



**CLAIRE BRIERLEY**  
**SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER, ASDA**

**? What do you do?**

“ I am a Senior Product Manager for Asda. I work in Asda's Head Office and look to develop products that you use in the home every day. The products I manage are ones you will use all the time without thinking about it: ones that we use to maintain good health like medicines, first aid and vitamins and also things like glasses and tissues. I understand what customers need the products to do and look at which products do something similar for customers now. Then I work with manufacturers to learn how the products are made and how they work, decide which products are good enough quality to put Asda's name on and then make sure the information on the packaging tells customers what is great about the product, how to use it and what they need to be aware of to ensure they can use it safely.



**? How did you get where you are?**

“ I did lots of different subjects at G.C.S.E level. I wasn't great at all of them but I gave them all my best shot. When I got my results I went on to study Biology, Chemistry and Maths at A levels. I didn't get great grades at A level and my first instinct was to retake them and show everyone I could do these subjects but before I got my grades I had visited a few universities and I had some great offers. I took a place at Manchester Metropolitan University to study Applied Biological Science to degree level.

By the time I got to my 3rd year I knew what I liked - Microbiology. I took a year's placement at a microbiology lab which specialised in water treatment. I tested lots of water samples for traces of potential harmful bacteria. This was really interesting and opened my eyes to what goes on in a work environment. After my degree I went into the field I had tried as a student and became a microbiologist. Here I got to work with the retailers like Tesco, Sainsbury's and Asda. Then I moved to Asda to look after own brand products. I now manage a team of 12 people and look after lots of different types of products.

The best thing about working here is the people – you build up friendships and there is always someone to bounce ideas off. I am always learning new things and I meet all sorts of interesting people and I love that! I get a real buzz from developing or improving a product and seeing it there on the shelf and in customer's baskets. I still use my biology, chemistry and maths but not in the way I thought I would - science for me is about asking questions and being inquisitive is what I use the most in my role.

**? What advice would you give to someone studying STEM subjects?**

“ Don't worry if you don't have a plan all mapped out – you have lots of opportunities and some will be where you least expect them! Don't focus all your effort in one area an important part of working is being able to communicate with people and apply what you do know to find a route to understand what you don't know – no one knows it all! Try and do what you like not what you think you need – there is always more than one route into the career you want and you will do much better if you enjoy what you do!

**? What kinds of activity can you support?**

“ Mentoring, Career talks, Interviewing, Workshops – I am fairly flexible really.



**How your school can access STEM Ambassadors**

We work with schools so that you can access our database of **FREE** STEM Ambassador volunteers, enabling you to incorporate exemplary links to the world of work within your teaching. Each STEM Ambassador has a STEM background – they are usually experts or professionals in their field.

All of our STEM Ambassadors have also undergone an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check to enable them to work with young people in school; and they have also attended an induction session with West Yorkshire STEM staff on how to approach classroom and school-based teaching sessions. To request a STEM Ambassador, email us: [ambassadors@wystem.co.uk](mailto:ambassadors@wystem.co.uk).

