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Awards for the latest crop of Siemens apprentices at Tyne Metropolitan College

Fifteen newly qualified apprentices from Siemens were today presented with certificates to mark the successful completion of their apprenticeship. The scheme was undertaken in conjunction with Tyne Metropolitan College, Siemens chosen partner for the programme. Richard Hogarth, who joined Siemens Energy Service as a craft apprentice in 2007, was named Apprentice of the Year and presented with the Münstermann Cup. David Mullen, one of the Siemens Transmission and Distribution apprentices, received the Stephen Kirkup Memorial Shield for Best Improver.

Developing a skilled engineering workforce is a top priority for Siemens as a major engineering employer in the North East. Siemens employs around 2,000 staff across a number of businesses including the two divisions that these apprentices will work in: Siemens Energy Service, based in Newcastle, which is part of a world-leading service and maintenance business for conventional coal-fired and combined cycle power plants and wind power plants, and Siemens Transmission and Distribution, with offices at Hebburn and Monkton, which is the UK market leader in power transmission projects. Siemens has a large and growing national apprenticeship programme, which also includes the recent launch of a wind power technician training programme.

The apprenticeship scheme was launched in 2005 and is currently training 53 Siemens Energy Service apprentices, including the latest intake of 14 new

apprentices, who began their training in September. Four full-time trainers and one full-time assessor deliver the NVQ2 and NVQ3 engineering training within the Siemens Energy Service Training Centre at Newcastle. Siemens' Joanne Dixon coordinates the apprenticeship programme, supported by fellow training manager Eddie Patterson.

Carl Ennis, managing director for Siemens Energy Service UK, who delivered the awards, said: "Today's awards are a testimony to the high quality training, organisation and support provided by Joanne, Eddie and all the staff directly involved in the apprenticeship training programme at Siemens and Tyne Metropolitan College. Developing the engineers of the future through practical apprenticeships in partnership with local colleges is a key focus of our skills and training. The partnership with the college is helping us to produce first rate apprentices"

Siemens, which has many initiatives with schools, colleges and universities to promote interest in STEM (Science, Engineering, Technology and Mathematics) and encourage careers in engineering, signed a partnership agreement with Tyne Metropolitan this year to support the College in its efforts to encourage more young people into the field. The apprenticeship programme combines structured on-the-job training with technical instruction during which apprentices gain practical experience in areas such as machining, fitting and winding. Bespoke technical courses have also been designed specifically for Siemens' apprentices and are delivered by partner college, Tyne Metropolitan.

Recent figures show that the grades that Siemens' apprentices achieve for their qualifications are far higher than the national average. One important reason is a 'block release' approach. Siemens' apprentices spend nine months at college at the start of their apprenticeship, as opposed to attending college on day release. This concentrated approach to study is much more effective and has been very positively received by the apprentices themselves. In the Energy Service business, after their

first 18 months, apprentices join a rotation placement programme within the Service Facility or on site with the Field Service team, where they gain valuable on-the-job training from staff. Similar placements happen within Siemens other businesses.

Jon Vincent, principal at Tyne Metropolitan, commenting on the success of the apprentices and the relationship with Siemens said: "We are delighted to strengthen our partnership with Siemens by helping to recognise the success of the apprentices who are here today to receive their awards. This College is passionate about engineering and the exciting career opportunities it can offer young people, especially with internationally renowned companies such as Siemens."

Last year 360 young people applied to join the apprenticeship programme at Siemens Energy Service, which has now been extended to four years in order to give the apprentices more in-depth training in key areas. Of the apprentices who begin the programme, 96% complete it compared with a national average of 68%.

Notes to editors:

Siemens Apprentices

Siemens Energy Service UK: Elliott Carr, Stephen Christian, Richard Hogarth (Apprentice of the Year), Declan McGuinness, Callum Reilly and Alan Robson.

Siemens Transmission and Distribution Ltd: Jonathan Ovington, Gavin Murphy, Philip McCaffery, Chris Swinney, David Mullen (Award for Best Improver), Chris Dine, Adam Edgar, Lewis White, Nick Baggott

About Siemens in the UK

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 168 years ago and now employs around 16,000 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £4.1 billion. As a leading global engineering and technology services company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges, across the key sectors of energy, industry and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit www.siemens.co.uk

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