SEPnet South East Physics Network **Employability**

THE VALUE OF WORK EXPERIENCE

Student: Steve Parsons
University of Surrey
Placement: Cobham RAD Solutions
Role: Radiation Effects Engineer

"Regularly check the advertised opportunities within your institution and wider afield so you don't miss an opportunity that fits with your skills/experience."

What is the subject of your PhD?
Detecting Ionising Radiation with polarised light.

Describe a typical day on placement:
On a typical day I arrive at work at 9 am, make a coffee and then go to my desk/workspace where I'm working on preparing a microcontroller rig for total incident radiation dose testing. This can involve a variety of tasks from setting up the software to run the electrical testing to using the mechanical workshop for building the test rig.

What skills and knowledge do you feel you have learned during the placement?
I have gained experience in using terminal emulation software for interfacing equipment to a computer via Ethernet/USB.

How do you think doing a placement has benefited you for the future?
This placement has benefited me by giving me experience of a private industry working environment and helping me to manage the transition from being a student back to a professional role as I had some work experience prior to starting my PhD.

What advice would you give a PGR student who might be interested in seeking a placement?
Regularly check the advertised opportunities within your institution and wider afield so you don't miss an opportunity that fits with your skills/experience.

Employer perspective:
We enjoyed hosting a PhD placement student at Cobham RAD Solutions to help on a specific customer job. Steve developed a test methodology and some hardware that we will use in the final test solution later this year. We would be keen to host future students for similar roles.

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