



Melissa Millington, a mechanical and electrical engineering apprentice at Go North East

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Young engineers Melissa and Maisie urge girls to apply for eight new engineering apprenticeships

Two aspiring female engineers at the North East's largest bus company are hoping to inspire other women to follow in their footsteps, as part of 'Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day' (20 February).

Melissa Millington and Maisie Hatch, two of Go North East's finest mechanical and electrical engineering apprentices, are sharing their experiences of their jobs to encourage other females to consider a career in

engineering. And with eight engineering apprenticeships soon to be available at Go North East, now is a great time to look at what this career path can offer.

The rising stars are undertaking training and development, in a four-year programme that Go North East runs, in partnership with Gateshead College.

Apprentices learn on-the-job with help from the bus company's expert teams and mentors, whilst also spending one day a week training at Gateshead College's Skills Academy for Automotive, Engineering, Manufacturing and Logistics at Team Valley in Gateshead.

Melissa, from Chester-le-Street, is in the second year of her apprenticeship, having joined Go North East in 2018, where she was one of six new apprentices that were recruited from over 500 applicants.

Commenting on her role the 20-year-old, said: "I'm proud to be a female engineering apprentice and love working for Go North East.

"I applied for this position because I was always intrigued by practical work like woodwork and art and design at school because I'm dyslexic and couldn't sit around for a long period of time in a classroom without getting distracted by something else. If I was given a task that had a practical application I wasn't getting distracted as much and the results were better than any written work I could have submitted.

"By being in this role it lets me focus and learn new skills that I didn't know I would need as well as being part of a team that is working towards a common goal of providing the public a better service of transport.

"I'd be delighted if I could inspire anyone to consider engineering as a career."

Maisie is someone that has followed in Melissa's footsteps, having joined the bus company a year later and she too fought off a strong set of candidates for her apprentice position.

"There's no doubt that some days are challenging but each day is extremely rewarding," the 16-year-old from South Shields explains.

“I’ve loved every minute of my experience so far and I can’t recommend the apprenticeship scheme at Go North East enough.”

Colin Barnes, engineering director at Go North East, added: “Melissa and Maisie are doing incredibly well with their apprenticeships but, unfortunately, engineering jobs across the board are generally dominated by males as there are so few women considering this type of career path.

“A lot of this can be put down to perception but beyond repairing equipment and simply tinkering, engineering requires so much more, including intelligence and a flair for creativity.

“We hope the great examples of Melissa and Maisie can help encourage girls to consider a route into engineering and, in time, inspire the next generation who might grow up to be great innovators and problem-solvers.”

Go North East will be looking to recruit another eight apprentices from May, with a start date of September 2020.

To register your interest in Go North East's engineering apprenticeships, visit www.gonortheast.co.uk/apprenticeships.

[Go North East website](http://www.gonortheast.co.uk)