

Paper Industry Welcomes New Apprentices

Under the Government's review of future apprenticeships programmes, and following the development of a new Apprenticeship standard in Papermaking, Essity Trafford Park Mill in Manchester opened its doors to the first intake of new apprentices representing eight paper mills from across the UK.

With an industry steeped in history and tradition, but with an ageing workforce, this next generation of 'budding' Papermakers will embark on a three-year programme which will test their technical knowledge and practical and academic skills to the limit.

The industry is constantly evolving and young, talented people are an essential part in its future success. The Papermaking Apprenticeship Programme, developed by industry experts in partnership with Unite the Union and support from the Printing Charity, is aimed at helping young people learn a unique skill, in a progressive manufacturing industry.

Jim Lang, UK Operations Director, Consumer Goods, at Essity said: "I started out as an apprentice here in the 1990s, so I can speak from personal experience that apprenticeships are a fantastic opportunity from which to develop a career. It's great to see a papermaking apprenticeship on offer under the new apprenticeship standards, as this can only help raise the quality of skills within the industry.

"We are pleased to be able to host one of the block training events at our Trafford Park Mill. When visiting different companies or sites within the industry, as the papermakers are doing as part of their course, I always learn something or see something I didn't expect, so hopefully the apprentices learning can benefit further with this approach."

During the course of the programme, each apprentice will attend three weeks per year of in-depth technical training, delivered by Dr Steve Mann and will cover the science of papermaking, fibres, water and chemical additives, and wet and dry end processes. Classroom training is supported by practical on the job experience on a daily basis within a paper mill environment.

Speaking about their new chosen career, Alex, one of three apprentices at Weidmann Paper Mill, Otley said: "I am really enjoying the apprenticeship experience, learning different aspects of the job and working with everyone."

Janet Marshall, Chairperson for the Paper Industry Trailblazer committee, said: "It's great to see that all of the hard work that has been put into developing this Apprenticeship programme finally coming to fruition, and these apprentices will be the springboard to encourage other young people to join this exciting industry."

In February the apprentices will continue their training at the historic Frogmore Paper Mill in Hemel Hempstead.



L to R: Trainer Dr Steve Mann with apprentices Jacob Givelin-Davis, Mahmoud Ibrahim, Alex Kennedy, James Supple, Amos Aschilean, Jacob Inman, Stephen Hull, Zoe Collis, Joshua Howe, Matt Lowther, Georgia Irving, Michael Gardner, Brandon Hartley, Jake Cairns and Jim Lang, UK Operations Director, Consumer Goods, at Essity.

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For further information contact Emma Punchard on 01793 889609 or email epunchard@paper.org.uk.

NOTES TO EDITORS

- For further information on the Papermaking Apprenticeship Programme please visit: www.paper.org.uk/information/pages/apprenticeships.html
- Participating mills:
 - o ArjoWiggins Chartham
 - o De La Rue Overton
 - o Essity
 - o Iggesund Paperboard
 - o James Cropper
 - o Northwood & WEPA
 - o Two Rivers Mill
 - o Weidmann Whiteley
- The Confederation of Paper Industries (CPI) is the leading trade association representing the UK's Paper-based Industries, comprising paper and board manufacturers and converters, corrugated packaging producers, makers of soft tissue papers, and collectors of paper for recycling.
- CPI represents an industry with an aggregate annual turnover of £6.5 billion, 25,000 direct and more than 100,000 indirect employees.
- For facts on the UK's Paper-based Industries please visit: www.paper.org.uk.