





September 2023 |    

 Institute of  
Explosives  
Engineers  
VOICE OF THE EXPLOSIVES INDUSTRIES

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# EXPLOSIVES ENGINEERING

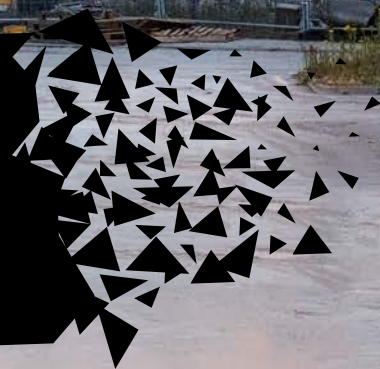


## This Month's Features:

Graduate Success

The Didcot Demolition

An Early Career's Journey into the WOME Sector





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# MEMBERS WEEKEND

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# Features

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**DISCLAIMER:** The opinions expressed in Explosives Engineering are those of the authors concerned. They do not necessarily represent the views of the Institute.

**Front Cover:** Minutes after blowdown, the team inspect the "stock-pile" before the dust has fully settled (Alford Group).

# Our Corporate Members

**Institute of Explosives Engineers**  
VOICE OF THE EXPLOSIVES INDUSTRIES

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**SYSTEMS ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY**



# Welcome to our New Members

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**Associates:**

Benjamin Chable  
Erick Skalberg  
Simon Cook

**Company:**

SPEX Group Holdings Limited

**Fellow:**

Edward Clinton

**Members:**

Abdullah Marghalani  
Daniel Hudson  
George Goddard  
Harry Field  
Jason Cheney  
Jocelyn Peach  
John MacAulay  
John Younger  
Kwa Kazimierska  
Lauren Jenkins  
Lewis Warner  
Mark Breakspear  
Matthew Lough  
Oliver Bazire  
Paul Hill  
Riki Swindells  
Ryan Stevenson  
Simon Murray  
Stephen Kerr-Ruston  
Stephen Lewis  
Stuart Peter Shepherd  
Thomas Gardner  
Randolph Law

**Students:**

Martyn McGinlay  
Alexander McDonald  
Sam Page  
Thomas Volpato

**Technical:**

Benjamin Smith  
Bradley Emanuel  
Caleb Paterson  
Charles Reynolds  
Charlotte Shailes  
Christopher Clarke  
Christopher Dalton  
Christopher King  
Daniel Knaus  
Danielle Thacker  
David Tindall  
Fionnlagh Copland  
Henry Wakefiled  
Jack Naseby  
James Kelsey  
James Montgomery  
Jessica Smale  
Joshua Dunford  
Lucie Shipp  
Malcolm Whyatt  
Matthew Tonks  
Molly Gerrard  
Nathan Dennis  
Olivia Jones  
Peter Gibbs  
Samuel Long  
Samuel Oldershaw  
Scott Howarth  
Sophie Riches  
Steven Rimmer  
Suren Limbu

# Graduate Success



**If there was a quick and easy way to grow new explosives experts into this industry, someone would have done it, but no one had.**

So, seven years ago, the Sector Skills Strategy Group (SSSG) set out to create an industry wide, integrated degree apprenticeship, developed in conjunction with the Institute for Apprenticeships and the University of Wales, Trinity St David. Our next generation of professionals and first ever cohort successfully graduated on 12th July, with flying colours.

The first ten students have completed their degrees in Ordnance, Munitions and Explosives (OME) and a smart bunch they look, too. Seen here in Swansea, their graduation represents the end of five years' hard work - a mixture of lectures at the university combined with an 'on the job' evidence portfolio and individual work-based projects.

This first group were very much in the spotlight as the "guinea pigs", and it was challenging, as no-one had ever done this before. "They've really been put through the mill, not least of which due to working through the pandemic, and quickly adapting to remote learning" says Shaun Dooley (AWE).

Their individual projects required Line Manager support and, in some cases, research funding. A shortlist of three students; Steve James, Fergus Russell and Jenifer Mungham, also presented their projects at Fulmination 2023, after their final assessment. >>

**“As colleagues retire, it's vital we develop the next generation by offering people the opportunity to achieve gold standard recognition of their competence.”**

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>> Launching this programme was no small achievement either. Agreeing the content, adapting or writing new modules and working with the non-industry partners over three years was a commitment that was a mixture of emotions but has been hugely rewarding.

"It's now up to the employers to encourage people to sign up," says Shaun. "As colleagues retire, it's vital we develop the next generation by offering people the opportunity to achieve gold standard recognition of their competence."

Fergus Russell was awarded Apprentice of the Year by the IExpE.

"The course has tested my abilities and has been a positive experience – the biggest benefit has been a boost in my self-confidence" says Fergus.

It's been a huge feel-good factor to get these congratulations from IExpE.

What Steve James did for his degree project has not only contributed to explosives safety, it has also won him the 'Innovator of the Year' Award.

"I'm proud that industry peers judged my work to be of benefit and of a quality good enough for such an accolade," says Steve. "The course had its challenges but it allowed us to expand our knowledge of other industry areas, and it was good to work with colleagues from other companies. I'd been out of education since 2005, which made me put in extra effort to get good results."

Josh Martin, sums it up, "It was a great feeling being able to celebrate the culmination of five years learning and working together, and I look forward to crossing paths with my classmates as we progress through our careers."

*Shaun Dooley CEng MIExpE, Chair of the Industry Liasson Group that supports OME at UWTSD.  
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After 5 years of part-time study on an integrated degree apprenticeship, the first 10 apprentices in the United Kingdom graduated from the University of Wales Trinity Saint David on 12th July 2023 with honours degrees in Ordnance, Munitions and Explosives (OME). The graduation was attended by the President of the IExpE, Professors of Practice, other VIP guests, and key enablers to the programme of study. With over 140 apprentices following close behind, this achievement is significant and marks the commitment of UK industry to bolster vital national capability.

Having experienced the rigours of academic learning throughout COVID, and being the vanguard to shape future course content, each apprentice is to be congratulated on the professional way they have approached their studies and amassed robust portfolios of evidence. OME is a high-risk profession, which strives for excellence in knowledge, skills and behaviours, and such dedication has been displayed by them all.

In typical fashion, the University has maintained pace with the changing global landscape. The Vice Chancellor, Professor Medwin Hughes CBE, is formally establishing a new Academy within UWTSD as at 1st August 2023, which will oversee several sovereign capability shortfalls such as OME, but also the development of humanitarian interventions.

It is hoped that these 10 graduands will progress their professional journey in OME to Level 7 at Cranfield University, and perhaps pursue post-graduate doctorates at UWTSD in subsequent years.

On behalf of the IExpE, academic staff, external examiners and employers, very many congratulations to the graduands of 2023, but also a very personal thank you to the families and loved ones who supported many weeks away from home.

*Gareth Collett CBE, Programme Manager, Ordnance Munitions and Explosives.*



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