

## **LSC PREPARES TO LAUNCH APPRENTICESHIP WEEK**

All employers in Lincolnshire are the target for the second national Apprenticeship Week from 23 to 27 February 2009, organised by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

The week is a national celebration of the success of Apprenticeships across England. The event seeks to raise the profile of Apprenticeships and encourage more employers to take on apprentices.

There will be a variety of events going on through the East Midlands – from visits to schools from employers advocating the Apprenticeship programme, to Sir Alan Sugar's former "apprentice" Saira Khan visiting the region and spreading the word about the campaign which aims to get apprentices into jobs.

Company managing directors will be "going back to the floor" to turn back time and try out the work of an apprentice. Meanwhile, East Midlands MPs will be having a go at being an apprentice for the day – and regional journalists will be given the chance to sample courses like brick laying and stable management at local colleges and training providers.

The LSC - who fund Apprenticeship programmes - is charged with raising the number of Apprenticeship placements offered by employers by matching them with approved training providers who can support them and their new apprentice throughout their period of training.

Nick Rashley, LSC director of Apprenticeships for the East Midlands, said: "Our aim is to let local employers know just how beneficial an apprentice can be to their continued business success. We have many success stories where businesses have taken on apprentices and those people have gone on to senior roles in the organisation. It is essential that this type of investment is made to develop the future, skilled workforce that the East Midlands needs."

Apprenticeships can help businesses across all sectors by offering a route to harness fresh new talent. The programmes provide on and off the job learning so that apprentices achieve the right mix of practical skills and qualifications to suit them and the needs of their employer.

Nick added: "A business can benefit greatly from the ideas an apprentice can bring to it and, at the same time are training their workforce of the future. Apprenticeships offer cost-effective recruitment leading to a well-trained, motivated workforce and contribute to increased productivity and performance."

**Siemens' Lincoln** site is a strong advocator of apprentices. It employs 1,800 people in researching, manufacturing and servicing gas turbines for use in the oil and gas industry. To cope with its growing business over the last 11 years, Siemens implemented an Apprenticeship programme to tackle the shortage of skilled people in an industry often overlooked as a career choice.

Currently 54 of these employees are working towards an Apprenticeship in Engineering. The company's reputation for training is second to none, having a long commitment to training the workforce of the future with Apprenticeships seen as an important part of the company's culture. With an 84% framework achievement rate over the last 10 years and an 85% retention rate for trainees over the last 14 years, it can clearly be seen as a successful programme for both the business and the apprentice.

Roy Bilton, initial training manager, Siemens, said: "For a programme to work and benefit both the business and the apprentice a strategy must be in place. Siemens' Apprenticeship programme has defined milestones and, to promote learning, the apprentices are encouraged to obtain a good range of qualifications in addition to the main programme qualifications. Approximately 41% of Siemens' learners have progressed to higher education courses including Higher National Certificate and degrees.

"Our bespoke programmes and long term commitment to training is paramount to the success of the business and the Apprenticeships. In an industry crying out for a skilled workforce we initiated 'The Females into Industry Challenge'. The scheme aims to encourage females to consider a career in engineering and has demonstrated unprecedented success in engaging the target audience."

Rosie O'Rourke enrolled on an Apprenticeship with Siemens at 16 when she completed her GCSE's and is currently working towards an Advanced Apprenticeship. Rosie said: "I first found out about the Siemens Apprenticeships whilst I was at school through the Females into Industry Challenge and decided I wanted to pursue it. Initially I had some reservations about leaving school at 16 and going straight to work in a male dominated environment. However, as it turned out, it was not how I imagined it to be at all. I really enjoy what I do and being a girl hasn't made any difference."

Siemens supports its apprentices 100% in every aspect of their training to ensure success not only for the learners but also for the business. Apprentices complete their course at Siemens with a greater understanding of the work and business ethos, increased confidence in their abilities and skills to match.

Ends

**Pic caption:** Rosie O' Rourke

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**Notes for Editors**

Learning and Skills Council: The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers. [www.lsc.gov.uk](http://www.lsc.gov.uk)

Apprenticeships: Apprentices follow a framework, which consists of a NVQ qualification, key skills qualifications, and, where applicable, a technical certificate. Two levels are available – an Apprenticeship Framework and an Advanced Apprenticeship Framework, offering qualifications at either NVQ Levels 2 or 3\* (equivalent to add GCSE and A level equivalent). There are over 160 occupational frameworks on offer including business administration; information technology and customer services and many sector specific frameworks such as chemicals and pharmaceuticals through to tourism and hospitality.

Level 2 is equivalent to five GCSE passes

Level 3 is equivalent to two 'A' level passes or one vocational 'A' pass.

[www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk)

Apprenticeship Awards: The LSC East Midlands Apprenticeship Awards 2009 will be held at East Midlands Conference Centre on 2 June 2009. The national awards event will be held in London on 16 July 2009. All regional winners will be automatically entered into the national awards. The closing date for entries is 27 February 2009. For more information please email: [realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk](mailto:realsuccess@headstorm.co.uk) or call 0845 058 0490.