



Arqiva

Communications Infrastructure Company

Higher apprenticeships are providing the specialist skills Arqiva needs for the future.



Name: Arqiva

Location: Across the UK

Framework: IT, software, web, telecoms

Fresh ideas

Arqiva, head-quartered in Winchester but with locations throughout the UK, is the company responsible for providing much of the national communications infrastructure, enabling people to enjoy television, radio and mobile connectivity. The business began employing apprentices in 2008 and currently employs 12, primarily on higher apprenticeships in IT, software, web and telecoms professionals.

“The broadcast and communication industry faces a well-documented skills shortage in the near future as it has a higher than average age profile. Consequently we need to bring in new talent now to prepare for when our experienced engineers

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finish their careers and retire. Apprenticeships help us to address that in a big way,” explains John Druce, Learning and Development Manager.

Arqiva gets most of its apprenticeship applications via the National Apprenticeship Service website, Find an apprenticeship. “We’ve been very impressed by the quality and calibre of the candidates coming through, and the site is a well-established first point of call for young people seeking apprenticeships, so it’s very useful,” says John.

High level roles

Apprentices at Arqiva undertake a Foundation Degree in Electronics and Communications Engineering, while working in operations teams across the UK maintaining broadcast and communication networks. 88% of former apprentices have stayed with the business, moving into various roles in broadcast or satellite engineering.

“Our retention rate is fantastic, and that’s one of the benefits of hiring apprentices – the vast majority do move into engineering or operational roles,” explains John. “We train them with the skills we require, and they fill the jobs we need doing.”

“Apprentices also bring a sense of energy and enthusiasm. They’re young, from another generation, and see things differently from

people like me who’ve been in the business a while. They are willing to get stuck in, ask questions and be adaptable, and I’ve been impressed with the speed with which they pick things up and run with them.”

“Higher apprenticeships in particular work for us because we’re an engineering and technology business, and a high level of skill is a requirement for the job,” adds John.

Spreading the word

Arqiva will continue to recruit apprentices every year, and John recently became an Apprenticeship Ambassador for the National Apprenticeship Service. He is particularly interested in bringing more diversity into engineering apprenticeships, and works to promote the advantages of apprenticeships to businesses and young people of all backgrounds.

“I’d absolutely recommend apprenticeships to other companies,” says John. “Apprentices think differently, they challenge us, and training them helps to maintain and even raise standards and professionalism across the whole workplace.”

To find out more about the business benefits of apprenticeships, please contact the National Apprenticeship Service on 08000 150 600 or visit the website greatbusiness.gov.uk/taking-on-an-apprentice/.