

PHYSICS IN ACTION

Participating in the Physics in Action trip was an enriching experience, that was not only educational but also sparked lots of our interests, and demonstrated the wide range of industry that physics is applied in.

As an A-level physics student, I thought I knew a lot about career options in relation to physics, but there was so much more that I learnt on this trip. The first speaker was Anna Ploszajski, an 'accidental' material scientist, who talked about how she unintentionally got into the field, without knowing much about it. It was fascinating to see the opportunities she was presented with by becoming a material scientist, for example being able to design and build a custom high-speed car to break a land-speed record in the salt flats in Utah. Other speakers discussed the possibilities that come with quantum computing, which was especially mind-blowing, and current projects in medical physics to explore brain imaging in infants. We also heard from current university physics students, which was particularly insightful because Year 12s are currently exploring our options for higher education, so learning more about apprenticeships and different physics courses was super useful. Finally, we heard from Brendan Walker, a 'thrill engineer', who designs roller coasters in order to get the best and most exciting audience reactions, whilst also maintaining safety, by relying on physics concepts like centripetal force. It was interesting to see that when designing roller coasters, there is an actual formula used to get the best reaction out of participants! The highlight of the entire trip, however, was being able to see so many students and professionals being so passionate about physics and being genuinely interested in each talk. Seeing that collective enthusiasm, made me look forward to what my own physics journey may lead to – whether that is designing a roller coaster, studying quantum computers or something entirely different.

Saashi

