



# Engineering Roundtable

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group



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**Developed By:**  
Charlotte Mcloughlin



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# Introduction

Welcome to the Engineering Roundtable. The purpose of this session is to bring together industry experts, employers, and educators to discuss the current and future skills needs within the engineering sector. This roundtable aims to:



- Review the relevance of the Engineering Fitter Apprenticeship Standard (ST0432) and ensure it aligns with industry requirements.
- Identify skills gaps, emerging technologies, and behaviours critical to the workforce.
- Explore opportunities for collaboration between employers and education providers to enhance apprenticeship delivery and industry readiness.

# Engineering Apprenticeship Offering

## L3 Engineering Fitter

### Overview of Engineering Fitter Apprenticeship:

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group offers a comprehensive Engineering Fitter Apprenticeship designed to equip learners with the practical skills, knowledge, and behaviours required for a successful career in engineering. This programme combines hands-on workplace training with structured classroom learning, allowing apprentices to develop a strong understanding of engineering principles while gaining real industry experience.

During the apprenticeship, learners are trained in a range of essential engineering skills such as assembling and fitting mechanical components, interpreting technical drawings, using precision measuring equipment, and maintaining engineering tools and machinery. Apprentices also learn how to follow health and safety regulations, work to engineering specifications, and ensure that components and systems operate efficiently and reliably. The programme helps apprentices build problem-solving abilities, teamwork, and professional working practices that are essential in modern engineering environments. By working alongside experienced engineers and industry professionals, apprentices gain valuable insight into real engineering processes and develop the confidence needed to contribute effectively in the workplace.

Overall, the Engineering Fitter Apprenticeship provides a strong foundation for a career in engineering, opening pathways to roles in manufacturing, maintenance, installation, and further specialist engineering training.

#### Engineering fitter

Producing complex high value, low volume components or assemblies.

Skills England

## L3 Mechatronics Maintenance

### Overview of Mechatronics Maintenance Apprenticeship:

The Windsor Forest Colleges Group offers a comprehensive Mechatronics Maintenance Apprenticeship designed to equip learners with the practical skills, technical knowledge, and professional behaviours required for a successful career in modern automated and manufacturing industries. This programme focuses on maintaining, diagnosing, and repairing complex mechanical, electrical, and automated systems used in advanced engineering environments. Apprentices develop hands-on experience with robotics, control systems, sensors, and production equipment while learning to ensure machinery operates safely, efficiently, and reliably. Through a combination of workplace training and classroom learning, the apprenticeship prepares individuals for skilled roles in mechatronics maintenance and industrial automation.

#### Mechatronics maintenance technician

Most changes to an apprenticeship are made as a result of a holistic review of it.

We prioritise the need for such reviews based on a range of factors. These include

Skills England

### **Mandatory Core Units:**

- Unit 301: Health and Safety in the Engineering Workplace – Ensures learners understand and apply safe working practices in all engineering environments.
- Unit 302: Communication and Teamwork in Engineering – Develops essential interpersonal and teamwork skills required in engineering operations.
- Unit 303: Applied Science and Maths for Engineering – Provides learners with the foundational science and mathematics principles necessary for engineering applications.
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### **Delivered by the employer:**

- Unit 312: Engineering Maintenance Procedures and Techniques – Covers planned and reactive maintenance practices.
- Unit 313: Principles of Electrical and Electronic Circuits – Introduces the fundamentals of electrical and electronic systems.
- Unit 314: Electrical and Electronic Measurement, Testing and Fault Diagnosis – Develops skills in testing, measurement, and troubleshooting of circuits.
- Unit 315: Principles of Three-Phase Systems – Focuses on understanding and applying three-phase electrical systems.
- Unit 318: Engineering Drawing for Technicians – Teaches interpretation and creation of engineering drawings.
- Unit 322: Principles of Machining Processes – Provides knowledge and practical skills for various machining operations.
- Unit 325: Project Management – Introduces principles of planning, executing, and managing engineering projects.
- Unit 335: TIG Welding of Materials – Offers specialist skills in tungsten inert gas welding for different materials.

This structured approach ensures apprentices develop a strong foundation in core engineering principles, while the optional units allow them to specialise in areas aligned with industry demand. The programme is designed to prepare learners for real-world engineering roles, enhancing employability and supporting career progression within the sector.



I feel like I learn a lot faster while doing it at work compared to sitting at a desk in school or university, and I get paid to work.

In work you face real life situations where you put the stuff you learn in college to use and I feel like that helps you learn a lot better

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Jacob

Level 3 Mechatronics  
Maintenance Apprentice

# Potential Offering

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## Standards

**Can we offer any other standards - What are the options:**

L2 Engineering Operative

L4 Lead Engineering Maintenance Technician

L6 Manufacturing Engineer

L3 Engineering Construction Pipefitter

**Are there any standards that are not listed that you would like to see the college offer?**

## Levels

What levels would you like more options for:

Level 2&3

Level 4&6

## Units

Units listed in questionnaire.

# Engineering Survey



**2026**

## **Input Needed - Engineering Apprenticeship Roundtable**

We are reviewing our Level 3 Fitter and Level 3 Mechatronics apprenticeship programs to ensure they continue to meet the needs of industry. Your expertise is invaluable, and we would greatly appreciate your input ahead of our upcoming virtual roundtable.

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below. Your feedback will directly shape the skills and experiences our apprentices gain.

Please complete the Engineering survey **[Click Here.](#)**

# Meet Our Team

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**Gavin Williams - Skills Coach**

I started out my career as a Level 3 mechanical engineering apprentice and I have switched from working in Water Utilities. I also have experience in the Clinical/Pharmaceutical water, Semiconductor, and mining industries. My focus is on getting to know the apprentices to understand how I can help each one progress through to achieve the maximum amount of success. I make it a point of emphasis to focus on coaching soft skills. As I believe the ability to communicate clearly, work in a team, manage time and solve problems creatively, are just as vital as technical competence.



**Iqbal Singh Sagoo - Tutor**

I have taught engineering skills at Slough and Langley College for the past eighteen years. I completed a bachelor's degree in computer engineering and worked in design office, where I used AutoCAD and utilized my mechanical skills and worked as a tool maker. I gained further knowledge and experience in the machine shop environment where I managed machining and metal fabrication shops for nine years. I can pass on hands on skills relating to electronics, welding, designing, bench fitting and machine shop related skills. I have been passing on my practical approach to problem solving to learners and helping them move to the next step in their journey in their engineering career. I am also able to pass on my mathematical knowledge especially to those who are pursuing higher education in the field of engineering. I have delivered level 4 and 5 engineering programs here at Slough and Langley college in the past.

# [Click here to read](#)



A City & Guilds Group Collaboration

# EPA welcome pack

**Getting started with our end-point  
assessment (EPA) Service**

For colleges, providers and employers



# KEY APPRENTICESHIP & LEVY FUNDING CHANGES FOR 2026

## 1 FULLY FUNDED UNDER-25 APPRENTICES (SMES)

Small and medium-sized employers (non-levy payers) now benefit from fully funded training and assessment for apprentices aged 25 and under, eliminating the previous 5% co-investment charge. This significantly reduces barriers to hiring young talent and encourages early-career development.

## 2 NEW "GROWTH & SKILLS" LEVY

From April 2026, the Apprenticeship Levy will transition into the Growth & Skills Levy, which offers greater flexibility in how employers invest in skills—particularly through modular, shorter and more targeted training options.

## 4 REMOVAL OF 10% GOVERNMENT TOP-UP

The automatic 10% top-up that previously boosted levy-paying employers' digital accounts has been removed, reducing the overall spending power available for apprenticeship training.

## 3 LEVY FUNDS NOW EXPIRE AFTER 12 MONTHS

From April 2026, unspent levy funds will now expire after 12 months, rather than the previous 24-month period. This accelerates the planning cycle and increases the urgency for employers to commit levy funds before they are reclaimed.

## 6 HIGHER CO-INVESTMENT (25%) WHEN LEVY RUNS OUT

When a levy-paying employer's digital account balance is exhausted, the employer contribution for further apprenticeships increases to 25%, up from the previous 5%.

## 5 APPRENTICE MINIMUM WAGE RISE & NIC SAVINGS

From April 2026, the apprentice minimum wage will rise to £8.00 per hour, up from £7.55. Employers are also reminded that apprentices under 25 earning below £50,270 per year remain exempt from employer National Insurance contributions, offering substantial annual savings for businesses recruiting or upskilling young staff.

# Employer Feedback

## Next Steps



### Survey findings

Once the roundtable is complete, we will review the survey results in detail to identify key trends, challenges, and opportunities in engineering apprenticeships. This will help us understand the priorities of apprentices and employers and highlight areas for improvement in current programs.

### Outcomes

After the roundtable, we will compile the key findings, insights, and recommendations and share them with all participants. This ensures everyone is informed of the discussion outcomes and can use the information to support improvements in their apprenticeship programs.

### What's next for engineering apprenticeships

Following the roundtable, we will use the insights gathered to develop actionable recommendations for enhancing apprenticeship programs. This may include refining mentorship structures, updating training content, and exploring ways to expand access and engagement for future apprentices.

### Continued Improvement

We greatly appreciate your time and contribution. Your continued engagement will help us deliver high-quality apprenticeship programmes that prepare skilled engineers for the workforce of tomorrow.

# Employer Partners --- & Sponsorship



## Employer Partnership

- **Event Access:** Invitations to all college networking and career events.
- **Spotlight Feature:** Highlight your company on our website and social media.
- **Candidate Access:** Connect directly with motivated apprenticeship seekers.
- **Brand Boost:** Showcase your commitment to workforce development.
- **Tailored Programs:** Shape apprenticeships to fit your skills needs.
- **Cost-Effective Hiring:** Train future employees with college support and incentives.

## How we support you

- **Free Recruitment Support:** Help you find and connect with qualified apprenticeship candidates at no cost.
- **Brand Promotion:** Feature your company on our website and social media.
- **Tailored Apprenticeship Programs:** Design programs to match your skills needs and business goals.
- **Ongoing Guidance:** Support onboarding, retention, and workforce development.
- **Cost-Effective Hiring:** Reduce recruitment costs while training future employees.
- **Apprentice Support Officer.**

## Sponsorship Packages

View packages [here](#)

# Thank you

We greatly appreciate your time, insight, and contribution during the Engineering Roundtable. Your expertise and feedback are invaluable in helping us understand the evolving needs of the engineering sector and ensuring our apprenticeship programmes are closely aligned with industry expectations. By sharing your perspectives, you are directly shaping the skills, knowledge, and behaviours of the next generation of engineers.

Your continued engagement will not only help us deliver high-quality, industry-relevant apprenticeship programmes, but also strengthen the connection between education and the workplace, ensuring that apprentices are well-prepared to meet real-world challenges. We look forward to collaborating with you further on curriculum development, potential new standards, and opportunities for practical industry involvement, so together we can build a skilled, adaptable, and future-ready engineering workforce.

## Contact Information

 01753 793484

 [charlotte.mcloughlin@windsor-forest.ac.uk](mailto:charlotte.mcloughlin@windsor-forest.ac.uk)

 The Windsor Forest Colleges Group