



Modern Apprenticeship Case Studies

Practical Workplace Examples
August 2011



Modern Apprenticeship Project



Introduction

This collection of case studies is a collection of practical workplace examples of positive trade union engagement with the Modern Apprenticeship programme.

These case studies were gathered by Scottish Union Learning during visits to workplaces across Scotland. The examples cover an array of Modern Apprenticeships, levels, workplaces and industries, unions and their members. The personal testimonies in these pages bring to life the positive impact of vital union engagement with employers on the development and delivery of Modern Apprenticeships and the accompanying union support for members employed as Modern Apprentices.

The examples included give reflective snapshots of union engagement with the Modern Apprenticeship programme, but it is not an exhaustive collection.

The Scottish Union Learning Modern Apprenticeship Project was developed in partnership with Skills Development Scotland. The aim of the project was to gauge trade union awareness and engagement with the Modern Apprenticeship programme and to support unions that are involved or aim to be involved with Modern Apprenticeships.

Trade union engagement is manifested in different ways including mentoring and representing Modern Apprentices; ensuring Modern Apprentices are covered in local learning agreements and collective bargaining; supporting Modern Apprentices' learning throughout the programme and supporting the progress of Modern Apprentices through to sustained employment.

The Modern Apprenticeship Case Studies publication complements and enhances the Modern Apprenticeship Toolkit, which was published by Scottish Union Learning in August 2011.





UCATT

Mark Lynch and his Modern Apprenticeship



Union: UCATT

Duration: Four Years +

Location: Glasgow

Workplace: City Building LLP

Mark Lynch is a Joiner and UCATT Rep at City Building LLP in Glasgow. When he was at school, Mark completed a pre-vocational course in construction, where he first heard about Modern Apprenticeships. The pre-vocational course gave him a sample of all the trades that were available. On completion of the course, Mark was due to leave school, so he applied for a Modern Apprenticeship in Carpentry and Joinery with City Building LLP.

At the beginning of his apprenticeship, Mark became a member of UCATT and went to college to learn the skills that he would require during his site-based training, on the job. Mark said, "I wasn't actively involved in the union at first, but saw it as essential to be a member as the union negotiates your pay and represents you if there are any grievance or discipline issues." Once he had completed his second year, Mark was fortunate to gain further education in his trade by completing an advanced craft certificate programme in Carpentry & Joinery at Anniesland College. This course was more advanced than the standard training he received during the previous two years. For example, during his second year, he learned to make straight



flight stairs and on the advanced craft course, he learned to make spiral staircases.

Mark excelled at his chosen career and during his fourth year, Mark won the Scottish Building Apprentice Training Council's James Birnie Award and was named Apprentice of the Year. Later that year, he was named the Federation of Master Builders National (UK) Apprentice of the Year. Leading on from this success, Mark was invited to attend the UCATT National Delegates Conference in Torquay, where he experienced firsthand how the union is run by lay members and what it does politically, internationally and locally. After that, Mark was inspired to become more active within the union and became a Health and Safety Rep and a Shop Steward. Mark also represents UCATT on the STUC Youth Committee and is a member of the STUC General Council.

Mark said, "I really enjoy helping to look after members in the workplace, and I have gained so much more than I ever thought possible through my apprenticeship programme. My priority now is to try to get Modern Apprentices and the union to work more closely together."



ASLEF

Drives Forward Modern Apprenticeships with First ScotRail



Union: ASLEF

Duration: 18 months

Location: Glasgow

Workplace: First ScotRail



ASLEF, the train drivers' union, has successfully negotiated a new Modern Apprenticeship in Customer Services for school leavers with First ScotRail. This will be First ScotRail's first recruitment drive for school leavers since the rail industry was privatised.

This Modern Apprenticeship programme is a partnership between ASLEF, Skills Development Scotland and First ScotRail. Skills Development Scotland has provided funding towards the training costs of the apprentices.

Eleven new Modern Apprenticeship posts were created by the recruitment drive. The young people will undertake this opportunity to earn and learn over an 18-month period and will, upon successful completion of their Modern Apprenticeships, gain guaranteed permanent posts with First ScotRail.

In addition to undertaking the SVQ Level 2 Modern Apprenticeship in Customer Services, the apprentices will also embark on a Duke of Edinburgh Award which will provide them with the opportunity to work directly with communities and go on an outward-bound team building course.

ASLEF also utilises the Rail Union Learning Centre at Stow College to provide the apprentices with career building skills such as CV writing, completing job applications and interview skills. Jim Baxter, ASLEF Project Worker, said, "ASLEF sees this not only as a benefit to the apprentices and the trade unions within the rail industry, but also the rail industry itself. This is a great opportunity for the company to give a group of young workers the employability skills they will require to progress through their railway careers."



Unite

Engineering Skills with Spirit



Union: Unite
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Duration: Four Years
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Location: Prestwick
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Workplace: Spirit Aerosystems
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Spirit Aerosystems is a global firm based in Prestwick. The company has a Modern Apprenticeship programme across three disciplines: Craft Engineering, Technical Engineering and Supply Chain. There are currently 19 Modern Apprentices in employment at the plant. Unite supports the apprentices throughout the programme and plays a role in the Apprenticeship Forum.

The four-year Modern Apprenticeship programme has a clear pay progression pathway and pay increments reached on an annual basis. Other motivating aspects of the programme include the Apprentice Engineering Competition, an Annual Awards Ceremony and the Team Spirit Initiative. The Team Spirit Initiative provides the apprentices with the opportunity to work with community groups and local schools.

Amanda Henderson, Capability Development Advisor, said, "We take the Modern Apprenticeships very seriously. It is a big investment from the employer and the apprentices. We strive to ensure that the apprentices are equipped with the skills required for the industry and for them to be able to progress their careers here."



The Modern Apprentices start the programme at SVQ Level 2 and progress to Level 3. The Supply Chain apprentices go further and undertake study at SVQ Level 4. On successful completion of the programme, the Modern Apprentices secure continued employment with Spirit Aerosystems. They are then given the opportunity to go further with their studies.

Jim McCahill, Convenor, Unite, said, "Unite at Spirit sees apprentices as the lifeblood of the company; when our members see apprentice recruitment, they see a future. As a union we enjoy working in partnership with the company on the Modern Apprenticeship programme. Together, we put a lot of investment and effort into this to ensure the apprentices get the proper education and skills to take the business forward. We are very pleased that we are recruiting five craft apprentices this year."



Community

Overcoming Disabilities through Modern Apprenticeships



Union: Community

Duration: Three Years

Location: Springburn

Workplace: RSBi Blindcraft

Michael Anderson started work with RSBi Blindcraft in Springburn, Glasgow as an 18-year-old school leaver in the post of Labourer. Michael is now in the third year of his Level 3 Wood Machinist Modern Apprenticeship. Michael learned about the Modern Apprenticeship from his predecessor, and liked what he observed from the programme. As a member of Community, he then approached the Shop Steward to enquire as to how he could become the company's next apprentice.

Michael said, "I was really keen to start the Modern Apprenticeship and my union helped get me started on it. Community has really supported me throughout the programme and any problems I have encountered were resolved quickly. I wanted to learn new skills and the Modern Apprenticeship offers the opportunity to do so. It will help me earn more money and now, I'll always have this to fall back on."

George Gaffney, Head of Manufacturing, said, "Michael started as a Work Step employee and has overcome his disability to get onto this Modern Apprenticeship. The closest training provider we could find for the apprenticeship was Falkirk College. When



Michael said he was willing and able to travel to Falkirk for the training, we knew that he was determined to succeed. We then decided to match his level of commitment by paying his travel expenses."

Robert Mooney, Community Convenor, said "The Modern Apprenticeship programme gives the young disabled people here something to aim for and it helps build confidence and skills. Community has a big role to play in the programme; for example, we successfully negotiated Michael's place and ensured that he remained on the same pay rate for the duration of his programme."

Community is very supportive of developing its members' skills, personal development and training. Robert has a keen interest in boosting this support. He said, "Unemployment amongst disabled people is around 50%. We need more opportunities for people with disabilities. We work to ensure the Modern Apprenticeships provide an opportunity for disabled people to move from semi-skilled jobs to skilled jobs. If another member of staff wants to start an apprenticeship once Michael has finished, I'm sure Community will negotiate on his or her behalf."



Unite and the GMB

Pumping Experience into Modern Apprenticeships



Union: Unite, GMB

Duration: Four Years

Location: Glasgow

Workplace: CLYDEUNION Pumps



CLYDEUNION Pumps is a global firm based in Glasgow that has grown its Modern Apprenticeship programme over the last four years to 55 Modern Apprentices in four disciplines within the Craft and Technical fields.

Unite and the GMB negotiate the terms of Modern Apprenticeships with CLYDEUNION Pumps. The apprentices study to SVQ Level 4, with the opportunity of completing an HNC in their fields. On completion of the Modern Apprenticeship, opportunities exist to study on day release at university for a BEng degree and later, potentially for a postgraduate degree.

The four-year Modern Apprenticeship programme has a clear pay progression pathway with an increase reached on an annual basis. It has been negotiated at a percentage of the skilled tradesperson's rate.

Nathan Murdoch, a Technical Modern Apprentice and member of Unite, said, "This Modern Apprenticeship goes beyond my expectations. I am able to combine theory and practice, to build my experience and skills, and vitally, to gain recognised qualifications while earning a wage. On starting here I joined Unite, and I know I can speak to my union about any problems that I may face."

The programme has also given support to redundant apprentices. For example, Chris Coburn, a third year apprentice, was unsure of how to progress when there was a risk from his previous employer that he would be made redundant due to the difficult times the employer was facing. Unite was involved in the negotiations between the employer and CLYDEUNION Pumps to employ Chris and the apprentices that were being made redundant. Chris is now a time-served Turner. He said, "I am a proud member of Unite. I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for the help from my union."



Unite

Jetting through Modern Apprenticeships



Union: Unite
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Duration: Four Years
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Location: Inchinnan
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Workplace: Rolls-Royce
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Rolls-Royce in Inchinnan, Renfrew has a long history of employing apprentices. Currently, it supports 54 Level 3 Modern Apprentices across Manufacturing, Mechatronics and Manufacturing Engineering. Its Modern Apprenticeship programme recruits across a wide age range, from school leavers to experienced Rolls-Royce workers.

Unite supports new Modern Apprentices from the start. The union participates in the induction programme for new staff, and it is here where the union explains why it is essential that all workers become members of Unite. The apprentices study at Anniesland College and union reps visit them on a regular basis to ensure their progression. By working with Scottish Union Learning, the programme supports workers with everyday skills issues and workers whose first language is not English.

On completion of the programme, the apprentices will have successfully progressed from studying an NC to completing a relevant HNC. For some, this will open up the opportunity to study an HND and then go on to Higher Education.



Jim McGivern, Unite Apprentice Convenor, said “The Modern Apprenticeship programme here at Rolls-Royce is an essential tool in ensuring that our workforce has the skills for the jobs. We support the apprentices throughout their programme and when they successfully secure continued employment as skilled trades persons.”

Steve Brodie, Apprenticeship Development Leader, Rolls-Royce, said “Having started as an Engineering Apprentice in 1989, I fully understand the benefits that Modern Apprenticeships can and do bring to the workplace. We are committed to delivering an excellent training and development programme and that is what we are doing with our Modern Apprenticeships.”

He went on to say, “The union has historically been very good at encouraging people to develop themselves.”

Rolls-Royce has an existing relationship with Unite, which has enabled both to progress the learning agenda together, through its Trade Union Learning Group. Joint work has included organising courses that support the development of workers, both personally and professionally.



A Closer Look

at Modern Apprentices in Rolls-Royce



Lynsey McQuaid
Manufacturing Modern Apprenticeship, Unite

After leaving school, Lynsey McQuaid worked in Business Administration and

Accountancy. Lynsey gradually decided she wanted to develop a different career path and left the job to attend college. Lynsey started her Modern Apprenticeship with Rolls-Royce after completing an HNC in Electronic Engineering. Lynsey feels her motivation for a Modern Apprenticeship is that it gives the best of two worlds: educational skills and work experience. She said, "I considered going onto university following college but I felt that first and foremost, I should get a trade. This Modern Apprenticeship is unique and time-sensitive, and it allows me to learn while earning money, instead of incurring student debt."



Kevin Fulton
Mechatronics Modern Apprenticeship, Unite

Kevin Fulton began the programme at Rolls-Royce when he left school at 16. Three years later, he

is ready to finish his Modern Apprenticeship and has just moved into working shifts. Kevin's original career plan was to become a mechanic, but after speaking to the school's careers advisor, he felt that a Modern Apprenticeship would provide a stronger standard of education since it led to industry-recognised qualifications. Kevin said, "My Modern Apprenticeship has put me in a good place, especially for the long-term. I've now got an HNC in Manufacturing, but this is not the end of my education."



Mulvena Klara
Manufacturing/ Engineering Modern Apprenticeship, Unite

Four years ago, Mulvena Klara, a Manufacturing/ Engineering Modern

Apprentice, was employed as a Cleaner by Rolls-Royce. Mulvena moved to Scotland from Poland and did not speak English when she settled in the UK. Mulvena worked a constant night-shift, and by day she went to College to study IELTS. IELTS is the International English Language Testing System which tests English proficiency across the globe.

While working at the plant, Mulvena heard about the Modern Apprenticeship programme from her colleagues and decided to apply at the next round of recruitment. In 2009, Mulvena started her Modern Apprenticeship and hasn't looked back.

The mix of learning and experience is an important aspect of the apprenticeship. Mulvena said, "Lifelong learning is important to me and I am achieving qualifications as I work. I enjoy being able to work with people throughout the plant because this exposes me to different working practices and helps build my communication skills."

Jim McGivern, Unite Apprentice Convenor, said, "The union has an important role to play in helping and supporting workers with different language and learning skills. The support we give as a union in this area directly supports the global culture of Rolls-Royce."



Cross-Union Working

GMB, Prospect, UCATT and Unite

Union: Cross-Union

Duration: Four Years

Location: Rosyth

Workplace: Babcock



The tradition of apprentices building ships in Fife has been sustained by Babcock through the employment of Modern Apprentices. The Modern Apprentices are supported by all the unions on site and included in the collective bargaining agreements.

This Modern Apprenticeship programme recruits across a wide age range from college leavers to older workers that already have experience within the industry. Currently there are approximately 170 Modern Apprenticeships at SVQ Level 3 across a number of skills including welding, electrical fitters, IT and Project Management.

Raymond Duguid, Unite Convenor, said, "The Modern Apprenticeship programme is essential in ensuring that our workforce has the skills and experience required."

The unions are all involved in the induction of the apprentices and successfully bring them into the union relevant to the trade that they are learning. A cross-union apprenticeship forum has been set up to provide the apprentices with an opportunity to discuss the work-based issues that are relevant to them.

As part of the Health and Safety drive at the Rosyth-based yard, all Modern Apprentices must wear a yellow hard hat to easily identify them. They must also spend one week working with the Health and Safety team in their office.

Eric McLeod, GMB Convenor, said, "Health and Safety is an essential component to the Modern Apprentices' training and working environment. We are encouraging the local colleges to further develop their work in ensuring that the students and Modern Apprentices have a strong understanding of why this is so important."

Satnam Ner, Prospect Convenor, said, "Modern Apprenticeships are bringing new people into the workplace and the industry across a wide range of skill sets. This is a positive method of tackling the skills gap and providing workers with the opportunity of building a career or changing the route of their career. The trade union movement clearly has a role to play in supporting Modern Apprentices and ensuring they are equipped with the skills needed for the job in a safe working environment."



A Closer Look

at Modern Apprentices in Babcock



Gary Best
Welding Modern Apprenticeship, GMB

Gary Best, a Welding Modern Apprentice and GMB member, was in his third year at university

studying Mechanical Engineering but decided to leave due to financial pressures. Gary secured his Modern Apprenticeship at Babcock and said, "It has met with all my expectations; it is a good programme and a good opportunity as it provides me with hands on experience backed up by training at the Welding Training Centre." A return to University through Babcock is an option open to Gary, following his Modern Apprenticeship. Gary said, "I would definitely recommend a Modern Apprenticeship to others. This is the start of my career and it will open up doors to me."



Kirsty Thomson
Project Management Modern Apprenticeship, Prospect

Kirsty Thomson started working with Babcock as a 17-year-

old school leaver to take up the post of HR Administrator. On joining Babcock, Kirsty felt it was important to be a member of a trade union and joined Prospect. After 18 months in the job, Kirsty applied for a Project Management Modern Apprentice vacancy. She said, "I felt that undertaking this Modern Apprenticeship would provide me with the opportunity to better myself, to put in place the building blocks of my career. I am also undertaking an Association of Proposal Management Professionals course, which will provide me with a professional qualification."



Michael Fraser
Electrical Fitter Modern Apprenticeship, Unite

Michael Fraser, an Electrical Fitter Modern Apprentice, said, "This Modern Apprenticeship

has been a great experience; I already had an HNC and an HND in Electronic and Electrical Engineering and this helps me build on that education with advanced practical knowledge through on-the-job experience."

Michael has had a strong input into the Health and Safety practices at the yard. Michael has diabetes and on his way to work one day, he had a diabetic attack. He was found by a colleague who immediately called an ambulance. There was a difficulty in accessing Michael's medical records and identifying that his diabetes was at the root of the attack.

Michael was supported by his union and upon returning to work, he was moved into the Health and Safety office to research methods of raising awareness of his condition and encouraging others with similar conditions to come forward. He decided to communicate with the site's workers through email and organised an opportunity for the staff to attend a talk.

Michael proposed that all workers with a health condition wear an ICE (In Case of Emergency) wristband which includes a dog-tag stating their name, condition and date of birth. Included in the wristband is a USB which allows paramedics to easily access further medical information on the potential causes of the problem.

Special Thanks to:



Scottish Union Learning

STUC Centre: 333 Woodlands Road • Glasgow G3 6NG
Tel: 0141 337 8111 Fax: 0141 337 8101

Highlands and Islands: UNISON Building • 53 Shore Street • Inverness IV1 1NF
Tel & Fax: 01463 248 905

Email: learning@stuc.org.uk • www.scottishunionlearning.com
www.twitter.com/unionlearning • www.facebook.com/scottishunionlearning

