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## West Midlands Railway apprentice technician scoops national rail award

A West Midlands Railway (WMR) apprentice technician has won “female apprentice of the year” at the 2023 Women in Rail awards.

Rio Pearce, 21, from Rowley Regis, scooped the prestigious award whilst in her third and final year as an apprentice for WMR at Tyseley depot.

Rio’s hands-on role includes the diagnosis and repair of train faults as well as safety-critical briefings and working closely with technicians.

Working 12-hour shift patterns, including early starts and late finishes, Rio’s

commitment to the job and determination to thrive in the rail industry has shone through and her confidence has grown to the extent that she is admired by young apprentices across the business.

Rio received her award at a gala presentation evening in London last night, where she recognised alongside inspirational female rail employees from across the UK.

Jonny Wiseman, WMR customer experience director, said:

“I am thrilled that Rio has deservedly won female apprentice of the year at the Women in Rail awards and everybody at West Midlands Railway is very proud of her.

“Rio is an outstanding apprentice who has pushed back boundaries and paved the way many more young women to join the rail industry in coming years.”

Rio Pearce, apprentice technician at WMR, said:

“I am delighted to win this award and I would say to anyone who wants to get into engineering or the railway to go for it.

“I wanted to join West Midlands Railway as an apprentice because the scheme offers multiple opportunities to learn from others who are experts in their industry.

“I don’t think being a female apprentice is much different from being a male apprentice. I get on with everyone really well, there’s no stereotyping, everyone is super friendly, and we all treat each other equally and with respect.”

More information on the Women in Rail awards can be viewed [here](#).

WMR aims to inspire the next generation to get involved in the railway. There are a number of apprenticeship schemes on offer [here](#) which provide routes into a career on the tracks.

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## About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, email [press.office@wmtrains.co.uk](mailto:press.office@wmtrains.co.uk)

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit [westmidlandsrailway.co.uk](http://westmidlandsrailway.co.uk) or [londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk](http://londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk)

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