

Case Study

Airbus

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The Sector Skills Council
for Science, Engineering and
Manufacturing Technologies



“Working with Semta has allowed us to develop a benchmark apprenticeship programme. Our apprenticeship scheme allows us to invest in the future and it gives us a great sense of pride to see our employees we have supported through these programmes becoming a valuable asset of Airbus.”

Mark Stewart
HR Director and
Country Manager

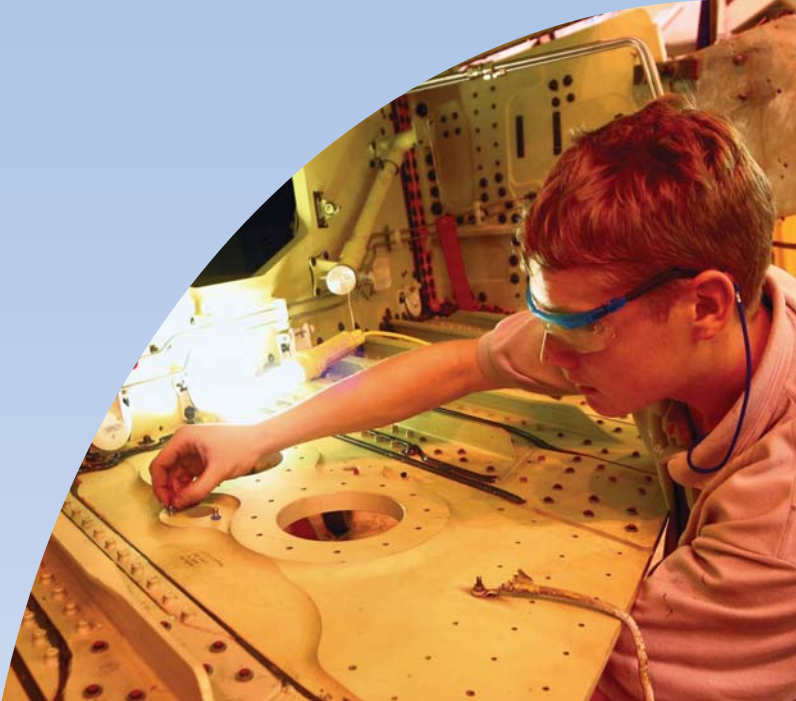
Pioneering Higher Engineering Apprenticeships

Airbus is reaping the business benefits of its 'best in class' Higher Engineering Apprenticeship which delivers the skills the company needs to stay ahead. The programme is a key stage in the progression route to professional engineer status, allowing all apprentices to reach their full potential. With unrivalled career development on offer, the company is able to attract and retain the best young talent.

The Airbus Higher Engineering Apprenticeship programme was developed at the company's Broughton site in partnership with Deeside College and Glyndŵr University with support from Semta. The company first requested Semta's help in 2001 to design a bespoke programme to give engineering technicians and engineers skills and knowledge over and above the outcomes of the national Modern Apprenticeship framework. Now the programme is accredited by the Royal Aeronautical Society and the Institute of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE). It is open to direct entrants and those transferring from the company's Craft Apprenticeship scheme.

Higher apprentices attend Deeside College full-time for the first year to gain a Performing Engineering Operations NVQ at level 2 and BTEC National

Certificate in Aeronautical Engineering (Mechanical). During their second and third years they develop their skills and experience in the workplace as they work towards the Level 4 NVQ in Engineering Leadership and follow the Foundation Degree (FdEng) in Aeronautical Engineering (Manufacture) through day release. The apprenticeship also includes five Key Skills at level 3 and an Institute of Leadership and Management qualification at level 3. A bridging programme provides a route to a BEng (Hons) degree at Glyndŵr University and from there an MSc in Composite Manufacture for Aerospace Technology is available. A CPD programme supports apprentices in gaining Chartered Engineer status through the IMechE, which Airbus actively encourages. The route from Craft Apprentice to Chartered Engineer typically takes nine years to complete.



Gary Griffiths, head of apprenticeships in the Employment Training and Competence Management team, said: "Over the years we have developed and refined apprentice training that benefits everyone. Progression was always the expectation and was an important consideration when we developed the Higher Apprenticeship model. Regardless of how people start off, they can now progress through to a Masters and Chartership with multiple entry and exit points. This means our programme is unique and is seen by many external organisations as being 'Best in Class'."

Many Higher Apprentices have gained good honours degrees and progressed to positions of responsibility. They include Lionel Dumont, Mike Darlington and Andy McGuffie.

Former craft apprentice Mike Darlington said: "I always hoped I could progress into engineering. I now have quite a lot of responsibility on the A380 team, signing off

standard operating instructions. My next target is to study for a Master's degree and become a Chartered Engineer."

Lionel Dumont, who joined Airbus as a Higher Engineering Apprentice, is now a quality conformance engineer. He said: "Airbus has given me every opportunity to progress and if you work hard there's nothing you can't achieve. Help and guidance was always there and the training advisers' door was always open."

Andy McGuffie started as a craft apprentice and was Apprentice of the Year at the Broughton site in 2007. He continued on the Higher Engineering Apprenticeship programme and earned a first class degree. "When I joined Airbus in 2003 I never thought I would get this far, but I've had the opportunities – and I've taken them," he said. "When I did the Craft Apprenticeship my training adviser gave me good advice and boosted my confidence to go further." Andy is now enrolled on an MSc.

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