

SUCCESS AS SEMBCORP-INSPIRED YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SCHEME CONCLUDES



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Almost 30 young people have taken their first steps to a long term career in the process industries thanks to a pioneering scheme initiated by Sembcorp Utilities UK.

The Sembcorp Skills Development Programme (SSDP) which has now concluded, was aimed at tackling skills shortages and getting 16-19 year-olds into training in a part of north east England suffering from high levels of unemployment and social and economic deprivation.

In three years, a total of 28 people progressed from the special SSDP pre-apprenticeship programme to complete high quality employer-designed apprentice schemes with recognised training providers in the area.

Kieran Dugdale, 21, joined SSDP as a school leaver and now works as an instrument/electrical technician for Lucite International UK Ltd at Billingham. Like all his colleagues on the scheme, he completed his apprenticeship with his sponsoring company and all impressed enough to secure full time employment.

Kieran said: "I was emailing everyone looking for an apprenticeship and the Sembcorp scheme came along just at the right time. It was a fantastic opportunity that gave me a great start in work and led to me getting the job I have now."

Graham Taylor, Project Manager of the SSDP scheme, said: "Kieran is a tremendous example of all the young people who have entered the jobs market since we implemented SSDP. All have been a credit to themselves and the employers who have supported them."

SSDP was also backed by two national bodies – the National Skills Academy for the Process Industries (NSAPI) and Cogent Skills.

Joanna Wolfe, Chief Executive Officer of Cogent Skills, praised the scheme saying: "It has been a privilege to be involved.

"It has been a life changer for many of the young people taking part and the springboard for the rest of their careers. Sembcorp and the supporting companies have been superb champions for apprenticeships within this region, showing leadership and making things happen.

"The region needs more companies like Sembcorp and Lucite International who can be exemplars and who continue to be ambassadors promoting science related subjects in schools and colleges."

The picture above shows Kieran, centre, flanked by Mr Taylor and Faith Hambley, Learning and Development Officer at Lucite International's Cassel Works at Billingham.