



WEST SUFFOLK  
College

## Youth & Graduate Engagement Case Study

### Rev Project Objective

The Rev Project will facilitate interactions between businesses and local education establishments to create work experience placements for both local school leavers and graduates.

### REV champions local engineering young apprenticeship scheme.

#### The Requirement

Businesses have identified the lack of young people entering the sector or showing an interest in engineering in general as an occupation. Businesses are concerned in general that young people leaving school are not work wise and need further training whilst at school or shortly after leaving to introduce them to the rigors and requirements of the 'world of work'.

Whilst some businesses are working with schools through work experience programmes and mentoring schemes, or have taken on apprenticeships, many businesses (although aware that the aging workforce within the sector is forcing a future skills shortage), currently feel it is not in their best interests to get involved in this way.

#### The Solution

To champion, promote and broker the new Young Engineering Apprenticeship Programme with local businesses.

A partnership between West Suffolk College and the two Thetford High Schools enabled motivated and able 14 –16 year olds to study for an engineering vocational qualification whilst following the normal core national curriculum subjects at the school.

For this new Young Apprenticeship programme to be successful it needed to be supported and championed by local engineering firms who could offer 15 students valuable work experience.

By offering work experience placements the employers would have access to high caliber students for their Advanced Apprenticeship vacancies when they left school. They would in turn have the confidence that those young apprentices are suited to the company and to further training before employing them full time.

A concerted effort to promote the apprenticeship was undertaken by the Rev Project. This included articles in the Rev Newsletter, emails and presentations to the Thetford Manufacturing Excellence Club and general brokerage.

Ten Thetford based engineering businesses from the Rev community have thus far given 12 Thetford Engineering Young Apprentices insight, exposure and experience of the world of engineering during March 2008.



It is anticipated that more engineering firms in Thetford will offer work experience placements and that the existing employers will continue to support the programme through the strong working relationship that has been created with West Suffolk College.

Deborah Wing Office Manager from HJW said" *Our Young Apprentice has been keen to work in our factory and has proved to be attentive, has listened carefully to instruction and has asked many questions when it comes to doing the work. His work has been of a good standard and will be pleased to have in back and look forward to seeing him again in July"*

#### The Result