

# Case Study

## Toni Brewster

Toni Brewster is a female contractor with BT Electrical Contractor Service Ltd in Essex.

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The 27-year-old joined the company at 18 as an apprentice electrician after starting her training at the Colchester Institute where she achieved a City and Guilds NVQ level 3. She is involved in all forms of electrical work including commercial installations and fibre optic cabling.



### **How do you find working in a primarily male environment?**

It can be challenging. I found it very difficult at first to find a job in the electrical industry especially being female.

### **How did you go about joining the industry?**

My school never really encouraged me into a career so it wasn't until I trained at the Colchester Institute and found work with BT Electrical that I really began to feel part of the industry.

### **What made you want to be an electrician?**

While living abroad I had the opportunity to try some electrical work and enjoyed it so I moved back to the UK and started an apprenticeship.

### **What type of work are you involved in?**

Around 99% of our work is carried out at The University of Essex. I am involved with electrical commercial installations, structured and fibre optic cabling. There are currently five of us on site but I am the only female.

### **What sort of reaction do you get from customers?**

As most of our work is at The University of Essex which promotes equal opportunities it's mostly a surprised but positive reaction.

The reaction from other trades that I work with can be a mix really. It can be anything from rude, sexist to some who are just inquisitive.

### **How would you like to see the industry evolve?**

I look forward to a time when it becomes "normal" for women to work in the construction industry and women are treated equally so that they don't have to fight to prove themselves.