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**Inspiring young people is the key to closing skills gaps**

According to Engineering UK, in 2019 only 39 per cent of young people aged 14 to 16 said they knew what they needed to do in order to become an engineer. A lack of knowledge about relevant pathways into Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects can discourage people from pursuing engineering careers, widening the evident skills gap. Here Julia Russell, Apprentice Lead at global engineering technologies company, [Renishaw](https://www.renishaw.com/en/renishaw-enhancing-efficiency-in-manufacturing-and-healthcare--45346?utm_expid=.1bs9dmsBTVCDshRo2EAK8A.1&utm_referrer=&utm_source=blog%20post&utm_medium=PR&utm_campaign=REC450), explores how apprenticeships can offer a clear pathway into the sector and help businesses close the skills gap by interviewing some current Renishaw apprentices about their personal experiences.

While general recruitment and graduate schemes after university are the traditional routes into engineering, apprenticeships are becoming a more appealing option. A recent boost in further education funding and the introduction of apprenticeship standards, apprenticeship levies and new T level qualifications, offer businesses an opportunity to bring more people into the sector. Degree apprenticeships, for example, allow employees to gain valuable work experience from the outset, while simultaneously working towards their qualifications.

Renishaw apprentices can work across several areas of the business, such as software engineering, embedded electronics and mechanical engineering, to gain hands-on experience in multiple disciplines. To encourage more people to consider an apprenticeship in engineering, we spoke to a few of our current employees.

**How did you first become interested in engineering?**

“I have always been interested in finding out how things work,” explained Marcus Evans, Mechanical Engineer Apprentice at Renishaw. “After building an electrified longboard, I realised I loved understanding the different aspects involved in engineering and having a tangible working product in your hands at the end. I then realised that I could turn my hobby into a career.”

“I used to spend hours in my dad’s garage taking things apart to understand how they worked,” commented James Meaden, Mechanical Engineer Apprentice at Renishaw. “Pairing this with my fascination with physics — engineering was an obvious career for me.”

“I loved product design at school, so decided to start an apprenticeship in machining,” explained Kaylum Brindle, Mechanical Engineer Apprentice at Renishaw. “It was during my apprenticeship when I started learning how to program using logic that I realised that co-ordinate measuring machine applications was the best engineering role for me.”

**What has been your best apprenticeship experience?**

“One of my most exciting moments as an apprentice was the first time I received the manufactured parts of a test jig that I had designed from scratch,” described Evans. “It made all the time and effort I put into the design worth it when it all assembled together and performed perfectly.”

“Any time I get the chance to play a role in designing a new product, it gives me a great sense of accomplishment,” commented Meaden. “It’s always rewarding to see Renishaw sell a product that I’ve helped create.”

“During my apprenticeship, the Institution of Engineering and Technology (IET) asked me if it could use my end-point assessment as an example to other engineers,” explained Brindle. “The recognition from such an important institution gave me a massive confidence boost and really motivated me to continue my high standard of work.”

**What advice would you give to people looking to become an engineering apprentice?**

“Keep your eyes open,” commented Evans. “Apprenticeships expose you to diverse disciplines of engineering that you may not know exist now, but could be right up your street. You might end up in a completely different place than you first imagined when entering the sector.”

“Don’t let struggles in one area put you off all together,” commented Meaden. “Companies are more than willing to help you strengthen your skills if you show the drive and passion they look for when hiring new staff.”

“Make the most of every learning opportunity, especially by taking on tasks you have not done before,” explained Brindle. “If you always take pride in your work, no matter how small, it will build up your reputation of working to high standards.”

Renishaw offers a range of award-winning apprenticeship programmes in engineering, manufacturing, software, IT and embedded electronics engineering. An apprenticeship at Renishaw is an opportunity to earn-while you learn, and degree level apprentices are able to obtain their university qualifications with no student debt. Further benefits include a competitive salary and an extensive benefits package, with onsite gyms, medical insurance and pension.

For more information about Renishaw’s apprenticeships, or to apply please visit [www.renishaw.com/apprentice](http://www.renishaw.com/apprentice).

**-ENDS-**

**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 4,000 employees located in the 37 countries where it has wholly owned subsidiary operations.

For the year ended June 2020 Renishaw recorded sales of £510.2 million of which 94% was due to exports. The company’s largest markets are China, the USA, Japan and Germany.

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 [www.renishaw.com](http://www.renishaw.com/)