



Oxford contractor launching new 'centre for excellence' to mark National Apprenticeship Week

Oxford-based electrical/mechanical contractor and Royal Warrant holder Lowe & Oliver is today officially launching its new apprentice training facility, the '**centre for excellence**', to mark the beginning of National Apprenticeship Week.

Thousands of pounds have been invested into developing this advanced training facility, which has the capacity to teach not only Lowe & Oliver's roster of approximately 30 apprentices, but dozens more from across central and southern England.

In the facility, there are six bays - five electrical and one mechanical (plumbing), with demo equipment installed to give the apprentices a feel of what a real site will look like. In addition, there is a classroom and other facilities to enable the apprentices to learn on and off the tools.

Lowe & Oliver will be using this new centre as part of their pitch to local schools and colleges to encourage more young people into the apprenticeship route. Having been in the industry for over 100 years, Lowe & Oliver has developed a strong reputation in the area for its commitment to apprenticeship development.

Fred Lowe, Lowe & Oliver Director, commented:

"We're delighted to have this centre up and running, with our year one apprentices already on location. The skills shortage is a crisis which is only growing, and we are determined to play our part in helping to develop the next generation of engineers."

Lowe & Oliver apprentices will be advancing through a mix of onsite work and development learning in our 'centre for excellence'. This unique programme will lead the way not only in Oxfordshire, but across the country.

It's particularly rewarding for us to be able to open the doors of this facility just as the company has celebrated 100 years in the industry - an achievement which is almost unheard of.

We're all looking forward to our apprentices taking full advantage of having such an advanced facility on their doorstep, and are hoping to bolster those numbers throughout 2024 by bringing in more apprentices than ever before from local schools and colleges."

Paul Tuson, Lowe & Oliver Chairman, added:

"Our skills centre has been manufactured for both the practical and technical development of our apprentices - following the curriculum of the Electrical and Mechanical traditional apprenticeship under the NVQ Level 2, 3 and above, supported by the JIB, JTL and BESA.

Whether specific development is required around mains distribution, power, lighting/controls, building management systems, data, fire security, domestics, gas, heating, ventilation, boilers or air source heat pump, audio visual and testing and inspection, vehicle charging, battery, solar or PV - it can deliver.

Utilising specific cabling be that SWA, Conduit/Singles, FP, LSF, SY, CAT 6A, Copper tube, soldered, compression, crimped, plastic pipework systems, MDPE, screwed or welded steel - enhanced training will be provided.

The basis of our training is designed to add support to the levels, and beyond that, already provided by their existing training provider and current college facility."

