



# ISSUE 01

SPRING 2021



Welcome to your first newsletter from the Centre of Excellence in Engineering at Wigan & Leigh College.

As an employer, you will know how important a skilled workforce is.

For the last 70 years we have been working with companies such as yours to develop the nation's engineering and technology specialists, helping to close the skills gap within your industry.

We offer innovative teaching and learning, based at the multi-million pound Pagefield Centre in Wigan, to invest in education that supports the nation's future economic growth.

Here's a look at the latest news and views from our students, staff and employers helping to shape the next generation of engineers.

## CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE IN ENGINEERING

### Get in touch

For more information about how Wigan & Leigh College can support you with apprenticeships, placements or workforce skills development contact:  
Employer Engagement Executive,  
Mark Greenhalgh, on:

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# CAL International launches Degree Apprenticeship programme

Four mechanical designers from Cal International have started their higher and degree apprenticeships at the University Centre Wigan & Leigh College.

CAL International's CEO, Cliff Kirby, said:

*"The College's support has been amazing from a commercial perspective. We have saved around £8K, as they identified that we are eligible for support from the apprenticeship levy scheme."*

The College provides bespoke advice for employers who want to offer the degree apprenticeship route for their staff, not only on appropriate courses for specific careers, but also on funding.

Degree apprentices, Tom Appleton, Ashen Daluwattage and Matthew Barker are studying the HND in Mechanical Engineering, with a view to progress to the BEng (Hons) Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering Top-up degree, while Nigel Kaitano, who has already achieved the HND, is to continue to the Top-up degree.

Left to right: Tom Appleton, Matthew Barker, Ashen Daluwattage and Nigel Kaitano

*"Apprentices play a vital role in boosting a company's productivity, help in delivering technology of the future and often challenge an organisation to do things in new, innovative ways,"* added Mr Kirby.

*"We are delighted with the support of the College in helping to set up the degree apprenticeship programme and look forward to continuing to work with them to develop our future engineers."*



**CAL**  
INTERNATIONAL

## HITACHI Inspire the Next

James Cryer is Production Engineering Manager at the Bolton based company. He said: "The students are doing very well. We want to encourage young people to become interested in engineering – they are our future workforce after all."

Student placements at Hitachi Automotive Systems UK are proving popular with those studying Level 3 Mechanical Engineering.

As the workforce inevitably ages the company is keen to introduce young people into engineering, where often they excel with more computer-based processes.

"Young people have fresh eyes and lots of enthusiasm and with the introduction

## Hitachi placements prove a hit

of robotics and automation they naturally take to these computer-based systems," added James. "We have a number of employees who have made their way up from apprenticeships or production team member roles to become experienced engineers or maintenance technicians."

# On track for T Levels

New technical qualifications are set to launch in September, designed to prepare school leavers for work in a range of industries including Civil Engineering.

The new T Level qualifications have been designed with employers, making them specifically relevant to industry, with students learning the skills demanded in the workplace.



The College is working with Galliford Try, Mogan Sindall, Bowmer and Kirkland, Murphys and Laing O'Rourke to offer placements for T Levels students, which form a large part of the course requirement, 45 days or about 20% of course attendance

Tony Costello is Social Value Engagement Officer at Galliford Try. *"We have delivered work placements for a very long time. I think the difference with T Level students will be the*

Tony Costello,  
Social Value Engagement Officer  
at Galliford Try

*high calibre of applicants interested in this option. We see the T Level as a stepping stone for students to move into apprenticeships. If we can help young people get their careers on track there's nothing better for both the individual and the industry."*

If you are interested in supporting T Level students progress their Civil Engineering career contact Gareth Lloyd or Neil Campbell on:  
[g.lloyd@wigan-leigh.ac.uk](mailto:g.lloyd@wigan-leigh.ac.uk)  
[ne.campbell@wigan-leigh.ac.uk](mailto:ne.campbell@wigan-leigh.ac.uk)

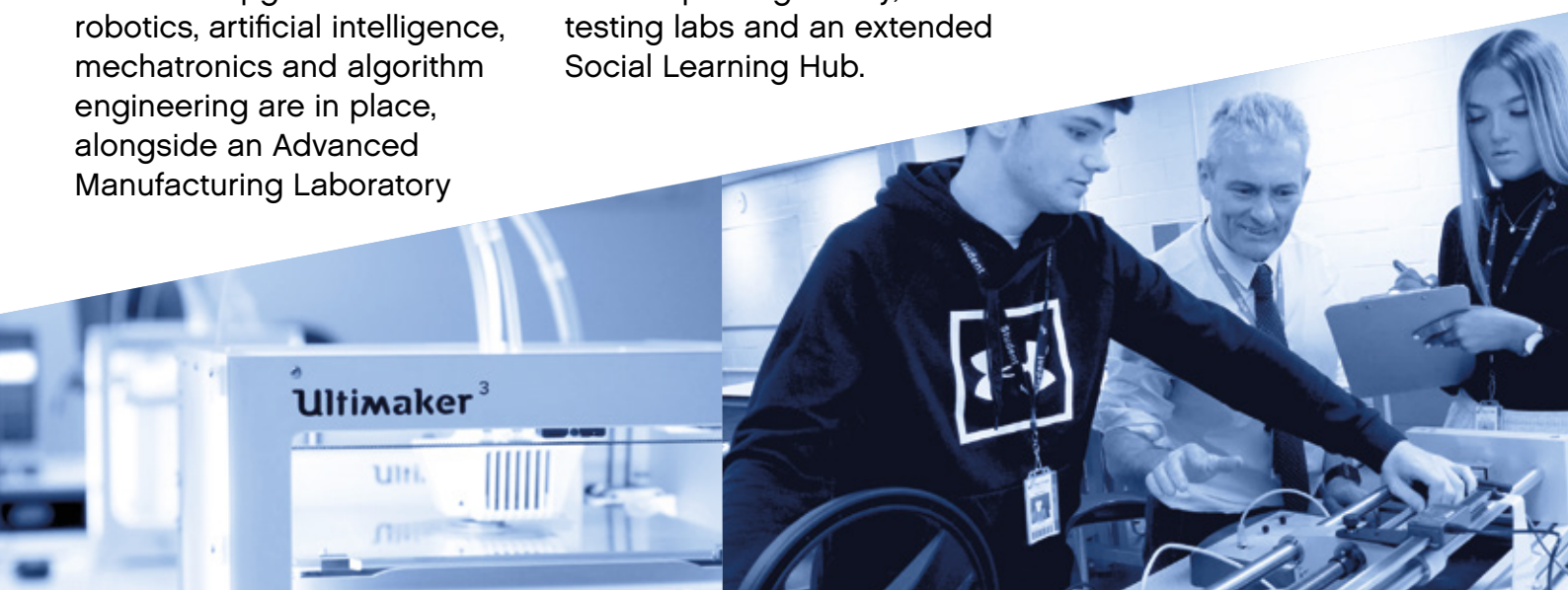
**T-LEVELS**  
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

## New digital technologies at Pagefield Centre

The Centre of Excellence in Engineering has benefitted from a multi-million pound refurbishment to ensure facilities and equipment align with industry standards.

Resource upgrades in robotics, artificial intelligence, mechatronics and algorithm engineering are in place, alongside an Advanced Manufacturing Laboratory

with 3D printing facility, soil testing labs and an extended Social Learning Hub.



# Sellafield apprentice aims for Chartered Engineer status

Sellafield degree apprentice Alex Rawlinson is in the second year of the BEng Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering (Top up) degree at the University Centre Wigan & Leigh College having studied the HNC and HND.

The mechanical designer attends the University Centre one day a week with the aim of becoming a mechanical engineer, earning a masters and progressing to Chartered Engineer status.

"I have always been interested in engineering. Maths and science were always my strongest subjects," said Alex. "My father owns an engineering company and I gained lots of experience doing odd jobs there."

Alex is also a Stem Ambassador for Sellafield visiting schools to promote science and technology subjects.

"Lots of modules on the course directly relate to what we do in work each day such as CAD design. We are learning about design and manufacture and how it can be more cost effective too, which is of huge benefit to employers."



Degree Apprentice  
Alex Rawlinson



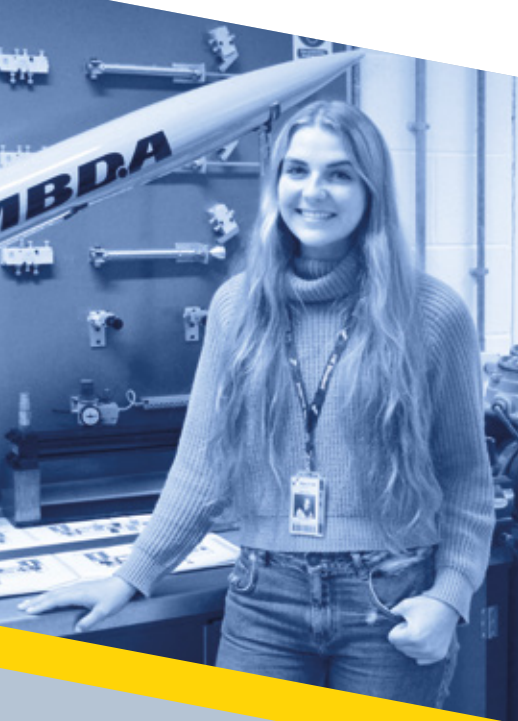
Engineering staff donated a range of personal protective equipment (PPE) to support local NHS key workers when stocks were running short at the start of the pandemic. Masks, gloves and visors, which were not needed for staff and students, were donated to support the fight against Covid-19.

New visors and other PPE  
ready to donate to NHS

Staff also got busy manufacturing new PPE using 3D printers at the Pagefield Centre - the hub of the Centre of Excellence in Engineering. The life-saving visors helped boost depleted PPE stock for NHS staff at a crucial time.

## Pagefield PPE boosts NHS stocks





# Developing diversity in engineering

Abbey Berry works full time at MBDA as a Senior Test Engineer and is a degree apprentice studying the BEng (Hons) Electrical & Electronic Engineering (Top-up).

Abbey Berry encourages more women engineers



As one of a minority of women in the industry, Abbey is keen to encourage more to consider a role in engineering.

*"I've never been treated any differently as a woman," said Abbey, "but it does need to be more widely accepted. If more women join engineering it will become the norm."*

Abbey would like to become a Chartered Engineer and is considering a masters when she completes the degree.

## Talented trio scoop engineering scholarships

Alexandra Pruden (19), Lisa Coffey (22) and William Sculthorpe (19) have each received the ICE QUEST Technician Scholarship, a sign of excellence which recognises the abilities and potential of early-career civil engineers and comes with a £1,000 funding award.

The trio is currently working towards HND qualifications in Construction & The Built Environment.

Lisa Coffey, said: *"I am excited about the potential opportunities this will open up for me as I work towards becoming a Chartered Engineer. The financial support will also help me to fund other training opportunities and potentially a research trip to Chernobyl to develop my knowledge of the nuclear industry."*

# ice

Institution of Civil Engineers

Three talented Sellafield apprentices have been awarded coveted civil engineering scholarships by the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE North West).

Scholarships are awarded to ambitious engineering students who demonstrate good leadership and team player attributes, independence and determination.

Phil Collier, Engineering Mentor at the University Centre, said, *"We are very proud of their achievements and believe they will each go on to successful careers in the nuclear industry."*

Emma Antrobus, regional director at ICE North West, added:

*"Quest Technician Scholarships are awarded to those who demonstrate excellence, so this year's recipients should be extremely proud of their achievements."*

Engineer Lisa is planning a trip to Chernobyl with the proceeds of her ICE scholarship



# Nippon Electric Glass welcomes work placement students

Mechanical Engineering student Harvey O'Neil Robinson is getting first-hand experience of putting theory into practice at Nippon Electric Glass.

The 17-year-old Level 3 student has been working at the company, based in Wigan, every Friday since January and has settled in well to his role.

*"The best thing about working is the team," said Harvey. "If I am ever stuck with something there is always someone there to help and to explain how things are done."*

Work placement is integral to engineering students' progression, forming an important aspect to learning.

Kevin Duffin is Head of Maintenance at Electric Glass Fibre.

He said: *"Harvey is getting stuck in to working on breakdowns across the site. It means he is working on something different every week."*

The company also employs apprentices from the College in mechanical and electrical engineering.

*"Placements provide a taster for students, so they can decide whether they really want to progress their careers and go on to apprenticeships in engineering," said Kevin.*

*"We very often offer positions to our apprentices once they complete."*

Taking on placements and apprentices is also a cost effective solution to combatting skills shortages in the sector.

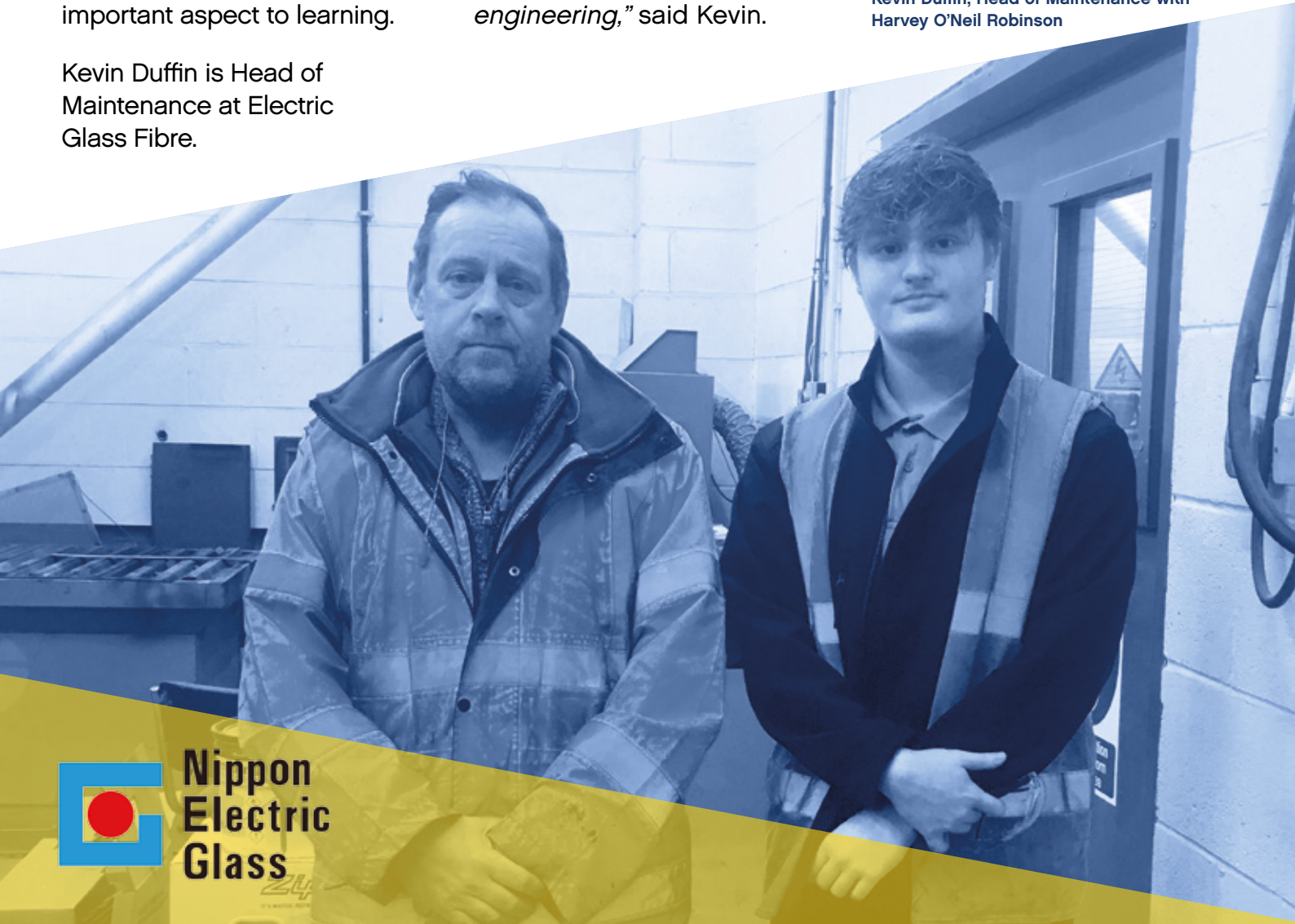
*"Growing our own workforce saves a lot of time for us in recruitment costs and makes sure that we hire quality staff who we have supported throughout their progression," added Kevin.*

Kevin Duffin, Head of Maintenance with Harvey O'Neil Robinson



**Nippon  
Electric  
Glass**

24  
HOURS  
SERVICE



# Institution of Engineering and Technology accreditation

The Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) awarded accreditation to the University Centre for the quality of its delivery of Engineering degrees. The College is the only one of its type in Greater Manchester to gain the award.



**Accredited Programme**

The accreditation provides recognition for delivering high quality internationally respected undergraduate degrees.

The BEng (Hons) Electrical and Electronic Engineering and the BEng (Hons) Mechanical

and Manufacturing, was accredited by IET on behalf of the Engineering Council for the purposes of fully meeting the academic requirement for registration as an Incorporated Engineer, and partly meeting the academic requirements for registration as a Chartered Engineer.

## Alumni achieves Weapon Engineer Officer role

Graduate, Danny Scholes, is looking forward to starting a new role in the Royal Navy as Weapon Engineer Officer, after achieving the BEng (Hons) Top up Electrical and Electronic Engineering.

Danny studied Electrical and Electronic Engineering at the College from 2013 achieving the highest grade possible for the BTEC Level 3 - a Triple Distinction\*, progressing to the HND with a Distinction, and finally graduating with a 2:1 BEng Hons Degree.

He is currently based in Portsmouth and is continuing to study before he joins the submarine in May this year.

His role as engineer manager means he will be responsible for making sure that everything works on board, from radar to sonar communications. He will also look after the welfare of his team.

*"I like to be doing something that isn't sat at a desk, while still being able to progress to achieve a masters and chartership in engineering,"*  
added Danny.



Graduate, Danny Scholes

# Engineering Advisory Board

The College's first Engineering Industrial Advisory Board was launched with senior representatives from a range of sectors including Engineering and Manufacturing, Health, Defence, the Power Network Industry and Nuclear Power.

Members include the Science and Technologies Facilities Council, Nippon Electric Glass America, CAL International, MBDA missile systems, Nice-Pak International and Sellafield Ltd.

The Board advises on the industrial relevance of courses and identifies sector issues likely to impact on their development.

The next Board will meet in June this year.

If you would like to join please contact:

Ursula Hoyles  
u.hoyles@wigan-leigh.ac.uk

Greater Manchester based Heatrod Industrial, manufacturer of industrial heating supplies, has extended its apprenticeship programme with the College.

## Heatrod Apprentice Programme



HR Manager Alison Rothwell has been working with the Business Services Team to set up the programme.

*"The College support has been fantastic," she said. "We had discussions with the course leaders and they kept us updated on the application process, right through to appointments being confirmed and paperwork being finalised."*

The College's Business Services Team is developing the apprenticeship programme for Heatrod, as well as supporting them with further skills training in the wider workplace.

*"Working with apprentices in the business helps us to grow a workforce that's enthusiastic about what we do," Alison added. "They add value to the team and are integral to our ongoing success."*

## Get in touch

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**Skills for  
Business Growth**