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**Finding the engineers of tomorrow**

According to EngineeringUK, we need to employ 203,000 engineers every year until 2024 to meet demand. One way businesses may can help to close this skills gap is by engaging with students at a young age. Here, Simon Biggs, Education Outreach Officer at [global engineering technologies company](https://www.renishaw.com/en/education-outreach--34713?utm_source=Stone%20Junction&utm_medium=PR&utm_campaign=REC260) Renishaw, explains how businesses and education can collaborate to increase engagement in engineering.

Employers often find it difficult to find employees with the right skills, qualifications or experience for their vacancies. This is partly because of the limits of the science and maths curriculum in schools.

The problem is particularly severe in engineering, which is hidden inside the traditional subjects of maths, design and technology (D&T) and physics. This can steer young people away from engineering as a career path.

The Government agrees that education needs to be more closely connected to industry. “We can’t guarantee young people that a qualification is a clear path to a job unless we’re working side by side with the people who have the vacancies and the skills needs,” explained Damian Hinds, Education Secretary. “That’s why we’re putting employers at the heart of every reform we’re making to technical education.”

**Making the connection**

The UK Government’s Careers Strategy, published in December 2017, and statutory guidance for school leaders and school staff published in January 2018, sets out the plan for building a high-quality careers system that will help young people to identify and choose career opportunities that are right for them. The eight Gatsby Benchmarks (developed by the Gatsby Foundation which is focused on strengthening the UK’s science and engineering skills) define all the elements of an excellent careers programme. The Gatsby Benchmarks have now been put at the heart of the Careers Strategy with an expectation that all schools will meet them fully by the end of 2020.

Schools will need to engage and link with local businesses to ensure that their students have encounters with different employers and employees and have the opportunity to experience different workplaces. Schools and employers will also need to work together to help link the curriculum learning to careers.

To support the Gatsby Benchmarks, employers can work alongside schools in hands on projects to encourage young people into science and engineering careers. Businesses can directly engage with schools to explain what an engineer is, the potential jobs young people can apply for in the future and the skills they need to develop.

One way to achieve this is by encouraging engineers to become science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) ambassadors. Current employees can then run workshops for schools to bring real-world context to their curriculum as well as providing a role model. Consistent interactions between a business and school can also increase the number of students that go on to further education, training or employment because they feel more prepared for working life. Other ways to interact with schools are offering work experience, mentoring, careers advice or CV workshops to help students prepare for the future they want.

Research by the [Education and Employers’ Taskforce](https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/media_release_neets_-_02.02.2012_final.pdf) shows that employer engagement has a significant impact on student’s future career aspirations. 26.1 per cent of surveyed students who had no contact with businesses while at school became young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). However, this reduces to 4.3 per cent if students had taken part in four or more activities with businesses.

Businesses and schools must work together to close the engineering skills gap. Early experiences of school can impact choices at higher education and future career aspirations. By getting involved in students’ education, businesses can encourage more people to consider STEM careers and make a long-term investment in young people who might one day work for their company.

For more information on Renishaw’s education outreach programme, which supports schools across Gloucestershire, Bristol and South Wales, visit [www.renishaw.com/education-outreach](https://www.renishaw.com/en/education-outreach--34713?utm_source=Stone%20Junction&utm_medium=PR&utm_campaign=REC260).

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Notes to editors

UK-based Renishaw is a world leading engineering technologies company, supplying products used for applications as diverse as jet engine and wind turbine manufacture, through to dentistry and brain surgery. It has over 4,500 employees located in the 36 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations.

For the year ended June 2018 Renishaw recorded sales of £611.5 million of which 95% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, the USA, Germany and Japan.

Throughout its history Renishaw has made a significant commitment to research and development, with historically between 13 and 18% of annual sales invested in R&D and engineering. The majority of this R&D and manufacturing of the company’s products is carried out in the UK.

The Company’s success has been recognised with numerous international awards, including eighteen Queen’s Awards recognising achievements in technology, export and innovation.

Further information at [http://www.renishaw.com/](http://www.renishaw.com/en/renishaw-enhancing-efficiency-in-manufacturing-and-healthcare--1030?utm_source=StoneJunction&utm_medium=PR&utm_campaign=REC263)