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!