



Inspiring a younger generation into STEM and the Aviation Industry

Our goal: Inspiring young people to explore careers in STEM and aviation, to support and encourage their future career choices.

How can you help? By sharing your story

Name & job role:	Ben Alcott, International Director
What did you enjoy doing when you were younger?	Cycling – it gave me amazing freedom Air Cadets – flying, gliding, shooting, camping, and making great friends. Of all my school friends, the ones I’m still in regular touch with I was also in the Air Cadets with.
What were your favourite subjects in school? Why?	Maths, Physics and English. I enjoyed the discovery of Maths, the way it helps us understand so much about our world. And with Physics, it was about how things work. But I’ve always loved reading fiction and poetry, so English was always on my list of favourites too.
What or who inspired you to study these?	My Physics teacher always had an air of a mad professor about him, which helped to keep me interested!
Did you do work experience? Where and did it help in choosing your career path?	I didn’t do work experience, but I think my love of understanding how things work and solving problems was what led me to a career in engineering.
What was your first job?	Paper boy, when I was 13.
How did you arrive where you are in your career?	I graduated from Kingston University in Mechanical Engineering and applied to do a Master of Science degree in Thermal Power at Cranfield University, as I’d always been fascinated by jet engines. When I left there, I worked in engineering contracting for about 18 months, part of teams designing chemical and pharmaceutical plants, but I soon felt the draw back to aviation. I had

Thank you for sharing your journey.



STEM

OPPORTUNITIES IN AVIATION



	<p>5 happy years working in jet engine research for the UK government, and then an opportunity came up at BMW Rolls-Royce near Berlin in Germany. To work for Rolls-Royce and live abroad too good an opportunity to turn down! When my contract ended I came back to the UK and that's when I joined the CAA. I started in jet engine certification but then moved into management and I've been working my way around CAA ever since, managing and leading teams from safety strategy to personnel licencing to change programmes, and now as International Director</p>
<p>What do you love about your current job?</p>	<p>I love the variety of what we do in the International Group. We provide support to industry in the UK, national authorities all over the world, and to the UK Government. And we cover everything from UAVs to noise to pilot examinations. And I love being part of the CAA: having such a strong purpose for public protection is a great reason to get up and come to work every day.</p>
<p>What were the biggest challenges/barriers you had to overcome?</p>	<p>Deciding to leave my original specialism and go for a career in management and leadership was a challenge for me. I don't regret it, it was a very conscious decision, but I've never lost my love of jet engines! The CAA has been a brilliant place to work and I've faced very few barriers, although I have been the first 'non-something' to have a couple of jobs, whether that's first 'non-pilot' or first 'non-Air Traffic Controller', but I think that just shows that the CAA has and is changing for the better.</p>
<p>Who have you looked up to and why?</p>	<p>Dame Ellen Macarthur, who at 24 was the youngest person ever to complete the Vendee Globe round the world race and the fastest woman to circumnavigate the globe.</p> <p>Dame Deirdre Hutton, who as the CAA Chair did so much to improve the CAA in her time with the organisation.</p>

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	<p>Dr Mike Philpot, who was the head of gas turbine research when I worked for the government, because he always had time to share knowledge and I learned so much from him.</p>
<p>What is your ambition?</p>	<p>Sail round Britain, and down to the Mediterranean through the French Canals. I'd also like to do a transatlantic trip</p>
<p>What is the best advice you were given?</p>	<p>Do something you love doing. I have good days and bad days like everyone, but underneath I know I love what I do.</p>
<p>What advice would you give a younger you?</p>	<p>Don't start smoking. I gave it up about 25 years ago, but it was a complete waste of time, money and health.</p>

Any additional comments:



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