

Top marks for Dstl's engineering apprentices

News story

The first cohort of scientists to work as Dstl apprentices while studying for a degree have all graduated – with first class bachelors in engineering (BEng).



All 3 received top marks for the qualification attained during 4 years while they earned money, gained experience and progressed on their career paths.

The trio are now working in cyber for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) – 2 are based in Salisbury and 1 has just started a secondment in the US.

Team Leader Chris said:

We are all extremely proud to see our apprentices receive outstanding degrees which are testament to their hard work, dedication and passion for science.

They are rolling off the apprenticeships and they are world class. We want to make sure we keep them. They are fantastic.

They have set the bar extremely high for those currently doing their degrees and shown that you don't have to choose between a top degree and an apprenticeship.

We support our apprentices both in terms career development and academic achievement. It's win win.

The group studied on a 6-week block release at Aston University in Birmingham when COVID-19 rules allowed. They studied Embedded Electronics Systems Design and Development degrees.

George said:

I was sceptical about paying an enormous amount of money to go to university and this was a chance to learn on the job, embed myself in a career and get a really good qualification

I think it works really well doing an apprenticeship and a degree as you get to apply what you are learning and that keeps you enthusiastic and improves your academic performance.

I would highly recommend the Dstl apprenticeship scheme and advise anyone on it to make the most of it – it is a fantastic opportunity.

He went on to say he was allowed time to study at work and found advice from people in the same field invaluable.

Josh said:

When I was looking at jobs before the course and I used to joke 'how are you supposed to be a fresh graduate and have 3 years of work experience?' Now I have 4 years.

I had the choice of going to university full-time or doing this apprenticeship and I think I definitely made the right decision and don't feel I've missed out on much – maybe I've sacrificed Freshers' Week for a 4-year head start in my career.

One of the best things about doing an apprenticeship with Dstl is the support they give you. We were given a reasonable period of time for our studies while people we knew elsewhere had to work every weekend to find the time.

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