

MR. KEITH BOHANNON

**RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS
MANAGER FOR FLIGHT PHYSICS**

**AIRBUS
BRISTOL, UNITED KINGDOM**

www.airbus.com



Education and Training

- B. Eng. (Hons) Aeronautical Eng, University of Limerick, Ireland, 1999
- Post Grad Dipl in Business Administration, Lancaster University, UK, 2009

Current Position

Title	Dates	Employer
RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS MANAGER FOR FLIGHT PHYSICS	2007-Present	AIRBUS, BRISTOL, UK

Previous Positions

Title	Dates	Employer
Technical Assistant to the Head of Aerodynamics	2006-2007	Airbus UK Filton, Bristol, UK
Lead Engineer for Aerodynamic Wing Integration Research	2003-2006	
Aerodynamics Engineer	2000-2003	
Graduate Engineer	1999-2000	

"Home" Town(s)/County(s)

Longford

Please describe your current job

I am currently responsible for managing a team of 7 people with the aim of building long-term collaborative partnerships with the world's best researchers to deliver value to the Airbus 'Flight Physics'* research strategy.

Airbus needs innovative ideas for technologies for our aircraft of the future so

to achieve this we need to develop and maintain relationships with research institutes, universities and funding bodies all over the world. As a result we now have partners in Europe, China, Singapore, South Africa, Russia and the USA.

I am based in the UK but my role is transnational. As you can imagine I need to travel a lot to meet with the partners, so I've got to see lots of the world and always try to make some time to take in some of the local sights and cultures on the way. Coping with jet lag can sometimes be a problem but the chance to visit places like the Great Wall more than makes up for it.

The things I enjoy most about the role are that it gives me the chance to work with lots of different people from varied backgrounds and cultures, which means that things are never dull. This also means the job can be demanding but this challenge keeps me motivated. Also, we have the chance to work on interesting ideas that could one day contribute towards shaping the future of air transport, so it feels like the work can make a real difference.

*The Flight Physics department covers Aerodynamics, Loads & Aeroelastics, Mass Estimation, Aircraft Performance and Flight Dynamics.

Please describe your career path since graduating with your B.Eng. Aeronautical Eng.

After graduating from UL in 1999 I joined the UK part of Airbus (based in Bristol) on their Direct Entry Graduate Scheme. I applied for Airbus because I knew I wanted to work in the area of aircraft design.

In the first year of the scheme I completed four placements, which allowed me to work in different parts of the business - aerodynamics, structures, manufacture and testing, including an external placement with a supplier, Hawker de Havilland (now Boeing Australia) in Sydney, for 4 months. Following this I joined the Aerodynamics department where I worked on the low speed design work for the A380 and A400M programmes including doing both Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) and wind tunnel testing. As part of my work on the A380 I spent 2 months in Toulouse on the Chief Aerodynamicist's team working on characterising the wake vortex behaviour which was a great experience.

In 2003 I took on the role of Lead Engineer where I was responsible for the management of all the research tasks within the group, My role included capacity and resource planning; budget, project and technical management; and

proposal preparation. I was also responsible for setting up, developing and implementing the group's research strategy. From this work I found out that I was motivated by managing and leading people, so my career has moved in this direction rather than purely technical, hence the move into my current role.

During this time I also had the roles of Task Manager and Lead Engineer for the AWIATOR European framework programme, responsible for managing a transnational team across Airbus and a number of European Research Institutes, to deliver technical results. The project involved having full responsibility for the design (Computer Fluid Dynamics), demonstration (Wind Tunnel Testing), Flight Test validation and exploitation of the technology (Sub-Boundary Layer Vortex Generators) across Airbus.

What made you decide to study Aeronautical Engineering at UL?

From secondary school I always had a strong interest in Engineering because I liked problem solving and implementation, but wasn't sure what area. I became interested in Aeronautical Engineering firstly because it was different. I was intrigued with how aircraft could be designed to be able to do amazing things, e.g. Spitfire, Concorde, 747, F-16. Also it seemed more glamorous and exciting as it was about global travel and pushing the boundaries of what was possible. The UL course on Aero Eng looked good and UL was gaining a very good reputation at the time especially for Engineering and Sciences.

Are you glad you did?

Yes. Really excellent course with a good balance between theory and application.

What did you most enjoy about studying at UL - academically, and also non-academically?

I enjoyed the atmosphere around the campus. Our course year was a small group (~20) so we all knew each other well. Also the Aero Eng department staff were very approachable.

Where did you do your COOP?

I did my coop at the Irish Air Corp in Dublin. It wasn't quite 'Top Gun' but it was excellent experience of seeing real aircraft up close and personal from helicopters to old fighters to a modern business jet. They were also very welcoming and friendly and allowed us to get our hands dirty and helped a lot in term of appreciation of the complexity of real aircraft and their operation.

What advice would you give school-goers considering choosing Aeronautical Engineering?

Speak to some people who have done it and ask them about it. Go somewhere where you can see a real aircraft.

What advice would you give future graduates of Aeronautical Engineering?

Look at all the options. There are many careers you can have linked to Aeronautical engineering so don't narrow your area of interest too much. Also apply to lots of places before you graduate. Don't just bank on 1 or 2. If you can speak to someone who works there before you apply to get some advice then all the better.