



APPRENTICE SPECIAL NEWS



► Foreword by **Simon Banks, Chairman of BSIA & Skills for Security**

It's great to see business-led initiatives such as this by EDSB. A huge labour issue is affecting every part of the value chain and needs to be tackled head-on. I particularly like how EDSB are recognising the role of mentors. They are proven to be vital in the development of skills in young people with many apprentices interviewed citing their on-the-job experience as the key underpinning of their competency and skill sets.

#OneTeam



► Special Overview by Group Managing Director, **Jonathan Parker**

Ever since 2008 when EDSB developed the engineering department, apprentices have been at the forefront of our thinking. The philosophy of growing your own engineers and putting people back into the industry always seemed the most obvious solution as we grew the business.

Many years on, I am extremely proud with the progress we have made at EDSB in not only creating a structured apprenticeship scheme but also developing apprentices across a number of departments. We have identified opportunities to develop and educate apprentices using our highly experienced leadership team as mentors to produce a calibre of quality akin to the EDSB standard.

Future proofing our recruitment as the business grows is testimony to EDSB's commitment to maintain the highest standards and ultimately become the best service provider in the industry.

Congratulations to Elliott, Andy and Adam for becoming fully qualified engineers.

I hope you enjoy this special edition of Team News as much as I have.

Jonathan



► Background by HR Director, **Anna Brown**

The EDSB apprenticeship scheme was launched in 2019, when we recognised that we had a gap in terms of trainees and apprentices within the business. Four years later, we are delighted with the success of both the scheme, and our apprentices, and how their skills and knowledge have helped to grow our engineering teams.

At the launch of the scheme, we chose to partner with Skills for Security, who are the UK's largest apprenticeship training provider in the Fire & Security sector. They provide the training for our apprenticeships to gain the NVQ Level 2 in Fire, Emergency and Security Systems.

Throughout the three year course, our apprentices combine a mixture of learning styles from theory in the classroom to self study, plus training whilst out on site with our senior engineers, who provide valuable mentorship. Our first three newly qualified engineers have also provided us with valuable feedback during their course, which has helped us improve the experience for future trainees.

Our scheme is going from strength to strength and we are proud that EDSB is gaining a reputation for training and developing the industry's engineers of the future.



► Qualified Engineer, **Elliott Higginson**

My name is Elliott Higginson and I'm an install engineer at EDSB. I wanted to join EDSB because at the time I had just finished my level 2 and 3 electrical qualifications at college and wanted to continue that path. I also knew another engineer who lived very close to me and they would talk to me about the work they would do and what the company was like to work for, which is how I started at EDSB.

I have been at EDSB for almost 3 years now, as I started in July 2020. Whilst on the apprenticeship at Skills For Security they were always very supportive and would always have the answers to any queries you would throw at them. They were also brilliant at guiding you through to your End Point Assessment.

Whilst on my apprenticeship I'd always get lots of installations for my off the job training, to the point where I would be working away and be struggling for time which is when my manager allowed me time to catch up with my college work.

Now that I'm fully qualified I want to continue on the path I'm on and even further. I've always said I'd like to be able to complete anything put in front of me.

To all the apprentices at EDSB I would say knuckle down on your college work because it adds up faster than you think and if you ever feel like you've fallen behind, speak up because both EDSB and Skills for Security will support you.

I would also like to say thank you to the people that have guided and mentored me along the way to where I am now.



► Qualified Engineer, **Andy Allen**

Hi my name is Andrew Allen, I am a Service / Small Works engineer within the Midlands team. I wanted to become an apprentice for EDSB as I wanted to try something new from my previous job and as my dad has always been in the security trade, I've always wanted to take the same career as him. I started my career here at EDSB in April 2019 so I'm now coming up to my 4 year mark.

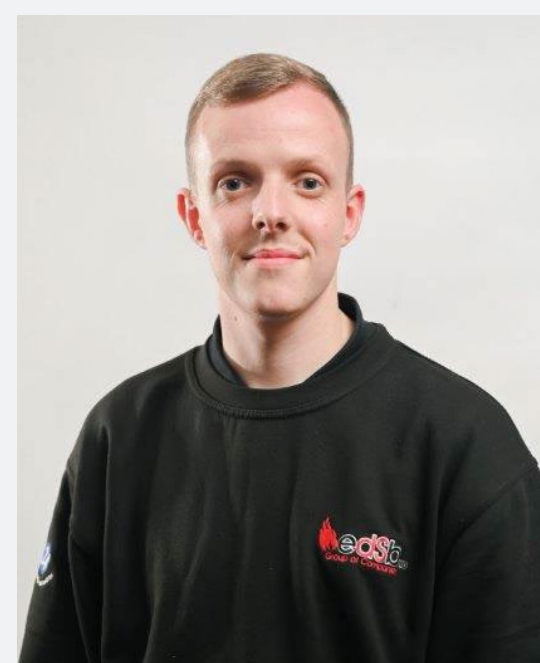
Whilst studying at Skills for Security I found the course helpful, the centre we went to in Warrington had a mixture of classrooms and also a practical room with plenty of booths with a mixture of fire addressable and conventional panels, intruder alarms, access control and hybrid CCTV systems. When it was our week at the college we had days in the classrooms learning about British standards, diagrams how to wire devices on all systems, safe isolation and much more. Then we would go into the practical room and get more 'hands on' with the systems learning how to fit them to the wall, pull cables to devices, terminate and programme.

Off the job training went well, a lot was about taking photos of your work while out on site. With me being a service engineer, this became a little tricky but I spoke with my manager at the time and explained to him what I needed and that I could do with more small works jobs, he was extremely helpful and scheduled more small works jobs my way so I could get the photos I needed. I would then have to upload and write something about the job on the system 'onefile' as we needed to achieve 20% or more to be able to be put through for our EPA (End Point Assessment).

Now that I am a qualified engineer, I would like to keep progressing and keep learning more, then in the future I would like to become a manager.

The advice I would like to give to the new apprentices is keep working hard, remember to take plenty of photos for the off the job training, keep on top of this and don't let it build up as it will become difficult as you need to reach 20% or more as this is crucial for the EPA.

I would like to thank everyone at EDSB who helped me get through the course, who took their time out to guide me when I needed it. Thank you #OneTeam



► Qualified Engineer, **Adam Atkinson**

I am Adam Atkinson, 23 years old and now a qualified Installation Engineer at EDSB. I am striving to become an expert engineer across all security disciplines at EDSB. I specifically enjoy the larger projects where we have multiple engineers onsite and work as a cohesive unit towards our main goal of completing a job to tight deadlines.

Before joining EDSB I worked as a pizza chef and wasn't sure which career route to take. When I researched EDSB (before and after the interview process) and was introduced to the fire and security industry, I could really see myself thriving and was excited to get started. I wanted to become an apprentice at EDSB because I saw the opportunity to push myself professionally.

At first, I was a trainee and was the "guinea pig" for EDSB's apprenticeship scheme. After the apprenticeship through Skills for Security began, there was open feedback and discussions between Anna Brown, Andy Loudon and I, and a clear path of progression was established. From this point on, the other apprentices and I began to thrive in our roles.

I joined EDSB in March of 2019 and was a trainee up until September 2019. By this time in September my apprenticeship officially began at Skills for Security.

The course at Skills for Security was challenging at times but also fun. Meeting up with other apprentices who were working in similar positions was refreshing and we were all able to help each other through the process.

Given how busy we all are at EDSB, the off the job training was one of the more difficult aspects of the apprenticeship. At times it was difficult to find time to complete this training. Following discussions with Anna and Andy about this, apprentices were given allotted time at the end of the month to go into the Leeds training centre to get up to date on our off the job training. This helped massively when our end point assessment dates were coming up.

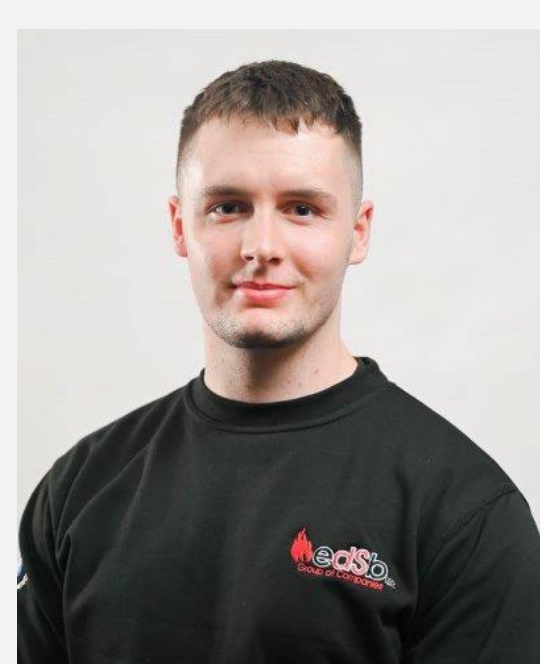
In the short term, I would like to keep gaining as much valuable experience as possible. I can achieve this through my hard work in the field, as well as putting myself forward for the training courses EDSB can offer. I would especially like to develop my ability to commission security systems. This will allow me to work on more projects from installation to handover.

I think being part of a growing company like EDSB provides me with the best career opportunities in the long term. I enjoyed the apprenticeship programme, and especially liked seeing how my feedback had been considered to improve not just mine, but other apprentices' experience. I would like to stay involved in the apprenticeship programme and help the next generation of apprentices at EDSB.

EDSB have proven themselves to be a company that likes to promote internally, so as I continue to prove myself as a skilled and competent engineer, who knows what the future may hold!

My advice to the next apprentices would be:

- Speak up if you're struggling, EDSB & Skills for Security will listen and help you
- Keep working hard and proving yourself
- Keep on top of the off the job log when you can. It'll creep up on you!



► Word from Service Director, **Simon Glew**

There was realisation a few years ago that there is a real shortage of resource in the fire and security engineering sector and we were just struggling to recruit the right level of Engineering.

We turned our focus to 'Growing our Own' whereby we decided it was the right time to start investing in apprenticeships and utilising the vast experience we already have at EDSB to start training and passing on this experience to our newly appointed apprentices.

We are super proud to see our first 3 apprentices pass their end point assessment to become fully qualified Engineers. Well done, guys.

This is a real milestone for EDSB and will just add more value to our position and offering to our many clients.

I personally look forward to seeing these guys flourish and go on to pass their skills on to future apprentices to allow us to build on what is already a superb team.

A special thanks to our senior Engineering teams who have mentored and shadowed these guys and our training partners Skills for Security who assisted in tailoring the plan to their qualification.



► Word from Install Director, **Andy Loudon**

Our business has some fantastic and talented people who have gained experience over a number of years, we always look to add candidates that fit our mould and share our ethos. Whilst we have recruited some great experienced people into the business it became apparent that the talent pool within our industry was lacking new and upcoming technicians.

We started our apprenticeship journey over 3 years ago and there really has been a lot to learn, however I feel the structure we have ensures our trainees have the support package in place to give them the greatest opportunity for success.

Our aim is to recruit apprentices and integrate them into the business just like any other employee. A question that is asked in most interviews is "Will I have a job at the end of the apprenticeship?" The answer is always "No, you have a job and career with us from day 1", we want to invest in our future and our trainees are just that, our future.

Finally, the whole apprenticeship package wouldn't work without our fantastic trainees, they demonstrate that with hard work and determination anything can be achieved so well done to Andy, Adam and Elliott, and thank you to our employees that offer their time and experience as mentors.



► What's coming up for 2023?

We currently have ten apprentices within the business, with plans to take on more during 2023, not only in Fire & Security, but Passive Fire, Water Hygiene and Business Support.

We have also developed an exciting new initiative, to support our commitment to employing service leavers and veterans from the Forces. In conjunction with Skills for Security, we have developed a fast track training scheme to enable engineers and technicians from the Forces with transferable skills, to re-train and flourish in a career within the Fire & Security industry.

We are delighted with the success of our apprenticeship scheme and see only bigger and better things for 2023. We acknowledge that there is a shortage of engineers within the industry, so by 'Growing our Own' we can ensure that EDSB not only has newly qualified engineers who are trained to the right standard and have gained a qualification from the correct accreditory body, but also a wealth of experience from our senior engineers, making our engineering team's experience second to none.



► End Word from **Jonathan Parker**

As you can probably imagine the leadership team at EDSB Compliance Solutions are extremely proud of Adam, Andy and Elliott now that they are qualified engineers. This goes to show that if you really want it you can achieve it at EDSB and I look forward to watching those engineers continue to flourish as they mentor the next group of apprentices this year. Of course none of this would have been possible without our current mentors and the great work they have done in training these engineers and also the ongoing training of our current apprentices.

Investing in the future allows EDSB to set their own standards and to develop skill sets that are up to date with the accreditory standards we conform to, which is why I am committed to the EDSB apprenticeship scheme as a fundamental ingredient to our future success and growth.

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