




LINCOLN
UTC
A University
Technical College

Apprentice Case Study

APPRENTICESHIPS AT FAIRFIELD CONTROL SYSTEMS

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH LINCOLN UTC

3 YEAR PROGRAMME

Fairfields are experts in designing and building control systems, therefore it is essential that the knowledge its employees possess remains within the company and apprentices are a key component to the company's success. Apprentices and ex-apprentices currently make up around 30% of the total workforce and we have retained over 90% of our apprentices as full time employees over the past 17 years. Fairfields was named as 'Small Employer of the Year' in 2013 in the National Apprenticeship Awards and was also named as one of the 2013 'Top 100 Employers'.

Fairfields engage up to four apprentices per year. These future engineers embark on an extensive three-year programme then, following successful completion of their Apprenticeship, the business continues to support them through sponsorship of a part-time degree for a further two years with the option of then going on to study for a Masters degree.

Apprentices spend the three year programme rotating around each of the company's core departments – Projects, workshop, Commissioning, Service, and Sales in order to gain a thorough understanding of the business. Once they have successfully completed the programme, they are then employed on a full-time and permanent basis in their preferred specialism, alongside studying for their degree; all of which enables

young people to earn while they learn and avoid the burden of student debt.

LINCOLN UTC

In order to recruit good quality, enthusiastic apprentices, Fairfields regularly attend open days, engineering and recruitment fairs and visit local schools and colleges. A 2 week placement is also a frequently used option in order to give students an insight into the business before applying to the apprenticeship programme.

One such college which Fairfields has developed a close partnership with since its inception in 2015 is Lincoln UTC. Fairfields has offered several work placements to its students, provided course specific presentations to nurture interest in electrical and control engineering, attended a number of open days and is a regular sponsor at their annual awards event.

Fairfields believe the partnership with Lincoln UTC be valuable in bridging the engineering skills gap and enable it to have a continued and successful long-standing apprenticeship programme with the next generation of electrical engineers.

INTRODUCING... ALFIE HINTON

Following a full day of practical assessments and an interview, Alfie Hinton was taken on as an apprentice in the summer of 2017, the second successful applicant from Lincoln UTC.



Alfie (second from left) on A Level results day

The Apprenticeship appealed to Alfie since it offered him the opportunity to further his academic knowledge whilst experience working in the field of electrical engineering.

A GRADE RESULTS

Alfie opted to go to Lincoln UTC for his sixth form studies as it offered the chance to study for A-Levels within a specialised environment, with the focus on STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics). Studying at the UTC enabled Alfie to enhance his chances of a successful career in engineering due to the specialist equipment the labs have been kitted out with, such as PLCs, drives and motors, along with industry work placements in engineering companies, such as Fairfields. Alfie received excellent results, gaining 3 A grades in A' Level Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry and a Distinction in his BTEC Level 3 Engineering.

LIFE AS AN APPRENTICE

During his first few months at Fairfields, Alfie has been in the Projects Department and has already had the opportunity to work on the numerous projects, including:

Dubai Metro Extension:

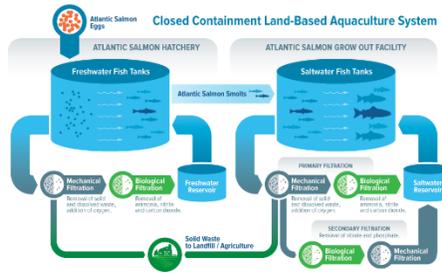
- Configuration of station I/O lists

Wimbledon Court One:

- General arrangement design for main control panels
- Schematic design for roof interfaces
- Control panel factory acceptance testing

Inland Fish Farms

- SCADA and graphical interface
- Design calculations



Inland Fish Farm system (top), Dubai Metro (middle) and Wimbledon Roof (bottom)

UTC, I decided it was a great company to work for as I was an interested in the control systems sector. The apprenticeship has offered me the chance to spend time within different areas of the business to understand how the company operates and gain practical hands-on experience. Fairfields also offers the chance to study for a HND in Electronic & Electrical Engineering with the option to go on to study this at degree level, which appealed to me as this was the area that I had the most interest in from the subjects I chose to study.

The start of my apprenticeship has been very enjoyable as I have had the chance to work on many different projects and learn different skills from all of them. I have also been able apply the learning from my sixth form studies to 'real-life' systems produced by Fairfields".

Peter McMorrow, Fairfields' Engineering Director, added:

"We can affirm that Lincoln UTC provide the necessary preparation and industry opportunities for talented students.

Since joining Fairfields, Alfie has provided a valuable contribution to the Design Team and has an exciting future in engineering and with Fairfields. We are looking forward to providing Alfie the necessary mentoring and training in order to achieve his full potential and support Fairfields in their continued growth."

TRAINING & MENTORING

Alongside studying for his HND in Electrical & Electronic Engineering 1 day a week at college, Alfie has also undergone job-specific and manufacturing specific training since he joined the team.

Throughout his apprenticeship, Alfie will be mentored by an experienced engineer to ensure he is on track with his apprenticeship and that he obtains a thorough understanding of the business methods, policies and procedures and someone who can identify any additional training needs.

FEEDBACK

Alfie said: "Having watched a presentation from Fairfields at Lincoln

30%

30% of all Fairfields employees are either current or former Apprentices.

90%

More than 90% of all apprentices have been retained by Fairfields since the programme began in 2000.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read more about Fairfields Apprenticeship programme, go to:

WWW.FAIRFIELDS.CO.UK/ABOUT

