

## Helen Emsley

**Job title:** Executive Director of GMC Design and User Experience

### **Job description**

Designing the interiors of automobiles.

### **Did you always know you wanted to go into this field?**

I come from a part of England called Yorkshire, which is in the north of England, and there's a lot of woolen textile mills. So I kind of grew up around the textile industry. My real passion in the beginning was textile design and my degree was in woven textiles. That was what I was going to do. Then I entered a competition in the final year of my degree designing fabric for automobiles, and I hadn't really thought about it until then. And that's kind of how I got into interiors for automobiles.



### **Can you tell me about a time that was particularly challenging?**

Well I can tell you one when I was quite young actually. It's sort of funny. When I was at high school, even though I hated it, I was quite good at science and math. And when I decided that I wanted to opt out to go into art, my teachers were very concerned and called my parents into the school. Lucky for me, my dad's kind of with it. He has more forward thinking, is the best way to say it.

My dad told them that "This is what my daughter wants to do. I stand by her. She will be miserable going to the university. She wants to be a designer." So my dad stood up against the school and told them to back off and leave me alone. All my dad said was, "All I ask is that you do what you want to do and be as good as you can at what you do, and your mom and I'll stand by you." And they did.

### **So what you would you say to youth who might consider taking a similar career path?**

I would say if this is what you really, really want to do, do it. Don't let anybody tell you that you can't do it. Because no matter what you do in life, you'll always get somebody saying that you won't get a job or if you do, you won't earn very much money. Or you might not be very good at it. You might struggle.