

This document has been archived because it is no longer current.

Building productive and successful links with employers: Tresham College

URN: 130771

Area: Northamptonshire

Date published: 4 March 2011

Reference: 120160

Brief description

Tresham College works closely with the motorsport industry to design and run successful race technician apprenticeship training courses, through their National College for Motorsport facility at the Silverstone racing circuit.

Overview – the college’s message



‘Race technician apprenticeships weren’t available before we became involved with the motorsport industry. We listened to employers in the industry to find out exactly how they wanted race technician apprentices to be trained and what skills they required. An industry advisory working group was set up to test ideas and to guide the process. It was important to make sure that the people delivering the training were credible in the

industry. They needed to understand how it operates and have a passion for motorsport, and they needed to understand the industry’s constraints and requirements. For these reasons we recruited staff from the industry and developed them as trainers and assessors.

It is important to be flexible about how the training and assessment is delivered to fully meet employers’ needs. For example the technical certificate part of the apprenticeship is taught between September and February when the racing calendar is quieter. The assessment happens during the race season when apprentices can demonstrate their skills and abilities. Learners must have a real desire to work in the industry and we teach them about the behaviour and attitudes that are expected in the industry. Learners are initially provided with good practical awareness training to improve their confidence and credibility in the pit lanes and the garages.

It is really important to make sure that you deliver against any promises and constantly consult with the industry to update courses and maintain the currency of the programmes.’

The good practice in detail

The college runs the apprenticeship training at the National College for Motorsport based at the Silverstone race circuit in Northamptonshire. The close proximity of the Motorsport College to many of the top race teams gives learners good exposure to potential employers and enhances the credibility of the training courses. The facility reflects the high standards and modern equipment levels necessary for motorsport racing today. The specialist courses have been developed in conjunction with the motorsports industry to provide highly skilled technicians to prepare, repair and maintain modern race vehicles. Apprentices are employed full time with a race or rally team as an apprentice race technician.



Following an initial training period, motorsport qualifications are assessed solely within the working environment by highly skilled technicians who have previously worked in the motor racing industry. The college consulted with employers about what they required from an apprenticeship training programme

and worked closely with the employers to build a practical and technical programme suitable for the needs of the industry. An industry advisory group was set up to advise and guide the college about what should be included in the apprenticeships and how courses should be delivered. College managers worked closely with the various sector skills councils and awarding bodies to design and implement apprentice and advanced apprentice frameworks for race technicians. Learners work on purpose-built race vehicles that regularly compete at the highest levels at racing circuits across Europe. Working closely with a nearby racing team provides opportunities for the learners to prepare their vehicles for race and test events. They gain valuable relevant skills preparing the vehicles to race in events and helping to repair them at the races. Some learners go on to work as part of Formula One racing teams in design and race-engineering roles; options previously only available to university graduates.

‘Now employers can be certain that if they recruit an apprentice, s/he will be properly trained and prepared for the demands of motorsport.’

Jim Harrod, the Head of School for Motorsport at Tresham says: ‘It was a difficult journey trying to help an industry that didn’t know it needed help, to recruit and train the right people to prepare, repair and maintain their vehicles. Previously they tended to use staff poached from other sectors that often did not have the right attitudes and knowledge to work in the motorsport industry. Now they can be certain that if they recruit an apprentice, s/he will be properly trained and prepared for the demands of motorsport.’

Hannah, who is working as a motorsport race technician having previously completed an apprenticeship with the National College for Motorsport says: ‘The support I received has been integral to boosting confidence in my own abilities and provided me with a strong base of knowledge which has helped reaffirm my decision to pursue a career in the motorsport industry.’



College background



Tresham College has developed a modern well-equipped training facility at Silverstone Technology Park based at the famous Silverstone racing circuit. The facility, known as the [National College for Motorsport](#) provides pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship and advanced apprenticeship race technician courses. The college, in conjunction with the motorsport industry has developed the courses and works with employers to provide the industry with well-trained and skilled people.

Are you thinking of putting these ideas into practice; or already doing something similar that could help other providers; or just interested? We'd welcome your views and ideas. Get in touch [here](#).

To view other good practice examples, go to:
www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/goodpractice