



Ambassador Profiles

Name: *Sarah Beard*

Occupation:

Senior Technical Advisor at Sellafield Ltd

What were your interests when you were at school?

Science – I loved to know how it made the world work – especially chemistry.

As a student were you able to take advantage of any STEM type activities outside the usual school timetable?

No – I'd never heard of it before I started work as a graduate at Sellafield

If so, how did this influence your career path? *N/A*

What are your roles and responsibilities in your workplace now?

My day job involves helping any area of Sellafield Infrastructure (chemical analysis labs, water treatment plant, utilities, sewage treatment plant, transport, the list goes on) with technical issues – sometimes this means applying the chemistry I learnt in my degree, or managing improvement programmes. However I also do lots of “extra things”, like being a STEM ambassador. I'm even helping a local theatre put together a business plan at the moment.

Why did you decide to become an STEM ambassador?

I love to feel like I'm making a difference to people, so when I heard about the STEM scheme I knew it was perfect for me. Before me, nobody in my family had gone on to further education, but I went on from a state school education to university to gain a Masters in Chemistry. A lot of school students in Cumbria don't have the aspiration or don't think it's possible to go to university so I thought I could be a positive role model – especially being a proper girly girl but with a science degree and a technical career!

**What do you feel are the positive outcomes of being a STEM Ambassador?
For yourself?**

Apart from getting the opportunity to develop new skills (more about that later), the biggest outcome I get from being a STEM ambassador is a great sense of joy out of the knowledge that I have helped someone, inspired them or even just got them thinking about the future a little! It is one of the most rewarding things I do.

For the pupils taking part in the activity?

On a technical level, the pupils get chance to learn what science and engineering mean in the real world and try some fun hands-on activities that spark their interest in the subjects. They also get a chance to see and speak to professionals who work in these areas – some very experienced that can pass on all sorts of knowledge, and some young people who are only a few years older than them and can connect with them and hopefully inspire and advise them.

For the teaching staff accompanying the pupils?

An opportunity to expand the learning of the pupils with activities and experience that would be otherwise be difficult in schools or on a smaller scale. This may build on the existing curriculum to aid learning back in the classroom, or open up completely new areas of experience. Teachers also form strong contacts with professionals in industry who can provide experience and support for the teachers and pupils.