

Edinburgh Napier UNIVERSITY | School of Computing, Engineering & the Built Environment

Student Case Study - Romy Jenit Xavier Jaya Singh, GEP Environmental Ltd

"My placement was truly impactful, and I firmly believe experiences like these are crucial for both personal and professional growth."

Romy Jenit Xavier Jaya Singh – MSc Renewable Energy

Can you tell us about yourself and the opportunity you were involved in?

I am currently in my final trimester as a masters student and completed my undergraduate degree in electrical and electronic engineering. I am an aspiring engineer who aims to make a positive impact on the environment by optimising renewable technologies with a primary focus on photovoltaics and battery systems. I was fortunate to secure a placement with GEP Environmental Ltd during summer 2024, which later became part of Mabbett, an integrated consulting firm specialising in planning, design, engineering and safety. The organisation operates with major initiatives such as the Energy Saving Opportunity Scheme (ESOS), a regulatory program designed to promote energy efficiency and reduce environmental impact among large UK enterprises.

Can you tell us more about what your role entailed?

I supported engineers in conducting energy efficiency and decarbonisation audits for projects in various locations. I contributed to the design of energy-efficient and low-carbon solutions, primarily for buildings, to identify potential energy, carbon and cost savings. I conducted feasibility studies for renewable energy systems, such as Solar PV and low-carbon technologies like air, ground and water source heat pumps. I also assisted in preparing technical reports which provided detailed analyses of energy and decarbonisation projects, delivering actionable and meaningful recommendations.

What key skills did your placement teach you?

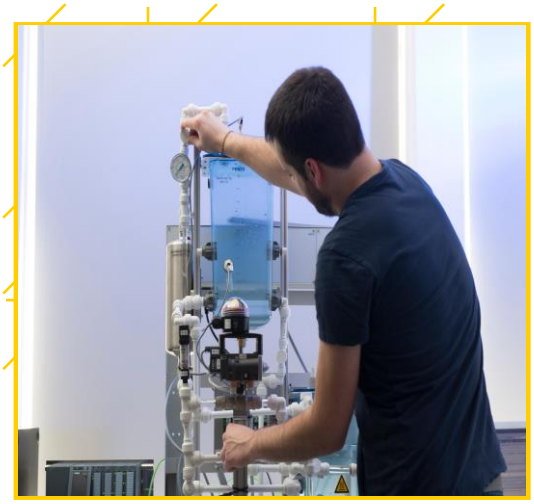
I participated in site evaluations, gaining practical experience by visiting labs, warehouses and offices. These visits enhanced my attention to detail as I assessed energy consumption and identified opportunities for sustainable, low-carbon improvements. I have since developed a need to observe my surroundings, paying close attention to elements such as windows, lighting, pumps, heat sources, insulation, energy losses and roof pitches, with an internal drive to suggest better renewable, sustainable options. I had the privilege of shadowing experts and interacting with clients to gather critical insights. Another notable skill I acquired was proficiency in PV*SOL software, which aligns closely with my interests and has become a significant addition to my CV.

What were your highlights and key successes of your time on placement?

My favourite part was undoubtedly the site audits. As a student new to Scotland, these opportunities were incredible, allowing me to explore industries and offices across various locations including Aberdeen, Glasgow, Bathgate, and Edinburgh. It was fascinating to learn how different sites operate, the equipment and machinery used, and the processes involved. My contributions directly influenced project outcomes, which deeply reinforced my passion for renewable energy. I vividly remember the sense of accomplishment and pride I felt after completing PV*SOL models for clients alongside detailed reports.



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Did you face any challenges?

Primarily my challenges stemmed from inexperience and uncertainty, which initially made me anxious. I recall feeling nervous about client interactions and taking longer looking at Excel tools for feasibility studies. At times I also doubted whether I was approaching tasks correctly. However, I realised that to improve and succeed, I needed to voice my concerns. I had to step out of my comfort zone and actively engage. Fortunately, my colleagues were incredibly supportive and reassured me that learning and making mistakes is part of the process. They emphasised my quick adaptability, especially with design software, which gave me the confidence boost I needed. Their encouragement empowered me to ask for help without hesitation, enabling me to learn, grow, and become more productive. Embracing the learning curve allowed me to build confidence and efficiency, enhancing my overall performance and effectiveness in the role.

How do you feel Edinburgh Napier University prepared you?

My course closely aligned with my placement. At the time, I had recently completed modules such as Research Skills and Project Management and Energy Materials, which proved to be significant. The Project Management module equipped me with the tools to prepare comprehensive reports for clients, which was a critical aspect of my role. I gained a deeper understanding of materials and equipment used, which enhanced my ability to analyse and evaluate components during site visits. These academic foundations were instrumental.

Do you think your placement affected your future career plans?

Not only did I receive a significant boost to my CV, but my placement offered valuable insights which enhanced my understanding of subsequent modules and shaped my career path. The challenges I faced with feasibility and economic calculations gave me a strong practical foundation, making my module on Renewable Energy Finance much easier to grasp. My site visits proved immensely beneficial for my module on Sustainable Energy Technologies. They provided firsthand knowledge of aspects such as heat gain, boilers, lighting systems, and building management systems, helping me see how everything connects and functions together. The ‘Solar Energy: Technology, Modelling, and Analysis’ module became one of my favourites as my practical experience during the placement (particularly in understanding roof pitches, inclinations and shading for Solar PV systems) gave me a solid foundation to approach the module's concepts. The seamless integration of my course and placement experience certainly made my summer incredibly productive and impactful for my academic and professional journey.

Would you recommend doing a placement to other and what advice would you give?

Absolutely. I still share my story with friends and family, reflecting on how insightful and impactful it was for my career. Placements offer essential real-world experience which complements academic learning and provides a deeper understanding of industry practices and professional expectations. Explore resources like the myFuture section on our student website, that’s how I found my opportunity, and I’m incredibly grateful for it. Check on LinkedIn or even reach out to companies directly. Showcase your qualifications, training and projects you have been involved in. Expressing genuine enthusiasm can help you stand out. Seek guidance when needed and remember to request feedback. Ultimately, put yourself out there.

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