

## Alstom Transport UK Ltd Apprenticeships



We talk to Jon Middleton, Graduate and Apprentice Lead at Alstom Transport UK and Jordan Wilson, Apprentice Engineer, about what apprenticeships bring to their business and the apprenticeship experience.

### The Employer Perspective: Jon Middleton, Graduate and Apprentice Lead

#### Q. How has your organisation benefitted from recruiting apprentices?

**Jon:** Alstom has been part of the rail industry here for over a century. A third of all UK passengers travel on Alstom trains. Alstom also made half of the London Underground trains. We also provide smart solutions in the rail market from high-speed rolling stock to infrastructure and signalling. Having young people working alongside our experienced staff makes a desirable positive effect in our working environments. A number of our mentoring staff began as apprentices. The skills and ethics they now possess were passed on to them by their mentors. A fundamental part of being an engineer is to pass knowledge down. This has been a major driving factor in the success of our program. Our engineering workforce are over 45 years old, so we began recruiting apprentices nationally resulting in the age demographic dropping considerably to become more balanced.



John Middleton

#### Q. What advice would you give to potential apprentices wanting to join your business?

**Jon:** Get involved in engineering projects. For example fixing your car, volunteering at a rail heritage site, maintaining go karts etc. We want to see a passion for engineering in the people we recruit. Also get work experience, either with us or with an engineering company. We want to see potential apprentices who have a real drive to work in the sector. Research as much as you can about rail and particularly the new technologies being introduced. For example, Hydrogen batteries, Driverless train systems and more.

#### Q. What advice would you give to other businesses who are thinking about recruiting apprentices?

**Jon:** Do as much planning as you can before you recruit. Make sure you fully understand the costs, constraints, legal framework and obligations surrounding employees on apprenticeships. Seek advice from a specialist.



### The Apprentice Perspective:

Jordan Wilson, Apprentice Engineer



#### Q. How did you find out about your apprenticeship?

“ Some members of my family work within engineering and production industries and were aware of how beneficial apprenticeships are in the modern world we live in especially for engineering.

I was guided by my family to go into an apprenticeship and I soon realised university wasn't for me and wasn't the route I wanted to take. I knew that I wanted to earn money as well as learn skills.

An apprenticeship is the perfect mix of on the job training as well as time at college to learn the basic skills which is something that suits me.

”



Jordan Wilson

#### Q. What's being an Apprentice like?

“ As an apprentice with Alstom, you get an opportunity to work across all aspects of engineering. You spend time and learn the job role at each section within the production and engineering sectors of the business. With learning all job roles, you get to meet all members of staff across the site. You learn plenty of skills as all jobs that are completed onsite are different. This leads to you becoming a well-skilled engineer by the time you have completed the apprenticeship. I enjoy having my time split between work and college. We are on block release for college in Leamington Spa which gives you an opportunity to live for a few weeks at a time away from home. You experience living in a new area and a little break away from working the full-time job.

”

#### Q. What advice would you give to someone who is thinking about becoming an apprentice?

“ Make sure you really want to work. If you are only taking an apprenticeship for money, as they pay quite well for a young person, then you are after an apprenticeship for the wrong reasons. Apprenticeships contain quite a lot of work and working in a professional environment isn't always for everyone. You do have times where you can have some fun, but you need to work hard and you are representing the company you are working for at all times.

”

