

Frimley, UK
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Siemens awards Hull blade factory training contract to Hull College Group

Siemens today (September 7) announced the award of a key contract to Hull College Group involving the development of a “best in class” facility to train workers for the company’s new wind turbine blade factory in Hull.

The contract, which is worth around £1m, will see the conversion of an existing college facility to deliver training to the blade factory workforce over the next two years and support the company’s ongoing training needs as it establishes a new industry for the UK in the city.

As part of the deal, Hull College Group will invest £400,000 to upgrade and re-equip the Construction Skills Centre on Hull’s Preston Road estate, which is just two miles from the factory site at Alexandra Dock. The centre will be renamed the Hull College Group Composites Training Centre.

The facility will become one of just two in the UK which specialises in manufacturing skills using composite materials – the other being the National Composites Centre in Bristol. Siemens’ blades are a composite of balsa wood, glass fibre and resin.

Siemens selected Hull College Group from four local training providers following a thorough bidding process involving extensive information gathering and evaluation. This involved the training providers visiting Siemens’ blade factory in Aalborg, Denmark, and Aalborg Technical College, which has a long-established training relationship with Siemens.

Under the deal, a successful training programme from the Aalborg college will be replicated in Hull, with the Hull centre becoming a sister training facility to the Danish operation. All 800 operational staff hired to work in the blade factory will undergo five weeks of training at the Hull College facility, with the first recruits trained from March 2016.

After a first week of introduction to Siemens and its culture and values, employees will undergo two weeks of training, delivered by Hull College Group, introducing them to Siemens’ turbine blades and how they are manufactured. This will include production of small-scale versions of the huge 75m blades that will be manufactured in the Hull factory.

A further two weeks of specialist training, delivered by Siemens staff, will prepare recruits for specific roles. Finally, a further eight weeks of hands-on training will ensure staff are ready to work in the factory, which is due to open in September 2016. Depending on specific job roles, this training will take place in a converted warehouse at Alexandra Dock or, if training in a factory environment is essential, at the Aalborg factory.

Siemens' UK Head of Skills Martin Hottass said: "We are pleased to announce that we have selected our delivery partner for the first major piece of training for our facilities in Hull.

"This is part of a comprehensive training programme, but we will do all the training that we can locally, delivered by local people. This will maximise the benefit to the local community and minimise the disruption to family life for the people we will employ in Hull.

"We will award further training contracts in due course and we anticipate working with local providers once more."

Mr Hottass said the Siemens' contract would enable Hull College Group to invest in remodelling and upgrading the existing facility.

He added: "Siemens is the catalyst that will allow Hull College Group to create a best in class facility, where our new recruits will be trained in miniaturised versions of the processes within the Hull factory.

"While our immediate contract covers all our initial workforce training needs up to 2018, we envisage a long-term relationship. We will clearly have training needs for new employees into the future and whenever we make changes to our manufacturing processes.

"The legacy is that the training facilities Hull College Group will establish for Siemens can also be available for other manufacturers in the wind industry that require this type of training or sectors such as caravan manufacturing and boat building, which also use composites."

Siemens' Hull Project Director Finbarr Dowling said: "This training partnership with Hull College Group is a crucial part of our strategy to develop a highly-skilled local workforce for the world-class facilities we are establishing in Hull.

"We are delighted that we will be working with a highly-respected local training provider to equip our new employees with valuable skills and that this training will be delivered in Hull."

Hull College Group Chief Executive Gary Warke said: "We are delighted to be chosen by Siemens to be their preferred partner to deliver a highly-skilled workforce to meet their training requirements for the significant investment in the renewables sector in our local economy.

“Siemens has made a strong commitment to hiring locally, buying locally and training locally and this announcement is real evidence of their confidence in the high quality of our bespoke training locally.

“Investing with Hull College Group, enabling the development of an industry-leading facility and committing to put 800 people through training here is a massive demonstration of Siemens’ commitment to the city and local community.”

Siemens is due to begin large-scale recruitment for the blade factory later this month and will soon hold a series of careers events which will enable people to find out all they need to know about the jobs that will be available.

The events are being staged in partnership with Hull City Council, East Riding Council and Jobcentre Plus. The venues, dates and times are as follows:

East Hull

Tuesday, September 29, Freedom Centre, Preston Road, Hull, HU9 3QB.
1.00pm to 7.00pm (Ample free on-site parking available).

West Hull

Wednesday, September 30, Mercure Grange Park Hotel, Willerby, HU10 6EA
1.00pm to 7.00pm (Ample free on-site parking available).

Central Hull

Saturday, October 3, Guildhall, Hull, HU1 2AA
10.00am to 4.00pm (Limited pay and display parking available).

People who wish to attend the events must register by going to the Green Port Hull website and following the link at www.greenporthull.co.uk/siemens

With partner Associated British Ports (ABP), Siemens is investing £310m in the Hull project to create world-class and world-scale offshore wind turbine blade manufacturing, assembly, logistics and servicing facilities employing 1,000 people.

Further information about the Siemens Hull project is available at <http://siemens.co.uk/hull>

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Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for more than 165 years. The company is active in more than 200 countries, focusing on the areas of electrification, automation and digitalization. One of the world's largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is No. 1 in offshore wind turbine construction, a leading supplier of combined cycle turbines for power generation, a major provider of power transmission solutions and a pioneer in infrastructure solutions as well as automation, drive and software solutions for industry. The company is also a leading provider of medical imaging equipment – such as computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging systems – and a leader in laboratory diagnostics as well as clinical IT. In fiscal 2014, which ended on September 30, 2014, Siemens generated revenue from continuing operations of €71.9 billion and net income of €5.5 billion. At the end of September 2014, the company had around 357,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.