WES   
I've written way to much here. Apologies. Not sure if you want to take much of this. I wasn’t entirely sure what to put or what goes well in a newsletter.

## Personal Thoughts

When we talked previously you mentioned you had read that 40% of people in engineering are women but I have checked the WES stats page and Wikipedia (the font of all knowledge) and they say its only 16.5% of all engineers (an increase on the 10.5% reported in 2010). <https://www.wes.org.uk/content/wesstatistics>

I think everyone working in engineering knows about this disparity (its very apparent at university and in the workplace) and instead of highlighting our differences it would be great if the article could focus more on how we can encourage more young women to enter engineering.

My personal experience of the negative side of engineering is that some people, because of my gender, have commented that they think I have received preferential treatment. Perhaps they are right because equally qualified candidates to my university received much less favorable offers. The E3 scheme which most of the female engineers who work at Nidec are hired through also takes on a much higher proportion of women than are in the engineering cohort in general. Does this mean I received my place to work here based on my gender (over another more qualified candidate)? I don’t know. This is again reinforced in the minds of other engineers when the women who enter engineering without the proper support, after taking the wrong A-levels or being overly pushed towards what can seem like a sensible job prospect, drop-out or struggle with the content. This uncertainty over whether you deserve to have your job or your degree, which may have only been given to you based on your gender leads to imposter syndrome.

Many women with engineering degrees also go on to work in different sectors (perhaps after feeling so isolated at university) which means that throughout university some teachers (although not the majority by far) assumed that women had less interest in the course generally and that they are hoping to move on into other kinds of jobs, which influenced the amount of extra help or attention you can get.

However, on a positive note, I have greatly enjoyed my time studying and working as an engineer. I love making tangible things and the satisfaction of finishing a project. As a person who enjoys science and maths but also can be creative, engineering is the perfect mix of problem solving, design and maths. I have made many friends through engineering and socially it hasn’t been difficult to ignore the bad apples. I have been lucky enough to make good female friends within engineering so I have the necessary support system in place, but I am sure there are some women who do not have that group in their career and rely on societies like WES to provide that support. Other engineers I have encountered are always encouraging and willing to offer a helping hand and I now feel more supported in my efforts to become a fully fledged engineering than I ever did at school or university.

## If you were to choose their GCSEs, A-levels, and degrees again, what advice would they have for their female peers and younger selves that would encourage them to pursue a career in engineering?’

I chose my GCSEs with a career as a medicine or law career in mind but as I progressed toward my A-levels I became more environmentally conscious. The key sector that was making tangible efforts that I could see every day, was the electronics and electrical engineering sector. I was inspired by seeing windfarms go up in my local area, by reading about new high tech farming advances that improved crop yield and seeing electric vehicles become more mainstream. Engineering was at the practical forefront of those developments and the bridge between the theoretical science that I enjoyed studying and the practical change I wanted to see implemented. I then chose engineering A-levels and looked for an engineering place at university which I have since enjoyed.

I would therefore advise my younger self and peers that if you enjoy science and maths then engineering is possibly a good fit. Look at what you use or see every day, what you take for granted, and think about how that was made or done. Once you have those thoughts you can think about how you could help others to use or do things better. Often, I have found the answer to be engineering. One of the key things I would say to young women is that even if you think you’re not the best at maths or science, try not to compare yourself to others. If you enjoy it and find it satisfying, then it’s the right thing for you.

## ‘Why did you choose engineering, is your career so far delivering to their expectations?

I already answered the why I chose engineering in the previous answer, but I think one of the best things about engineering is that you are problem solving every day with a clear goal of improving the way things are currently done. Electrical engineering especially does a lot of work with improving efficiency which is at the crux of environmental protection. Although my career has barely started (5 weeks in), I am enjoying it, it's what I expected and the people I have met have been welcoming.