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Graduate Case Study

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Associate Profile: Alex Tarter

Name: Alex Tarter
Qualifications: Masters in Engineering
Current Role: Senior Systems Engineer
Location: London

IN MY KTP I...

My KTP with Lancaster University and Ultra Electronics aimed to develop a real time video security system to protect civil aviation from human uncertainties. The project aimed to create an intelligent aircraft cabin surveillance system that would give the crew the ability to stream live video to the ground in the event of an incident and thus provide assistance in any response.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT WERE...

There have been a number of highlights for me. I joined a European Aviation Standards committee (EUROCAE WG-72) that was developing an international standard and co-authored the section on 'Security Control Operation and Maintenance'; the aviation standard ED-127 that will be published later this year. I wrote a proposal for the Ministry of Defence in its 'Competition of Ideas', which we subsequently won and now Ultra Electronics and Lancaster University are carrying out the project. From this, we hope to create a new KTP and develop it into a viable product.

THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A KTP ASSOCIATE IS...

You get the opportunity to develop something that is not in the company's realm of expertise, so you get the chance to teach yourself and get your own views out there. Through KTP, I got the chance to present a paper at the House of Commons for the finale of 'Britain's top Early-Stage Research Scientists, Engineers and Technologists', which was an invaluable experience. In addition, I got the opportunity to travel a lot, within three weeks of starting I was off to Europe and the Middle East!

FROM KTP I HAVE LEARNT...

I have learnt to have confidence in my own views and that everyone's opinions are worthwhile, including my own! I have attended technical integrated video processing courses and international aviation conferences that gave me the necessary skills I needed to complete the project effectively. Other skills that I have obtained or improved through completing my KTP include public speaking, software development and stakeholder engagement.

LIFE AFTER KTP IS...

I now work for Ultra Electronics as a Senior Systems Engineer, which is a similar role to my KTP project. I would never have been able to gain the level of work experience that I did from my KTP whilst at the same time undertaking a PhD. I have nearly finished my PhD and I am currently writing my thesis, and have three years of experience under my belt. As a direct result of my KTP work in aviation security, I am also in the process of co-authoring a textbook on the subject, which is challenging but fulfilling!

I WILL RECOMMEND KTP BECAUSE...

KTP has a lot more to offer than a normal graduate job, you are not just someone's assistant, you get responsibility straight away. You also get to really develop and value your own personal growth; personal development isn't just a corporate aspiration, it's a defined part of the programme! The other great thing about KTP is the defined support structure, which you may not get in any other job.

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Knowledge Transfer Partnerships is one of the largest graduate recruitment programmes in Europe and is managed by the Technology Strategy Board. KTP uses the knowledge and skills of high calibre graduates and their academic supervisors to inject fresh ideas into UK businesses.

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