

Meet the team



Ajay Patel, Systems Engineer, Engineering

What do you love about your job? The variation in day-to-day work helps keep me focused and allows me to learn and develop new skills related to various areas of work I am doing. One day I could be learning to code while working with the digital team on our innovative 'Digital Twin' and the next day I could be learning about our approach to Modularisation, while working with the build certainty team on how best to capture and configure their information.

Why did you choose nuclear? Nuclear energy is going to be a core part of how we power our country in a more sustainable way alongside the use of renewables. I am passionate about contributing to a better future and working on the SMR design allows me the opportunity to do this while also working with and learning from some of the best engineers in the country.

Your academic journey: After lower results on my A levels (3 Cs vs the predicted 3 As) I secured a place on the BEng Electrical and Electronic Engineering course at the University of Derby through the clearing process. During my time at university, I was able to identify why I underperformed at sixth form and resolve the issues and learn from them. I graduated with a First Class (Hons) degree which helped secure my first engineering job at Rolls-Royce.

Your work experience: My first role was as a Systems Design Integrator at Rolls-Royce Aerospace within the control systems team. Although the role didn't necessarily align to the degree I completed, it required me to apply the logical approach to electronic design to a higher-level system design for the engine overheat management system. As I progressed and learned more about the role, I transitioned to a heavier focus on the systems engineering processes within the team. This change allowed me to get involved and give my input in

shaping how we worked as a team as opposed to following steps defined by others.

When the opportunity arose to apply for a role on Small Modular Reactors (SMR), I jumped at the chance to focus on the systems engineering process development I enjoyed so much in my aerospace role. Although the change in sector from aerospace to nuclear was daunting, it allowed me so many opportunities to learn and progress it was hard to pass up. Since joining Rolls-Royce SMR, the engineers around me have been fully supportive in helping me learn about the sector and understand the details of the different engineering strands.

How did you get into your specialism? Systems engineering was something I wasn't aware of before starting in the role on the UltraFan Aero Engine project. Although I was lucky in that I was placed in a role and project that was perfect for me, I have always been encouraged to explore my interests within my work and try other types of work to become a multi-skilled engineer.

What advice would you give to someone interested in doing a role similar to yours? Don't wait for opportunities to be handed to you. If you want to get involved in something or want a specific role, go for it! Pro-activeness goes a long way!

What three words would you use to describe working at Rolls-Royce SMR? Flexible, Challenging, Fun

What would you say to someone considering a career with Rolls-Royce SMR? Nuclear as an industry and the work Rolls-Royce SMR is doing will only grow going forward. Now is a great time to get in and come on the journey with us. By getting involved early, you will have more control to shape your career in the future.

