

## Juliette Scholes EngTech TMIET

*“As I am unavoidably conspicuous as a female Electrical Engineer I make sure I earn everything that comes my way. Commitment and a strong work ethic should be recognised above all else.”*

**Education and qualifications:** BSc (Hons) Building Services Engineering

**Which Institution are you a member of:** Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) (Technician Member), Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) (Student Member) and British Council for Offices (BCO) (Member)

**Current job title:** Electrical Engineer

**Company:** Hoare Lea

**Length in current job:** Two years, three months

### Please briefly describe your current role and a typical working day

I have worked a lot with Revit building software, and subsequently on Building Information Modelling (BIM) projects. My day primarily consists of designing electrical services within Revit and ironing out any kinks as I go along. I attend design team meetings for projects that I'm working on and go on site when construction is underway to check that installed services match the design we produced. I'm also the BIM manager for my office, so there are always queries to answer from my colleagues. Being located in Yorkshire also means that taking my turn in the tea-round is a top priority!

### What is the greatest challenge you face in your job?

A challenge is finding enough hours in the day. It is a fast-paced environment and there is a lot to be done, often in very short periods of time. The construction industry waits for no one and in order to keep projects viable in terms of finances, politics, build phasing etc, we have to keep up. I am one of those terrible people who is always 15 minutes early to an appointment, so I'm a real stickler for deadlines. The gratification you get from reaching the end of a tough project on time and with a happy design team is second to none.

### What do you most enjoy about your job?

There is a lot of variety and no two days are the same. I've worked on projects across all sectors and in different capacities, so the learning curve is always there and it is always steep. I am lucky to work with some fantastic people who have been there to help guide me whenever I've come across something new or ominous. I started as a trainee just over two years ago, so undoubtedly I still have a lot to learn, but I would not have experienced and learnt as much as I have without my colleagues' support.

## CASE STUDY



### What made you choose this career path?

I joined the Army Cadet contingent attached to my school when I was 13, and as part of this I spent time at various barracks learning from serving Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME) personnel. This sparked my initial interest in Engineering. I have always been a problem solver, and having studied Electronics at A level, the natural path for me was to study Electrical and Electronic Engineering at university. I later transferred to a Building Services Engineering degree. Building Services is an engineering discipline full of problem solvers.

### Has being a woman affected your career so far?

In my experience I have only seen positive effects on my career as a woman engineer. With far fewer women than men in the industry you certainly stand out, and working in electrical engineering I find this even more so. However, I don't believe in positive discrimination, where being in a minority can give you an upper hand. As I am unavoidably conspicuous as a female Electrical Engineer I make sure I earn everything that comes my way. Commitment and a strong work ethic should be recognised above all else, regardless of any factors that may classify you as a minority. If you transcend these labels, they can never be used to question the success your hard work will ultimately bring.

## CASE STUDY

### Are there many women where you work? How do you think more women could be encouraged to become engineers and technicians?

There is an uncommonly high percentage of women in my office, in comparison to industry standards at least, most of whom are currently at Graduate Engineer level. Having been part of steering groups and committees focused on encouraging young men and women to study STEM subjects, it is promising that we are beginning to see more students take an interest in engineering careers. There is a lot more work still to be done and I think that this encouragement in schools needs to start at a much younger age. Engineering seems to fall away as an option for many young women by the time they are teenagers, simply because it is rarely presented as a possibility. Another loss of women in the industry, by this point qualified, skilled women, is the lack of retention after maternity leave. Simple changes to accommodate familial responsibilities could give a huge boost to the percentage of female engineers across all engineering sectors.

### How has achieving EngTech benefitted your career?

Being registered as an Engineering Technician (EngTech) gives a clear indication to anyone looking at my credentials, whether on a bid document or just in an email, that I have sufficient knowledge and experience to be discussing project matters with them. When you have been in the industry for a relatively short time it is important to be able to demonstrate your aptitude in lieu of years of experience and reputation. EngTech accreditation does just that.

### What advice would you give someone considering professional registration as an EngTech?

Professional Registration Advisors are invaluable, so I would highly recommend anyone to find their local PRA as soon as they start thinking about applying to become an EngTech. A PRA will guide you through the process and check your application before you submit it, giving you the best chance of success.

### Was your employer supportive while you were working towards professional registration as an EngTech?

Hoare Lea offers an accredited Initial Professional Development (IPD) scheme to all new employees wishing to become professionally registered. You can work towards each registration title: EngTech, Incorporated Engineer (IEng), and Chartered Engineer (CEng). The scheme is approved by the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET), Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE) and the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE). This means that when you apply to register through any of these professional bodies, they already know that your professional development has been well supported in the working environment. You are also assigned a mentor within your office, who helps you through the scheme and your application.

### What are your future career goals?

I am currently working on my application to become an IEng and will be starting my Masters degree in September 2016. So my goal for the next two years is to continue learning all that I can at work and in my studies, after which I hope to apply to become a CEng. I will have five years of experience behind me by that point and I want to make sure that I have used those years wisely to become a well-rounded, knowledgeable, dependable engineer that our clients can count on. I would also like to mentor trainees who are new to Building Services and make sure to give them the same opportunities that I was presented with.

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Registered: March 2015

