

## CASE STUDY



### LENGTHEN YOUR STUDENT LIFE



Stephanie  
Ankrah

You may find that you love being a student. Who wouldn't? You get to spend time with friends, lie in bed in the morning watching TV and have long summer holidays. The rest of the time you learn loads of stuff you're actually interested in. Wouldn't it be great to spend the rest of your life in the university lifestyle?

Continuing your study after university has many of these advantages. Ok, the summer holidays are reduced and if you sleep in you might have to work late. But there is one major advantage of a postgraduate student lifestyle - you get more money, lots more if you are sponsored. This means you can easily afford those wild nights at the student union...

Stephanie Ankrah is a sports materials engineer doing a PhD in football shin guards.

#### She says

"I look at how the materials in equipment behave when they are impacted. I also research potential materials that may improve protection against impact.

"My GCSEs include physics, chemistry, geography, maths and RE. I then did chemistry, maths, geography and languages A-Levels before going to university to study engineering.

"The first year was quite difficult as the work was hard and we had to do a lot of hours but I am really pleased I stuck with it. The hours got easier and my marks improved.

"I am a very keen sportswoman and wanted to combine my interest with further study. The perfect PhD was on offer so I took it and stayed!

"What I love about my job is meeting people to find out their opinions on the sport products I work with. I have visited Aston Villa, Sheffield Wednesday and Wolverhampton Wanderers and met a few professional football players, which was brilliant as I am a big football fan as well as a scientist! I also enjoy the satisfaction of seeing good results from something I've been working on.

"I have an excellent balance of work and play. I switch off from work by playing sports like hockey - my university has loads of sports on offer, especially through the active lifestyles programme. I have recently taken up a golf course. There is also an intermural league which offers 14 different sports - our mixed netball team has been undefeated champions for the last two seasons. I also enjoy the student life of going out with friends."

Stephanie is sponsored by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council. If you would like to find out more about doing a PhD, talk to your school careers advisor or go to [www.prospects.ac.uk/](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/).

Girls, you might also be interested in WISE. WISE aims to attract more girls and women into Science Engineering and Technology (SET), to support other organisations that enable girls and women to advance their careers and to support other organisations that ensure girls and women are retained in the SET sector.