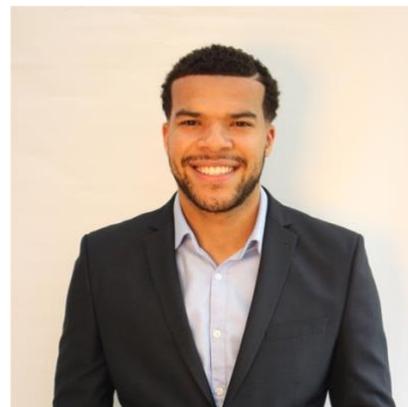


FIND *your* FUTURE**Taylor Young-Chambers****Job title:** Assistant Engineer at WSP**Graduation date:** 2016**Degree:** MSc Civil Engineering**What did you study at UCL?**

I studied an MSc in Civil Engineering. It was a full-time postgraduate degree which consisted of eight modules and an independent research project. I did my thesis on the “Development and optimization of a wavemaker for a wave-current flume”.

Where do you work now and what are your responsibilities?

I work in the civil engineering industry, for a company called WSP, which is one of the largest professional services firms in the world. They provide management and consultancy services across numerous sectors such as Property & Buildings, Transportation & Infrastructure, Environment, Power & Energy and many more. I have been working for the firm roughly around one and half years, and part of my role as a Graduate Engineer, I work within the Development discipline where I am positioned in Public Realm ‘Major Projects’ team, who has been engaged by Westminster City Council to undergo highway improvement and public realm schemes. My day-to-day responsibilities would be liaising with client and stakeholders, undergoing site meetings and surveys, preparing technical reports and carrying out CAD design from planning and concept to detailed design and implementation. Overall, I'm involved in a good variety of tasks.

Why did you want to go into this field?

For me I have always had a passion and admiration from a young age to be involved in projects where my design can have a huge impact on a development. For that reason, I did a three-year bachelor's degree in civil engineering, of which I was fortunate to obtain a scholarship from UCL to undergo a Masters. From this result, I chose to pursue a career in the industry, and WSP provided a platform where they were involved in major projects around the world and they would give their staff valuable experience to develop and grow their careers in the industry.

What was the application process like?

Application process was crazy! I applied for a number of jobs. At WSP they had four stages of recruitment. A CV application process, where you upload your CV, then if you passed, the next

stage would be a video interview, where they ask you the standard questions like “Why do you want to become an engineer?” and “Why do you want to work for this company?”. Then the remaining stages would be a group assessment and then a personal interview. However, I was quite fortunate to know a senior colleague within the company, who fast-tracked my CV. This progressed me onto the personal interview stage, which was roughly an hour long, after which they offered me the job.

What do you think separated you from other candidates?

Definitely having the master's. Even in the interview, they were impressed by the credentials I had having a master's at the age of 22, from a credible university, and I was keen to be involved in highway design and gain site experience.

What does your normal workday look like?

Most of my day I spend designing and improving the public realm infrastructure within Westminster, so this would entail me producing schematic engineering drawings, preparing schedules and bills of quantities. I would also go on site visits within the city and undergo surveys across streets like Oxford Street for example, and if the project is in the construction stage, I could see my own design being implemented, which is very cool.

What are the best things about your role?

For me the best thing is the prospects for me to grow in the business. I like the fact my company likes to support any graduates who are looking to progress their careers professionally, because I aim to become a chartered engineer. This support is always very helpful. I'm learning and gaining experience every day, because it's very different to what you study at university, which was the theoretical aspect, and now it's the practical side of things.

What are some challenges?

Keeping within the projects budget. This is one of my biggest challenges because a lot of projects I may be involved in differ in scale and the expectations from stakeholders, clients and statutory undertakers may also differ. Therefore, it is ensuring your project is managed efficiently overseeing the costs, risks, scope and quality aspects.

What advice would you give to students looking to get into this field?

I would advise anyone who is studying and in their final year to start applying now! I was a bit fortunate to get a job 3-4 months after I finished my masters. But I could have saved myself the hassle and applied during my studies of which I would transition into a respected role fairly swiftly. It is also good to find a company that will help you progress your career by supporting your learning, and allowing you to work on different scaled projects, because you are an early career professional with little experience. Therefore, you need to learn and be taught in order to progress up the ladder.