

Apprentices in the real world



Our regular writer on apprenticeships, Gerard Honey, an assessor of the scheme, continues his look at security training and, in this feature, gives examples of some of the everyday work carried out ...



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1. Looking after emergency services

Oakroyd Hall in Bradford is the West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters, which includes a high technology purpose-designed demands and rescue training centre, complete with training towers and cranes for height simulation and rope rescue.

It also includes classrooms, lecture theatres, a comprehensive administration and communications centre dealing with the reception of fire calls and the mobilising of appliances and senior management offices.

Even to the casual observer it is a highly impressive set up with overriding security and protection issues of serious complexity.

I visited Harry Hodgson of family business **TI Security** working at the Hall on the CCTV network which secures access into the grounds and, subsequently, monitors the activities within it.

A further apprentice and colleague, Chris Hawkrigde of TI's sister company **Absolute Access** has, within his terms of reference, a working knowledge of automated gates and the onerous safety requirements of them. This includes automatic control and safety devices to ensure the safety of users and others in the area.

It covers the installation range of all residential electric gates and barriers extending to industrial

Beyond college

A part of the programme for learners involves on-site assessments. An assessor visits the apprentice at the workplace to witness the carrying out of the syllabus technical units to gain evidence for the NVQ.

In my term working as an assessor, I have genuinely witnessed a truly fascinating range of installations and, in doing so, attended sites ranging from residential properties through to highly secured warships moored on the river Tyne.

So let me illustrate a few real life installations that I have seen involving my current eight security apprentices at work.

The following examples will prove that diversity can be provided for them – but we have to supply it.

The extent of the actual security systems installation available to us and the roles we can find for them is only limited by our own imagination.

I HOPE THIS OCCASIONAL SERIES HAS shown how security apprenticeships are integrated programmes involving work-based training and education which ultimately leads to appropriate qualifications.

In our particular industry, after three years of work experience, college attendance, assessments and examinations, the apprentice will have a City & Guilds 1852 qualification and 1882 NVQ Level 2 and Level 3 (providing security, emergency & alarm systems).

However, throughout this programme, there has to be a variety of interesting work offered to the trainees by the employer if these youngsters are going to continue to follow the scheme and eventually obtain a National Advanced Apprenticeship Certificate.

Our ongoing "Support Installer Apprenticeships" campaign has highlighted many areas of training and suggested what we need to do as an industry to further promote the training concept, including ways to bring more women into the scheme.



A Morrisons development site in a pedestrian area. An apprentice from Securi-Plex has been working on many Morrisons sites, involving everything from first fix through to final commissioning and handover

bollards, turnstiles and traffic barriers including IP and PC-based access control.

2. No longer a market stall

Although Morrisons is a household name and one of the UK's largest supermarket chains, it started as a humble Bradford market stall.

Alongside Morrisons is Farmers Boy, their own purpose-built fresh food factory.

Both of these entrust **Securi-Plex** to look after their highly advanced and networked integrated security systems nationwide.

I visited Matthew Bedford of Securi-Plex working on many of these sites involving first fix through to the final commissioning and handover stages. So important is Morrisons, that an Ofsted Inspector once paid a visit with me to York to witness the assessment process for governmental educational verification.

Morrisons place the highest possible emphasis on security-related protection and the safety aspects for staff and customers alike. Therefore all branches include a multitude of advanced technology security techniques to include the high classification risk and protection of staff at the tills together with safeguarding cash.

Strict Health and Safety issues must be upheld and, in the early stages, the premises are effectively building sites in inner city areas, not the most glamorous areas for apprentices to work.

At the project start, apprentices may have to contend with inhospitable conditions and weather in, generally pedestrianised, areas cordoned off to the public. At the project end, apprentices have to satisfy the demands of the building's architecture and those of the integrated security system.

3. New outlook for offices and education

Adam Smith and Matthew Frank, who are both apprentices at **Monks Security Systems** have recently been involved with systems work in

Forsyth House at Gelderd Point, a modern three-storey office building close to Leeds and the M62 and airport and rail links.

It is interesting to see that it boasts about its security alongside that of its facilities, such as staff reception, virtual offices, meeting rooms, secretarial services and car parking.

This work follows on from the pair's security installation work at Tong High School, a multicultural co-educational secondary school serving a wide area of south east Bradford.

This building became one of the first contracts under the Building Schools for the Future scheme for state of the art buildings. It pioneered BSF's

main aim, to renew all of England's secondary schools within the next 10 to 15 years.

4. Working in harmony

An interesting project was assessed when I visited Grimsby to see Michael Stephenson of **Abatis Fire and Security Solutions**, a small but well established family business.

Abatis share the same security compound with both TH Brown, who operate as employment consultants and sub let other offices in their block, and Space People, who rent out storage space within a large warehouse. These three separate businesses all share access into the compound through a common highly secure electric sliding gate. Abatis took over existing site security systems and updated and extended these to provide techniques and management networks. In the takeover, the security company discovered irregularities such as fire detection systems with mains-only sounders.

They also found that 24 hour access could be achieved by monitoring the gate with CCTV and adding external beam detection.

Access systems installed in the neighbouring buildings included fobs and cards with an intercom, all integrated using equipment that could ultimately provide dual path IP and GSM/GPRS communications with SMS reporting to EN Grade 3 and PD 6662.

All this proved how resources can be better used by introducing integrated site-specific methods that allow parties in a common area to share a range of protection with others who may be renting short term.

5. Protecting police – and environment

Luke Harrison is an apprentice who works for **Marshall Fire & Security Solutions** who carry out most of the work in the police stations used by the West Yorkshire police force. He includes, within his skills, access control installations using



Two apprentices from Monks Security Systems have been working at Forsyth House, Gelderd Point, a modern three storey office building