



Christmas Newsletter 2016

Dear Student, Parent/Carer,

It is hard to believe that we are now at the end of 2016 and the long Autumn term, which has seen us welcome over 100 new students in Years 10 and 12 to UTC Swindon. The two Induction Days in September do seem an age ago, particularly as our new recruits settled in extremely quickly and in no time were proudly showing off the college to prospective new students and families at Open Days and Evenings, as if they'd been here for years!

Students have settled well into their studies, with Year 11 and 13s approaching their last full term before final examinations and assignment completion. Mock exams have just been completed by Year 11s, who will receive their results in a similar manner to their Summer 2017 results on **Monday 9th January**. Hopefully, hard work will be reflected by good outcomes and much is expected from this dedicated cohort.

As you will see from this newsletter, it has been a busy term, with students having many opportunities to develop their skills and experiences with our employer partners. We are grateful for the experiences these provide in preparing UTC students for the workplace. There are some amazing opportunities out there for young people, both locally and further afield, and the head-start that employers give our students, through regular business exposure, is highly valuable.

We are also excited at the prospect of another good number of students joining us next September, with over 100 Year 10 applications having been made via Swindon Borough Council to date.

College Start/finish time Consultation

Following consultation with students, staff and parents/carers, we have decided not to make any changes to the start/finish times of the college day. Although the majority of respondents expressed a preference for an earlier finish, the relatively small number of responses, along with some well-made justifications for retaining our existing day, suggests that the current structure is preferable at this time.

Student Board

Earlier in the term, prospective Student Board members completed applications and were grilled during interviews as part of the selection process to appoint this year's team. Congratulations to the new team and we look forward to your contributions to further UTC Swindon developments.

UTC Swindon's 2016/2017 Student Board: Rebekah Stubbs, Lawrence James (Vice Chair), Ziemowit Jozefowski, Taylor Loveridge, Matt Williamson, Chris Williamson (Chair), Sol Cavilla and Robin Gurung (not pictured).



The Board's first official engagement took them to the Houses of Parliament to see how voting and elections are determined for the UK. They were given a tour and took part in a workshop.

You are likely to see a lot more of these students representing the UTC in the future, both in college and in the community.

Student Well-being Day

Student Well-being Day was another great success this year, with lots of local businesses and support services offering sessions to our students. This was the opportunity for students to take part



in lessons outside of the regular curriculum. This year these included Martial Arts, Health and Beauty, Finance, Mindfulness and many more.

Students said they enjoyed having a day away from their usual timetable and the chance to spend time with all year groups.

All the professionals involved said they enjoyed working with students and found the day a useful way to engage with such a large group of young people all on one day.

It gave many students the chance to focus on how to deal with stress and pressure placed on teenagers to do well. It allowed them to take away some strategies they could use in their free time, as well as ways to stay safe and a sense of how to be a good citizen.



Careers Convention



A massive thank you to all the employers who came and gave their time to speak to our students about the next stage in their life. With over 30 businesses and educational establishments participating, students gathered a vast amount of information from future employers and guidance about what they need to achieve to progress into their chosen careers.

Lectures from Adrian Gath on his experiences as an Engineer, and information to students and parents from GW Partnerships on apprenticeships, encouraged many of our students to take the next steps towards a future in engineering. It was fantastic to see our students professionally engaging with businesses. Companies said UTC Swindon students were very mature, asked intelligent questions and were really interested in how they could prepare for their future. Joining UTC Swindon is the first step in creating our Engineers of the future.

We will continue to work with these businesses to support our students with their future employment.

Thames Water Network Challenge

Year 10 and 11 students welcomed back Thames Water to complete the Network Challenge and take part in a Careers Lab. Amazing staff from Thames Water engaged the students and created an excellent atmosphere for our young people to use engineering theory to help solve real world issues.

Students worked in teams to plan network routes and design water networks. They were required to submit pipe orders and test their networks.

As part of the Careers Lab they looked at CV writing and why they should consider working in engineering. They also looked at skills and qualities required to apply for apprenticeships.

Another great day and thanks to Thames Water for their support.



Network Rail “My kinda future!”



This was a popular careers event highlighting stereotypes about engineers and detailing the apprenticeships available. Year 12 students were given a challenge to build a sculpture using basic tools and equipment. Students had to work as a team to build their model and create a working engineered structure.

Network Rail offered students advice and guidance on how to get into their chosen career after their time at UTC Swindon.

Year 10 Bath University visit

Thirty of our Year 10 students visited Bath University to experience university life. They had a tour of the campus, took part in a range of lessons including Engineering, Maths, Physics and School of Management.



They were given the chance to meet Bath University students, who ran a session to answer questions about university life and how to apply. They also took part in a Higher Education quiz to test their knowledge.

This trip was such a success that we have booked a visit later in the year for another set of students to attend.

Our students were a credit to the UTC and engaged well in the sessions. This was a great start to the careers events running during November.



Past and present UTC Swindon students and staff recently returned from a 10 day trip to Kenya as part of the Swindon based Younite Outreach Project.

During their stay, the group taught several lessons, donated clothes and resources, as well as providing a temporary water system for Silver Bells, one of Younite's supported orphanages in the area, whilst they wait for



their new water tank to be installed. The students helped prepare land for a new school, to provide a safe and educational environment, for 500 destitute children. They also visited Lake Nakuru National Park and Thompson Falls.

Ben Rickards (pictured), a Year 12 student, said: "Visiting Kenya with YTA was one of the most valuable and rewarding experiences of my life. Not only did I gain a lot for myself, but it is clear to see the difference YTA are making to the lives of the children at both Melon Mission and Silver Bells. Getting to interact with and teach the children gave me the most rewarding feeling, which will stay with me forever."

We hope to offer the opportunity for students to participate in this life-changing experience, again in 2018.



GWPGroup

A group of Y12 students visited specialist packaging designer and manufacturer GWP last week and learnt about the entire manufacturing process, from start to finish, including the hidden complexities and challenges involved in the manufacture of the humble cardboard box.

They were able to get up close to the working manufacturing machinery and see first-hand the range of technical processes involved in manufacturing what appears, to the lay person, to be a simple product. Students were able to see and ask questions about pneumatics and hydraulics whilst they experienced manufacturing from the start of the process at 'goods in', through production at the Cricklade site, to finished items in the 'goods out' area.

Robert Gibbs, UTC Workshop Manager, said: "This was a fantastic opportunity for the students to see an industrial environment with real world examples of what we have been teaching them. Being able to bring the theory of what the young engineers have been learning, to life, is invaluable. I'd like to thank GWP for working with us to make this possible for the students. I think the students were all genuinely surprised at how much engineering is involved in the design and manufacture of corrugated cardboard boxes."



As part of their BTEC Level 3 Engineering course, the visit supported several units, such as health and safety, engineering design, hydraulics and pneumatics.

James Pedley, Operations Manager at GWP Packaging said: "We believe it's very important for all employers to do their bit to support the education of young people. Schools and colleges can only do so much, but by investing time into projects such as this, employers can really make a difference to the quality of education that youngsters receive and that inevitably helps improve the employability skills of young people."



This is the first visit GWP have hosted for our students but following the success of this pilot, further visits are planned for next year.

Rob Gibbs added: "GWP are experts in engineered cost reduction and just-in-time supply so it will be very valuable for our students to learn more about these important subjects. They also work across many industries, such as automotive, aerospace and retail so the breadth of their experience will be very useful."

Following the visit the students were enthusiastic about their experience. Lauryn Bailey said: "It was more interesting than I thought it was going to

be. Seeing how much goes into a business of that type was good."

Fellow student James Goodchild added: "Seeing the whole process from 'goods in' through production to 'goods out' was useful, the tour was good and I now have a greater appreciation for a business environment."

Other Events this Term

This term at UTC Swindon, we have been lucky to have a variety of guest lectures from a range of employers to speak to our students. Year 10 welcomed **MP Robert Buckland** during their enrichment session to discuss Swindon's Youth Parliament. They were also lucky enough at the start of the term to have the **REME** in to complete some team building activities and be given careers advice.

Hochtief spoke to Year 12 students about Civil Engineering and the associated design discipline. They put into context the environment in which Civil Engineering takes place, and provided examples of engineered solutions and how they are developed.

Year 10 and 11 students have also been given the opportunity to volunteer to support the work of **Swindon 105.5**.

Year 11 Business Studies students visited **Cadbury World** in Birmingham, where they were able to pick up useful information on production, marketing and quality control, which involved the unenviable task of sampling chocolate!!



Without wanting to wish away the Christmas holiday, a reminder that college starts on **Tuesday 3rd January 2017** at 8.30am.

Wishing you and your family a wonderful Christmas and all good wishes for the New Year and beyond.

Jon Oliver
Deputy Principal