

## FERN JOHNSON



**Job:** Trainee Clinical Scientist, Bioinformatics(Genomics)

**Company:** Genetics Diagnostics Laboratory - Manchester NHS Foundation Trust

I'm training to be a clinical bioinformatician, and analyse complex genetic information from diagnostic tests using specialised software and custom scripts to do this. I learn programming, as well as computing, genetics and information governance. As a trainee I complete different rotations at work, and do a part-time Master's.

smart

enthusiastic

Optimistic

**The skills I use most in my job...**Computing

- Presenting
- Communication

**The most interesting thing I've worked on in my career so far...**I'm only in my first year so am just getting started – but at a meeting I presented an idea for validating the analysis we carry out. This is important as we're making real, life-changing diagnoses. It was great to get the change to contribute to the team so early on.

**What inspired me into digital and tech...**I was first exposed to programming and bioinformatics as part of my undergrad stat courses. I wanted to do something in healthcare and make a difference, and

wanted to work in a cutting edge field where I could improve my technical skills, so clinical bioinformatician is really my dream job,

**My educational background is...**I studied Biological Sciences at Oxford (My background is not at all 'Oxbridge' so it was quite a culture shock). I worked for a healthcare charity for a year, and then did an MSc in Bioinformatics. I worked in IT consulting after that. I applied twice to my current programme.

**What advice I'd give to girls thinking about a career in digital and tech...**Don't be afraid to give it a go – there are loads of online learning resources. It's also not all about technical know-how; communication, presentation skills and time management skills are sorely needed to make tech projects succeed, and your stereotypical male techie has none of these – plenty of girls do!