



SHORT STUDY 2025

# Young women on STEM education

## Young women like STEM, but there are barriers

**The good news: today's female school and college students in the UK find STEM anything but boring.** 70 per cent of the respondents have a personal interest in **Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics** topics. **That's one of the results of a short study by Walbrook Institute London.**

**The bad news: many have doubts about studying a STEM subject or taking a STEM apprenticeship.** The reasons? Nearly two out of three have concerns about the heavy workload, and half say they could feel overwhelmed by STEM topics. More than 40 percent are worried that the volume of work for these subjects would mean they couldn't take on a part-time job to support their university living costs.

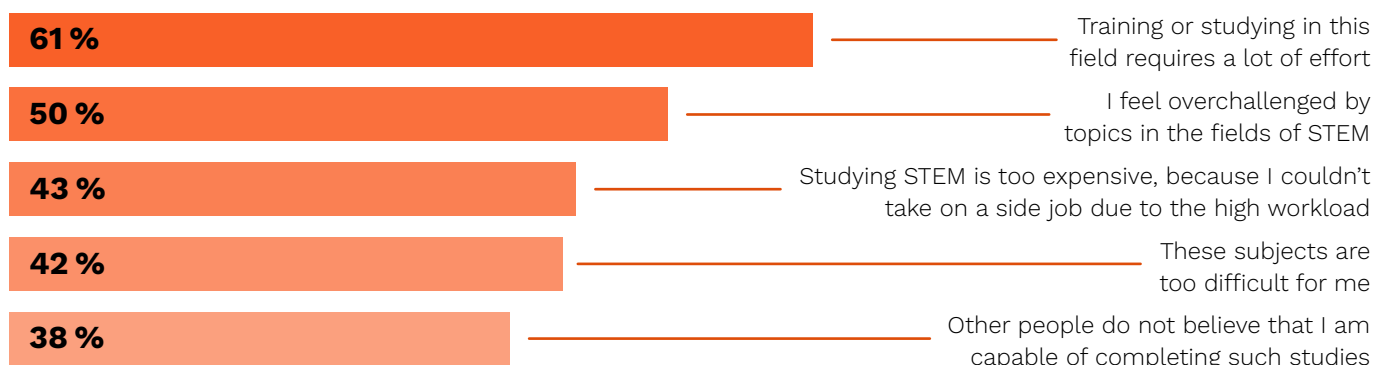
**70 %**

of female school and college students surveyed are interested in STEM topics.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Question: Do you generally have a personal interest in STEM topics?

Due to rounding off, there could be marginal deviations in the results.

**Please rate the extent to which the following points would prevent you taking an apprenticeship or a degree course in STEM.** Only answers "fully applies" and "applies" on a scale of 1 to 5 – excerpts from survey answers



# Other obstacles? A lack of knowledge...

Many of the respondents state that they lack the previous knowledge and the skills for specialist STEM subjects. This means they feel underequipped for a university course or apprenticeship in these areas. There is also a difference between subjects, with respondents feeling most prepared to study biology, maths or chemistry at a higher level.

**Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statement:**  
**"With my previous knowledge and my skills, I feel equipped to start a university course or an apprenticeship in the following subject."** Only answers "strongly agree" and "agree" on a scale of 1 to 5



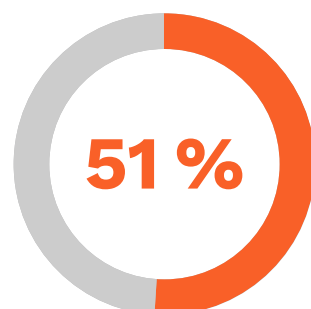
# ...or lacking fascination for STEM

In school, STEM subjects and the way they are taught are felt to be boring. So say about half of the female school and college students surveyed. For 45 per cent of the respondents, the teaching content is too complicated.

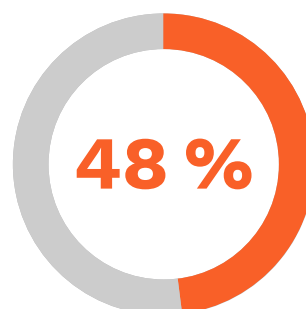


**Please rate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.**

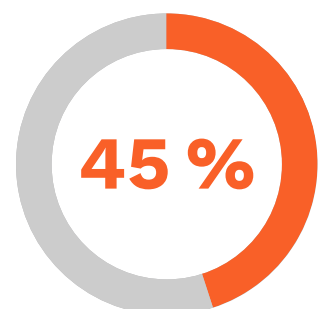
Only answers "strongly agree" and "agree" on a scale of 1 to 5 – excerpts from survey answers



My teachers teach the content of STEM in a boring and unappealing way.

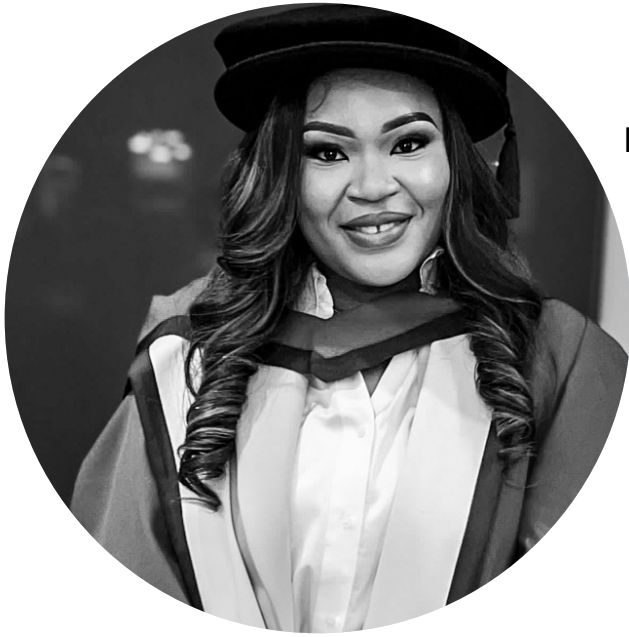


At school, I often find STEM dry and boring.



The teaching content of STEM is too complicated for me.

# “STEM careers can be so rewarding.

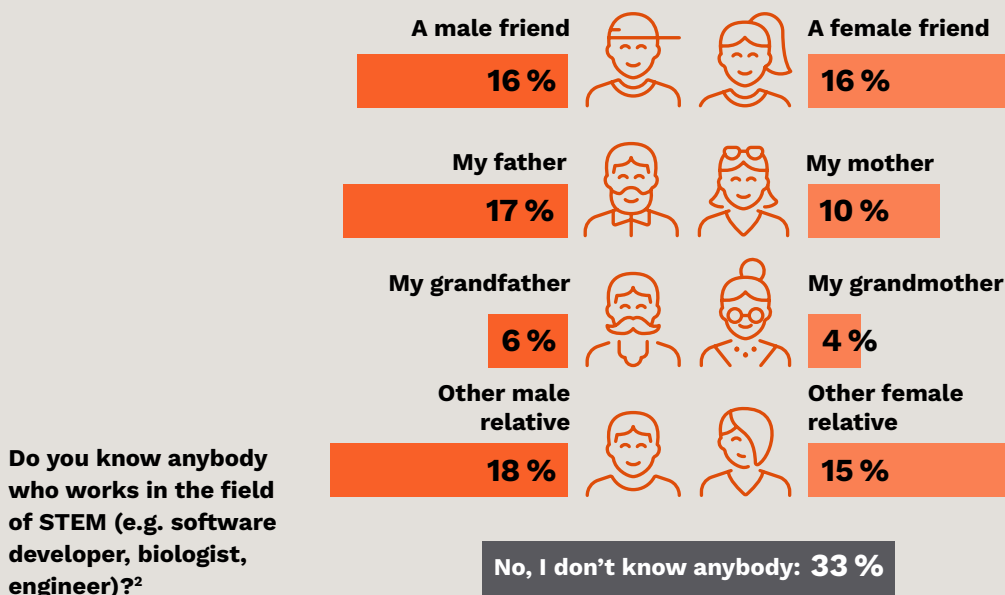


It's important to ensure they're available to everyone. While it's good to see that most of the young women surveyed did know someone working in STEM, these results also show some invisible barriers. It's clear from this survey that we need to build on young women's interest in these subjects, and provide engaging, accessible teaching and support.”

Dr Glory Aigbedion,  
Lecturer at Walbrook Institute London

## STEM models: young women know many

Two thirds of today's female school and college students in the UK know someone working in STEM. There is a slight majority in males in STEM known to the respondents. One third of the respondents don't know anybody who works in STEM.



# A life goal: balancing success and family

**Young women are ambitious.** They strive for career success, financial security and freedom of choice. **But time for and with their families is just as important to them.**

**Please rate the extent to which you consider the following aspects of life to be particularly important and desirable.** Only answers "fully applies" and "applies" on a scale of 1 to 5 – excerpts from survey answers

**73 %:** Being able to improve your social and economic status

**81 %:** Being financially well-off

**84 %:** Supporting your family and being there for them

**85 %:** Achieving career success

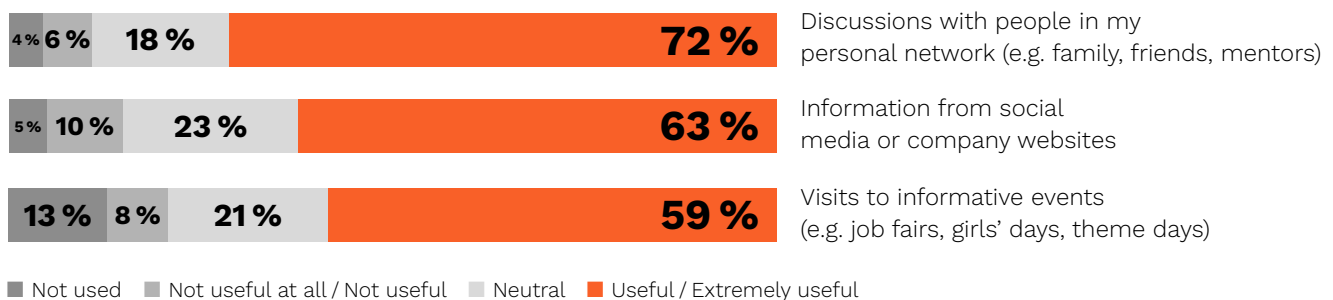
**85 %:** Having independence and being able to make your own decisions

**90 %**  
of female school and college students want to study at university.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Are you generally interested in studying at university?

## Career guidance is a social affair

**Have you ever made use of any guidance services to help you choose your career / degree?** Excerpts from survey answers



## Imprint

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### Target group:

1,000 female students who are currently attending school or college in the United Kingdom

### You can also find us on:



### In cooperation with:

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Panel: Cint  
Survey period: 6 to 11 September 2024

<sup>2</sup> Although gender requires more than a binary classification into female and male, the data currently available for such an analysis is limited. In general, the numbers are too small to allow a statistically significant breakdown by additional variables. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, gender is considered in a binary system.