

Helpful, powerful and valuable: mentoring on GDST Rungway

Over the last couple of years we've welcomed over 2,500 users to GDST Rungway, our safe, supportive online community, offering advice and mentorship to our sixth formers at the click of a button. Here Sabina, a sixth former at Sutton High School and Rebekka, a recent alumna of Northampton High School share their experiences of mentoring on Rungway.

What made you decide to join the Rungway community?

Sabina: I signed up because I knew it could be a useful resource. I had many questions regarding A-Level subjects and career paths and thought GDST alumnae would be able to help answer these.

Rebekka: I thought it would be a great way to build contacts, but also to help and inspire girls currently at GDST schools to look at STEM degrees/careers and pursue them.



Could you tell us about how you 'met' each other on Rungway?

Sabina: I'm applying for aerospace engineering. For most universities, you apply for a specific branch within engineering. I was a bit unsure about whether I should apply for a MEng in aerospace or do a BEng in mechanical engineering and MSc in aerospace engineering. Most of the people I asked, including via The Student Room, had not studied aerospace engineering, so I decided to ask a question on Rungway. Rebekka responded to my question and the good thing is that she studied aerospace engineering at university.

What sort of advice were you able to provide?

Rebekka: My main 2 pieces of advice were:

- It is surprisingly easy to change between a MEng and BEng course and to add industrial placements or study abroad years once you are at a university. Personally, I

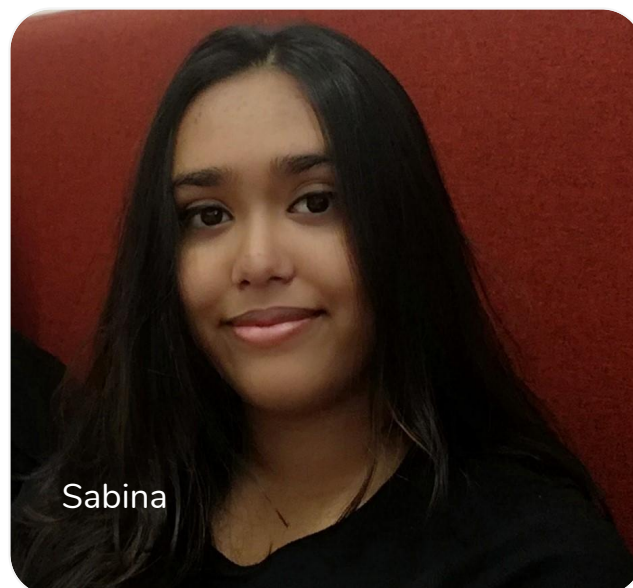
recommend applying for the highest level of degree with years out for placement or study abroad as it is much easier to move “down” as numbers can be limited for masters etc.

- You can apply for any jobs mechanical engineers can apply for with an aerospace degree. The benefits of an aerospace engineering degree are that you have a slight area of speciality, you also tend to cover more electronics and electrical engineering than mechanical engineering students. Also at some universities, all engineers are grouped together for the first and sometimes the second year too, so you can switch between engineering disciplines at the ends of these periods.

We also spoke about my university experience and starting work. Sabina also asked me to review her personal statement and it was really rewarding to see it develop. She has done so many extra-curricular activities already that it was about finding the right things to include that added to her application. I found I was really able to help in this area as I had a similar problem when writing my personal statement due to being given so many opportunities through school.

How did you move your conversations from Rungway into ‘real life’?

Rebekka: I asked Sabina to let me know the name and email address of her Head of Sixth Form. From here, I sent Sabina a copy of my personal statement to guide her in writing her own. I also told her Head of Sixth Form that she could pass my email address onto Sabina so we could communicate between ourselves if she would prefer that to going via her Head of Sixth Form.



Sabina: Rebekka was kind enough to send me her personal statement from which I understood the layout with the balance of content and enthusiasm for the subject. Her time at Nottingham university meant she was able to give useful advice about what sort of structure the admissions tutors would like which was very helpful for me, because at the time, I was struggling with the structure of my personal statement. We further conversed about her recent projects and time at Nottingham university because I was unable to visit the university in person. A lot of people have said that job prospects are limited, but Rebekka got a job straight out of university. She also mentioned doing a year in industry and taking modules which are broad. She mentioned previously that the aerospace engineering course has a larger computational module, in comparison to other branches of engineering, which opens job opportunities.

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It's great to hear about all the support you've received and offered via Rungway. For sixth formers reading this, what one piece of advice would you give to them to make the most of the app?

Sabina: I would say in some cases it is a better resource than other websites such as The Student Room because you have a variety of qualified women who can help. If you're shy you can use an anonymous persona which makes it easier to use as some people find it more helpful to talk to strangers when they don't know anything about you.

Rebekka: Ask any questions about careers, degrees, apprenticeships, uni life. There is always going to be someone in that field that can help you and if not, they will know someone who is. The more people you have connections with and the more questions you ask, the more successful you are going to be.

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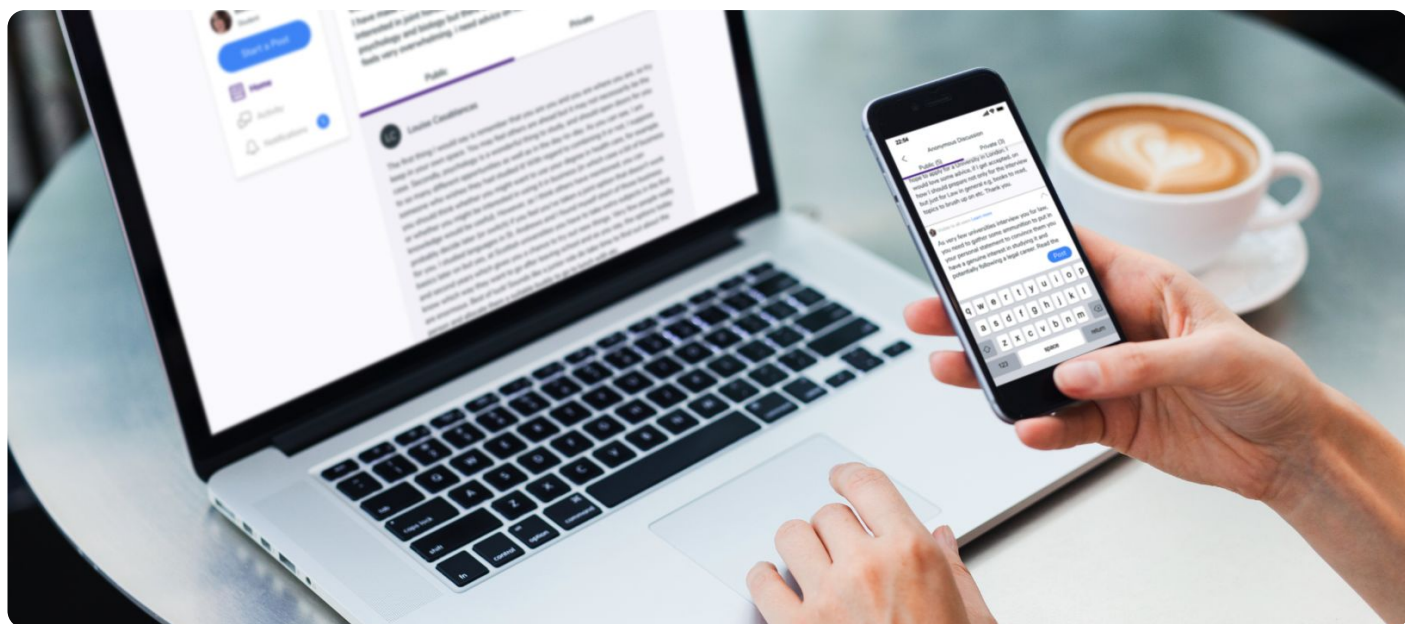
And for our alumnae readers, what advice would you give on becoming a mentor on Rungway?

Rebekka: Offer your help to as many students as you can as you will find you have unique experiences that can really help them to solve small problems before they become an obstacle.

And finally, if you could sum up Rungway in three words what would they be?

Rebekka: Powerful, supportive and valuable.

Sabina: Helpful, easy to use and community.



For more information on Rungway visit <https://go.rungway.com/gdst> and sign up today at <https://app.rungway.com/gdst/request-invite>