



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 department – 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 will 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... BILLY HANNER

Following a full day of practical assessments and an interview, Billy Hanner was taken on as an apprentice in the summer of 2016, in what Fairfields Hopes to be the first of many recruits



Billy being filmed for the Baker Dearing Trust for Lincoln UTC working in a control panel

from Lincoln UTC. Billy was inspired to apply for the Apprenticeship following a presentation and demonstration given at college by Fairfields.

TRIPLE DISTINCTION *

Whilst at Lincoln UTC, Billy was an outstanding and enthusiastic student. He achieved a triple distinction* in his BTEC Level 3 Extended Diploma in Engineering and during his first term at college, was the youngest student ever to be awarded the Sir William Siemens Award in recognition of his work on a project to design a working twin cylinder steam engine from scratch. Billy was a regular Student Ambassador at college events and open days, and still attends as a representative of Fairfields. In his summer break, Billy also volunteered to assist the IT team to set up the new ICT infrastructure when the college moved to new premises.

LIFE AS AN APPRENTICE

During his first year at Fairfield's, Billy has been in the Projects Department and Sales Department. Projects Billy has worked on include:

Wimbledon Court 1 Roof:

- Creation of schematic drawings

Viking Voyage Superflume:

- HMI Graphical Interface

Dark Ride for the Leisure Industry

- Developing HMI
- Creation of Software to animate graphics

Inland Fish Farms

- Quotation and specification
- Hardware design of control panels
- Control panel build

TRAINING & MENTORING

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

Throughout his apprenticeship, Billy has been assigned an experienced mentor to ensure he is on track with his apprenticeship and that he obtains a thorough understanding of the business methods, policies and procedures and who can identify any training needs.



Viking Voyage Superflume (top) and Wimbledon Roof (bottom)

FEEDBACK

Billy said:

"I was fascinated by some of the projects Fairfield's had worked on. All my life I have always had an interest in how things worked. With my Apprenticeship, and hopefully future career, I can focus that interest on Engineering."

Lincoln UTC helped me to focus my skills and interests and showed me career options that I had not previously considered."

Peter McMorrow, Fairfield's Engineering Director, added:

"Apprentices are such a vital part of our organisation and sustainability, we appreciate the need to train and develop young talented people in order to produce world class engineers for the future."

We have identified Lincoln UTC as a key partner in providing students a springboard into industry. Billy is a testament to how this partnership works."

30%

30% of all Fairfield's employees are either current or former Apprentices.

90%

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

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To read more about Fairfield's Apprenticeship programme, go to:

WWW.FAIRFIELDS.CO.UK/ABOUT

 **Apprenticeships**
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