



Our 2023/24 Year In Industry Students



Ethan Noulton | Year in Industry Placement, Production Engineering

I am currently studying Mechatronic and Robotic Engineering MEng at the University of Sheffield. My placement at ITL began after I completed my third year, and I will return to finish my final year in September 2024 where I will hopefully graduate with a Master's degree. This is my first full-time job after holding a part-time position in hospitality last year. My commute is about an hour and a half by train and tram which is made easier by the

ITL flexible work scheme which means I can start and finish later to complete my allocated working hours.

My placement is in the Production Engineering team and for the last few months I have been designing new jigs to help enhance production lines. I have also been producing mass tests to improve assembly lines and workstations, ease workload, increase productivity and allow easy access to all essential components on the production line.

Working full-time differs from university mainly because my day starts a lot earlier! However, I have quickly got used to the routine and working has helped me improve my time management skills. The great thing about ITL is that each day you learn something new. And the network of people which you can talk to provides such a fountain of knowledge. I have only been here a short time and I already have an in-depth understanding of ITL products both hardware and firmware. Both university and working give me independence and allow me to perform tasks how I think is best, however, the team and managers here at ITL have more time to provide daily support and guidance on projects.

My main goal during my time at ITL is to help introduce automation on the shopfloor to aid production processes. I also hope to improve my professional skills by communicating my ideas to colleagues at all levels of the organisation.

In terms of my future career, I would like to continue with Mechatronic Engineering, using my knowledge of mechanical, electrical and computer science concepts. At yet, I am not sure what type of mechatronics or robotics I will focus on, but I am sure the skills I will learn at ITL will boost my confidence in whichever profession I choose.



Csaba Grill | Electronics Design Engineer Placement Student, Electronics

My placement year at ITL is in-between my second and third year of my degree course studying Electrical and Electronics Engineering at the University of Manchester. I have done some past work experience in the industry, but this is my first full-time position. I live locally so the area is familiar to me, and my commute is not too long using public transport.

I am working in ITL's Electronics Department, and my tasks are split between continuous improvement i.e. the continuous testing of currently existing products, component changes, general improvements to units, and developing new projects for some of our major customers. Working is a whole different ballgame compared to student life. In university, the focus is on learning and understanding concepts, while in the industry, it's about applying that knowledge to real-world problems. There's a lot more collaboration with experienced professionals, and the pace can be faster. Deadlines are real and have tangible consequences. Also, the problems you're solving are often more complex and interconnected than the textbook examples.

During my time at ITL, I hope to gain hands-on experience in electronics design and apply the theoretical knowledge I've accumulated in university. It's a chance to see how things work in the industry, understand the design process from concept to prototype, and to get involved in new projects. I am still exploring ideas on my future career, but I think this placement is a great opportunity to figure out what aspects of electronics design I enjoy the most. Whether it's embedded systems, signal processing, or something else entirely, I'm hoping this experience will give me more clarity about my interests and strengths.



Penelope Broad | Computer Scientist Intern, Science

I am studying a Bachelor's in Computer Science and Mathematics at the University of Manchester and started my placement at ITL following the completion of the 2nd year of my course. I have had some work experience waitressing at a local pub, but this is my first time working in an office environment on a full-time basis.

I live in Manchester, close to the university with my uni friends which means I still get plenty of time to socialise with them outside of work and enjoy the city life. It's not too far to get to Oldham as I bought a car for my placement so I can drive into work which is relatively easy. Flexible working at ITL is fantastic as I can choose to work late to miss the traffic and also have the benefit of working from home occasionally too.

My placement is in the computer science team within the Research Department, and I am currently working on a new Smart Data website with the rest of the team.

I'm finding the work really interesting and it's enabling me to put into practice the theory taught at university. Work life is very similar to student life in terms of my day-to-day schedule, as I mostly did a 9-5 day at uni anyway. One thing I am enjoying is not having to study at evenings and weekends, plus I am looking forward to spending my holidays with family without having to revise.

My main goal while working at ITL is to improve my programming skills and gain experience in a wide range of techniques within the area of software development. It would also be nice if I was able to use my new abilities to inspire myself with ideas for my dissertation which forms part of my degree as I have to choose my topic in April. I'm really enjoying the role, and at the moment, I would like to go down the software development route for a graduate job too.



Jakub Bronowicki | Work Placement, Data Science

I am studying a degree in Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence at University of Bath and this year placement is the third year of my sandwich degree. Although this is the first time working full time, I have worked through an agency in the past, so I have had some experience in employment before joining ITL.

I moved to the area to be closer to work and thankfully the transition has been smooth and I'm really enjoying living in a new location. I only live a 25 minute walk away so the commute is great, plus if the weather isn't good, I also have the option of getting a tram. Working is a lot more structured and less stressful than student life, more 9-5 with no studying in the evenings! The Research and Development department at ITL is interesting and forward-thinking. I am currently applying machine learning techniques for banknote validation which is helping me use my knowledge gained at university in a real-life working product.

I hope to gain practical experience during my placement, and as well as contribute to the company, I would like to develop a real understanding of how AI technology and data science techniques can be applied to products in an actual working environment. I hope to work as a data scientist or software engineer in the future, and I am sure my time at ITL will help me decide my preferred career path.



Michael Papantoniou | Work Placement, Data Science

Like my colleague Jakub, I am studying Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence BSc Hons at the University of Bath and I am also in my third year. I moved from Weston-Super-Mare to Manchester to start my placement at ITL. It was pretty daunting at first as I didn't know anyone in the area. But working with the friendly people and making friends with my new flatmates has made me feel more at home in Manchester. I choose to stay near Manchester as there are more housing opportunities and I can commute into the office easily via public transport. Though the journey is long (90 mins), the bus and tram services make it much easier plus a fellow intern is kind enough to give me a lift on two of the working days. On top of this, I can work from home two days of the week which reduces my total time spent commuting.

This is my first time working and I am really enjoying the experience so far. I am working in the Research Department as a Data Scientist. The project I am currently undertaking is researching and implementing new and classic machine learning algorithms to develop a product classification.

The beauty of working life is that you feel more rested, and you can have dedicated downtime when you finish work. With student life, I always felt the stress of coursework and studying at any time of the day. Additionally, studying can feel isolating and sluggish at times. When working in a friendly environment such as ITL, the day goes faster and is more enjoyable.

I hope to gain valuable experience in the workplace and expand my knowledge of computer science and AI alongside a team of experts. As AI is a rapidly changing field, I don't know exactly which specialism I'd like to focus on yet. All I know is that I want to take the powerful tool of AI and use it for the betterment of society, helping as many people as I can.



Benjamin Eichhofer | Software Developer Placement Student, AI Biometrics Department

I am a student from the University of Manchester currently doing a BSc in Computer Science. I have just finished my second year of study and am now doing a year in industry at Innovative Technology. This is my first time working full-time in a tech role, although I have worked part time in an office before.

When I received confirmation of my placement, I opted to continue living close to Manchester and remain close to my friends. Part way through, I did however move nearer to the tram links as I previously had been living in the student areas in South Manchester and from there it took me quite a while to commute to ITL.

I am working as a Software Developer in the AI Biometrics division and currently my main responsibility is developing and maintaining a new application. Working in the AI biometrics team is giving me the ability to work on a wide range of technologies – such as AI pipelines, web applications and mobile applications, and improve on the skills that I have been developing at university.

One aspect of working that I enjoy over student life is having a clear separation between work and personal time, being able to do other things with my spare time rather than worrying about studying and coursework.

During my time at ITL I would like to develop a better understanding of what it means to work in a software development role, as the computer science field has a wide variety of different disciplines, many of which greatly interest me. At this point in time, I am not fully decided on a future career, the two main job areas that attract me are cybersecurity and software development/engineering, although I do know that I would like to pursue postgraduate education in computer science.