

Charlie Stokes

BEng Materials Science and Engineering

Design Engineer at Archipelago Technology

“As the lead design engineer for the company, I’m a mixture of scientist, engineer and industrial designer. I’m responsible for contributing to the science of our technologies, and coming up with inventions.

Much of my day to day work involves drawing different designs, building up our current machines, documenting discoveries we’ve made and contributing to a larger body of work. The rest of my work involves a lot of client interaction and applying what we do to different industries. It can change very quickly.”



Why did you choose Queen Mary?

I wanted to study in a university in London and felt the environment was right for me. I have dyslexia and ADHD, and the student support at Queen Mary was fantastic. If I ever had a problem, it was dealt with.

How did your time at Queen Mary prepare you for work?

Queen Mary trains you to bring out all your strengths, not just one, and that’s so vital for what I do. If I was just a materials scientist or just a mechanical engineer or just an industrial designer, I wouldn’t be able to draw on all the knowledge and connections needed for what I do now. It also gives you a chance to be part of something bigger than yourself, I always felt like I was part of a team and everyone looked out for each other.

What can current students do to prepare for getting a job in your area?

Be genuine and enthusiastic about what you want to do – people can tell when you’re into an idea or not. If you see anything that’s new and you’re curious about, follow it and see where it takes you (and this doesn’t just mean in engineering – I got an internship at a music technology company doing engineering because I found seeing where materials and music interaction was going interesting). Get as many lab skills, practical engineering skills as you can, and practise your drawing skills, as that’s a lot of what I do from day to day. Work on your social skills and empathy as well. You might have the best engineering idea in the world, the best physicist on the planet, but you’re not going to convince anyone unless you get them on your side.