

News story: Digital and science engineering to be taught at new college

Hundreds of students will be trained to become experts in engineering and digital technology to help deliver the skilled workers local businesses need at a state-of-the art new college in Doncaster announced today (Monday 18 June).

Doncaster University Technical College will train up to 750 13 to 19-year-olds in the latest rail engineering techniques, as well as coding and 3-D design skills when it opens its doors in September 2020, helping to meet the needs of the local economy.

Plans for the college have been led by the Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council, working with both the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University alongside leading businesses from across South Yorkshire, including Volker Rail and Keepmoat.

Today's announcement is part of a wider government drive to deliver a world-class technical education system that rivals the best performing countries, giving young people genuine choice about their future and developing the skills that are truly valued by employers.

This announcement follows the recent unveiling of the first 52 colleges and post-16 providers selected to teach new T Levels from 2020 by Education Secretary Damian Hinds. T levels will provide a high-quality, technical alternative to A levels and is part of a £500 million a year programme to ensure people across the country have the skills we need to compete globally.

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System Lord Agnew said:

Technology and the world economy are fast-changing, and we need to make sure our young people have the skills they need to get the jobs of tomorrow. There is a clear demand from local businesses for these specialist skills and Doncaster UTC will provide a strong mix of academic and technical-based study that nurtures the talents of all its students.

I am greatly impressed by the commitment of those who have driven the proposals forward, and work now begins to design an exciting curriculum that will arm pupils with skills that employers need to build a Britain that's fit for the future.

As part of the Industrial Strategy, investments are being made in digital and technical education to help generate well paid, highly skilled jobs across the country. Digital sectors contributed £118 billion to the economy in 2015

and it is predicted that within 20 years 90% of all jobs will require some element of digital skills.

The Government is also working with hundreds of industry partners as part of the Year of Engineering to offer a million direct and inspiring experiences of engineering to young people throughout 2018 and help tackle the estimated shortfall of 20,000 engineering graduates a year facing the UK.

Pupils at Doncaster UTC will study core GCSEs and A levels alongside a high-quality technical curriculum that focuses on teaching them key digital and engineering skills, designed with local and national employers. It will join the 49 University Technical Colleges (UTCs) – colleges that specialise in subjects that meet the needs of employers and the economy by integrating academic study with practical learning – already open nationwide.

Doncaster is one of 12 Opportunity Areas, identified by the Government as social mobility ‘coldspots’, which are receiving a share of £72 million to raise aspirations and opportunities for the young people who live there – Doncaster UTC will provide more good places for parents and pupils to choose from. A site for the school will now be finalised at a cost that meets the needs of the curriculum and offers value for money to the taxpayer.

Today’s announcement will transform the educational landscape in Doncaster and across South Yorkshire and the “fantastic news” has been widely welcomed by a number of leading businesses, local politicians and other institutions in the region including both Sheffield University and Sheffield Hallam University.

Lord Baker, Chairman of Baker Dearing Educational Trust, said:

We are delighted that Doncaster University Technical College has been given the go ahead by the Department for Education.

UTCs are based on local skills demand. This UTC bid was led by Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, Wabtec Faiveley and Keepmoat Group and has been supported by key employers in Doncaster including: Polypipe, VolkerRail, Agemaspark and Pennine Stone. Dan Fell, Chief Executive of the Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, deserves much recognition for the work he and the bid team have put in to convince the Government that a UTC is a necessary addition to Doncaster’s education landscape. We are pleased that all their efforts have been successful.

Mayor of Doncaster Ros Jones said:

It has been a long held ambition of the council, Doncaster Chamber, local businesses and the whole of Team Doncaster to bring a University Technical College to Doncaster so it is fantastic news that we now have the green light from government. We have just published a review of post 16 education across Doncaster and one of

its key recommendations to improve outcomes for young people is to improve quality and choice in Doncaster's further and higher education opportunities so our communities have clearer routes into employment which the UTC will be an integral part of.

The UTC will become a vital pathway into further education and employment for our young people and is part of our comprehensive plans to have a diverse educational offer that provides our young people with the best opportunity to learn and thrive.

The UTC will link our young people with local businesses so they gain the technical skills needed by industry. It will also complement the National College for High Speed Rail by providing another route for our young people to build a successful and rewarding career which supports inclusive economic growth. These are exciting times for Doncaster as we continue to build for the future.

Mayor of Sheffield Dan Jarvis said:

This is fantastic news for our young people in Doncaster. Gaining skills in advanced engineering and digital design, and being involved in industry-led projects, will give learners the perfect opportunity to secure those high-skilled jobs that are increasingly coming to the Sheffield City Region. My congratulations and thanks go to everyone who has worked so hard to secure this new college.

Dan Fell, chief executive of Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, said:

I am absolutely delighted by the Department for Education's decision to approve Doncaster's bid to open a University Technical College.

The UTC will provide exciting new opportunities for the borough's young people to access outstanding technical education here in Doncaster. By equipping Doncaster's fantastic young people with the skills and experience they need to thrive in industry, the UTC will play a key role in tackling the long term skills shortages that are apparent in key sectors such as: rail; construction; and engineering. This will ensure that firms in these industries have access to the skilled labour they need to grow and succeed in a competitive global economy; it will also make Doncaster an increasingly attractive destination for inward investors from these sectors.

The Chamber is a founding member of the UTC and I have been proud to lead the bid for a UTC in recent years on behalf of the local business community. We could not have got to this point without having a robust and dedicated partnership between the business

community, local educationalists, Doncaster MBC and other key stakeholders. I would applaud everyone involved in this project to date for their vision, tenacity and commitment to Doncaster. We all now look forwards to working closely with DfE to open a brilliant UTC in Doncaster's town centre in 2020.

Dave Sheridan, chief executive of the Keepmoat Group, said:

As an anchor business in Doncaster we welcome the announcement of a successful UTC application. Keepmoat construction have been involved in this project from the outset and continue to support this important project which will provide new and exciting opportunities for young people. As a key partner to the project, we look forward to supporting young people to ensure that they have the skills, knowledge and experience to ensure that they access the best career opportunities locally and that Doncaster economy continues to grow.

Helen Radford-Hernandez, Principal of Hungerhill School in Doncaster, said:

I am truly thrilled that Doncaster has been given final approval to set up a UTC providing students of all abilities with a much needed gateway into the highly specialist studies and industries of Engineering, Science and Digital Media.

It is testament to the existing strong collaborations between local businesses, universities and educational leaders that our young people will, as part of a highly innovative, employer led curriculum, have many opportunities to experience a world class education affording them the opportunity to compete globally for the best jobs, apprenticeships and places at the top universities. It is nothing less than Doncaster and our young people deserve.

Michael Wilkinson, deputy Managing Director of Frog Education and President of Doncaster Chamber of Commerce, said:

The announcement of the UTC marks another step change for Doncaster; giving confidence to our young people that they have quality opportunities ahead and are being invested in, giving confidence to business to continue to invest in Doncaster for the future, safe in the knowledge a new talent pool is developing, based upon a relevant curriculum which they contribute to engineering giving confidence to the nation and beyond that Doncaster is great place to work, live and enjoy.

Professor Wyn Morgan, vice-president of Education at the University of

Sheffield, said:

The University warmly welcomes and supports the decision to locate a University Technical College in Doncaster. Focused on Advanced Engineering and Digital Design and working with local universities employers, the new UTC in Doncaster and the existing UTCs in Sheffield are aimed at developing skills which will drive innovation, attract inward investment from high-tech companies and help to create jobs.

Professor Sir Chris Husbands, vice-chancellor of Sheffield Hallam University, said:

We welcome the news that the application to open a Doncaster UTC has been approved. Sheffield Hallam is proud to be a partner of the new UTC, building on the successful partnerships we already enjoy with both UTCs in Sheffield.

UTCs are a great example of how industry and education can come together to provide opportunities for students to get involved in innovative and applied learning whilst addressing the regional skills gap.

Paul Stockhill, Managing Director of Agemaspark, said:

This is marvellous news for Doncaster and will provide a new opportunity for all of the local region to participate in the future of our young people. To encourage diversity and insight for growth among the business and communities of the area. I wish to thank the local government and Doncaster Chamber of Commerce and local business for their determination and persistence to bring the UTC to a successful conclusion.

Cameron McLellan, Managing Director of Polypipe, said:

Polypipe welcome the recent announcement regarding Doncaster UTC. Having worked with the project team we are looking forward to being involved in the development of the UTC and see its opening in Doncaster as a real benefit to our future.

Polypipe's roots are in Doncaster since we commenced in 1980 and we have continued to grow internationally. Further growth is dependent on new talent joining our organisation each year and we welcome the opportunity to be an integral part of developing young people with the skills and experiences needed to enter the engineering world.

Richard Walsh, Managing Director of Pennine Stone, said:

I am delighted that this scheme has been approved, Doncaster UTC will create a new offer for our young people which will develop the skills and behaviours that industry needs to continue to thrive. By securing Industry involvement in education delivery, we have an opportunity to ensure that our young people succeed in their careers and access the very best opportunities while driving local economic growth.

The UTC will provide young people with an exciting education alternative which will enable them to combine traditional study alongside stimulating new industry-based and applied learning pathways.

Jack Pendle, Engineering Director at Volker Rail, said:

Having worked with the Doncaster UTC team, we are delighted about the recent announcement confirming UTC approval. At Volker Rail we are passionate about building the next generation rail engineering workforce for Doncaster and will require talented young people with a good grounding in STEM subjects to deliver in the fast emerging digital railway.

The UTC will be of great benefit; not only to local young people, but the future local economy. We believe the UTC, alongside the National College of High Speed Rail, will provide fantastic opportunities for our young people and we are excited to be taking this project forward with other partners.