



ALSTOM and DCG
Working in partnership for excellence



Rail industry employers in the driving seat

Derby has a long history as being the home of the rail industry and employers across the sector are working proactively with DCG to ensure that this continues.

A wide range of companies are represented on DCG's Rail Industry Skills Board – co-designing and co-delivering the curriculum to better prepare the current and future workforce.

The focus of the Board members' work with curriculum managers has most recently been on the introduction of the Engineering T-Level in September 2022 with discussions also underway regarding industry's requirements and involvement in the Institute of Technology (IoT) which is earmarked for launching in 2024.

Emily Bramble CEng Meng MA is chair of the Rail Industry Skills Board in her capacity as Verification and Validation Management Lead Engineer at Alstom in Derby.

She explained that members of the Rail Industry Skills Board had undertaken a skills survey with DCG to map out the skills that employers want in the short, medium and longer term.

"Our involvement with DCG through the Rail Industry Skills Board is a crucial part of succession management both as individual employers and as a sector and it is our opportunity to bring young people through to be the next generation of leaders.

"Working with the College is enabling us to map out the skills gaps and identify the common attributes that we all require in this sector.

"The message came over loud and clear that we want young people and adults with higher education qualifications alike to have high quality soft skills.

"In the changing workplace, we particularly want people with communication and digital skills who are able to operate efficiently and effectively both in person and on virtual meetings and presentations. We also want individuals who are responsible, critical thinkers and problem solvers.

"Such skills are just as important as engineering knowledge and practical skills such as welding. From that base, we recognise that it is our responsibility to develop job-specific skills."

The focus on soft skills is reflected in a key part of employers' co-delivery at DCG with mentoring, job application and interview techniques provided to a wide range of students.

Ms Bramble continued: "Our input into the Engineering T-Level has been valuable to ensure that the work placements element, which is such a crucial part of this new Gold Standard of vocational education, is both worthwhile for the young people and workable for the employers.

"We are also excited about DCG's involvement in the IoT which could potentially be an important part of the wider moves to make Derby a worldwide hub of learning in the rail industry.



“We have some innovative and world-leading facilities in the city such as virtual reality learning which will revolutionise learning in the rail industry and the IoT is an opportunity to widen the impact and accessibility of what is available and under development.

Another key function of the Rail Industry Skills Board has been to raise the profile of the rail industry and the broad career options available.

“I joined the rail industry with a chemical engineering background and didn’t know anything about the industry and that is something I particularly want to address through the Board.

“Through events, workplace visits, guest lectures and mentoring, we want to raise aspirations and have the skills pipeline coming through from further and higher education with people who are well rounded and knowledgeable about the industry.

“The end goal is to support the college to be a valuable part of Derby being a rail centre of knowledge with national and even international impact.”

DCG’s Assistant Principal – Technology, Brian Malyan concluded: “The input from employers involved in the Rail Industry Skills Board continues to be crucial to ensure our curriculum reflects the needs of this diverse industry.

“In line with their feedback, we have re-focused the curriculum to better develop our students’ transferable skills.



“The introduction of the Engineering T-Level in September 2022 and the work to develop the IoT have both provided a particularly valuable focus for wider discussion about co-design and co-delivery of further and higher education programmes and we greatly value the expertise of representatives from a wide range of rail companies.





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