choose the right career path and having experience of your chosen industry can really help with the decision.