

RNN Group Employer Newsletter

Edition 10

July / August 2025

Welcome

Welcome to our bi-monthly RNN Group E-Newsletter. This newsletter aims to ensure we communicate key information that is happening within the Group to employers and local partners so that you are up to date with all our latest news and activities.

As you will know, RNN Group works in partnership with schools, employers and local organisations to continually ensure we are leading and delivering on innovation and skills in our communities. It includes five campuses of career-focused further and higher education in South Yorkshire and North Nottinghamshire alongside our partner organisation, the National Fluid Power Centre. We educate school leavers, undergraduates, employees and those re-joining the workforce with a focus on ensuring learners leave equipped with the necessary skills to join or re-join the workforce.

Our focus is on skills development through vocational courses up to Level 7 including T Levels, Apprenticeships, HN Flex, HNCs and HND, HTQs, traditional degrees and others - to ensure we support the LSIPs, employers and the needs of our local economy to develop a better and more prosperous future for our communities.

Jason Austin
CEO & Principal
RNN Group



In this edition, there are bite-size pieces of information on each section with more detailed information included in links if you would like more information.

- **FREE Webinars**
- **Business Breakfasts - 30th September and 1st October**
- **Employer Awards Lunches for 2025**
- **Skills for Employment**
- **Get Involved with our Induction Programme**
- **Launch CSCS Testing and Forklift Truck Training Centre**
- **Useful Publications**
- **Latest News & Blog**
- **Recommend a friend / employer**
- **Our Social Media Platforms to follow**

Save the Date!

RNN Group

*Employer Awards
And Celebration*

27th November 2025

**New York Stadium, Rotherham,
6.00pm - 9.00pm**

Business Breakfasts

30th September and 1st October

We continue with our popular and successful business breakfasts for 2025 holding our next ones on:

Tuesday 30th September 2025

8.30am - 10.00am

at The National Fluid Power Centre (NFPC)

Wednesday 1st October 2025

8.30am - 10.00am

at University Centre Rotherham, BCR

These business breakfasts will be followed by our careers fairs at each campus for employers to speak directly with learners as part of our Careers and Skills Induction Week.

For more information or to book on email shartley@rnngroup.ac.uk RNN Group runs a monthly lunchtime and evening webinar series which is totally free.

FREE Lunchtime Webinars

These webinars are for adults, employers, partner organisations, school's careers leads, Headteachers, prospective and current learners and parents who might be interested in some or all of the topics that we will be running.

Sessions have been run on Apprenticeships, T Levels, Higher Technical Qualifications, Distance Learning, Community Courses and Adult Skills Courses to name a few!

[Catch up on our free lunchtime webinars here.](#)

We will be launching our 2025/2026 programme in September!



RNN Group Employer Award Lunches: 2025

Last year we launched a monthly award to formally recognise our amazing employers and how much they align to the [four values](#) of the RNN Group.

[Click to read more RNN Group Employer Award Lunches 2025](#)



Useful

Publications for Businesses

We have a number of publications that businesses might find interesting and helpful especially in these areas:

Commercial Lets and Office Space
Adult Training Courses
Apprenticeship Information
RNN Group Information

[Click to read more from our publications](#)



[Click to read more RNN Group Prospectus](#)



[Click to read more RNN Group Commercial Office Space and Pricing information.](#)



[Click to read more RNN Group Apprenticeships for Employers.](#)



[Click to read more Adult Learner welcome pack.](#)



Skills for Employment

During Autumn 2024, we launched Skills for Employment to our learners and employers.

During Autumn 2024, we launched Skills for Employment to our learners and employers. This is an employer backed and driven initiative for learners to gain the transferable skills they need to succeed in employment and for employers to recruit learners with these vital employability skills.

For more information about Skills for Employment and how you can get involved as a business, click here:

[Click to read more informations about skills for employment and how you can get involved as a business](#)

Get Involved with our Induction Programme

This year we are having an eight week induction programme for all our new learners starting in September which spans September and October following its successful launch in 2024.

There are eight weeks of useful information, support and opportunities for our new and returning learners which are broken down as follows:

Week 1- Introductions, tours, getting to know peers and College and College life

Week 2- Sign up to activities week with lots of enrichment activities available for learners to take part in

Week 3 - Check in Week with our learners

Week 4 - Swap Don't Drop: we encourage learners to swap courses rather than drop college altogether

Week 5 - Careers and Skills week - workshops, fairs and sessions on careers and skills

Week 6 - Wellbeing week

Week 7- Higher Skills and Education week - a chance for learners to see what's available when they finish their Level 2 and / or Level 3 courses

Week 8 - Celebration Week - a round up of the last eight weeks as well as celebrating the first eight weeks of college and the half term holidays around the corner

For businesses and employers, Week 5 is key!

If you want to get involved with supporting us at the Careers Fairs we have on that week listed below,

Please email Lucy Barnwell at lucy.barnwell@rnngroup.ac.uk.

We have opportunities for you to lead sessions and workshops too on power skills and careers development.

**Tuesday 30th September
@ North Notts College
10.00am - 2.00pm**

**Wednesday 1st October
@Rotherham College
10.00am - 2.00pm**

**Thursday 2nd October
@ Dearne Valley College
10.00 - 2.00pm**

Launch of our CSCS Testing and Forklift Truck Training Centre

Launch Event

**Monday 20th October 2025
10.00am**

This year we have a new course offering Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Testing & Warehousing & Forklift Truck Training

RNN Group is proud to be offering Warehousing & Forklift Truck Training & CSCS Testing and are the only provider to be offering this.

Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) Testing

The CSCS (Construction Skills Certification Scheme) test is a crucial assessment for individuals working in the UK construction industry which is why following the opening of our four million pound Construction Centre, we are offering CSCS testing. It evaluates a worker's knowledge of health, safety, and environmental practices on-site. Passing the test ensures that individuals understand how to operate safely and responsibly, helping to reduce accidents and injuries.

Holding a valid CSCS card demonstrates competence and professionalism, often serving as a mandatory requirement for site access. This not only protects the worker but also promotes a culture of safety across the industry. Ultimately, CSCS testing is essential for maintaining high standards and ensuring a safer working environment.

Level 2 Warehousing & Forklift Truck Training (*Funded Course)

RTITB (Road Transport Industry Training Board) sets industry leading training standards specifically designed to change behaviour and make measurable improvements to efficiency.

Our training courses offer training to RTITB standards that indicate that a person has completed a specific course and passed the standardised practical and theory test, demonstrating their ability to operate lift trucks safely and effectively.

Benefits

Sector Work: Based Academies: Promoting these programmes is a proactive approach to skills development as well as addressing industry needs and it is a valuable offering for learners.

Close Work with JCP: We are working in collaboration with Jobcentre Plus (JCP) which is crucial for reaching a wider audience and ensuring that training opportunities are available to those who need them most. It also streamlines the process for learners.

Targeted Training: The focus on Warehouse courses and Forklift truck training demonstrates an understanding of local job market demands and provides learners with practical, in-demand skills.

Guaranteed Interviews: This is a significant incentive for learners and a key factor in the programme's success. It provides a clear pathway to employment.

For more information contact us by telephone on 07812 611591 or email: natalie.white@rnnngroup.ac.uk.

Key and relevant industry leads will be sent an invite to this event in due course.

Latest News and Blog

RNN Group Students Transform Community Garden

A powerful partnership between RNN Group students and Esh Construction has helped revitalise a community garden for Lighthouse Homes – a Rotherham-based charity supporting men facing homelessness, poverty, and substance abuse.

The redevelopment project, completed in time for spring, aims to boost mental wellbeing and encourage outdoor activity for the residents of the 17-bed hostel on Westgate, which offers 24/7 support for men aged 18 and over.

A dedicated team of students from the RNN Group volunteered their time and skills to support the project. They worked alongside industry professionals from Esh Construction to upcycle benches, install sleepers, lay paving, and create a sustainable green space that will benefit residents for years to come.

Patience Middleton, an RNN Group student who took part in the project, said:

“I have really enjoyed participating in practical activities on site, as it has allowed me to work outside of my comfort zone and given me valuable knowledge and skills by working with industry specialists.

Completing this project with the Esh team has given me an insight into how to work together to complete a project, and I feel confident that I can take what I have learnt on site into my future career.”

Martin Haigh, Support Manager at Lighthouse Homes, expressed his gratitude for the collaborative effort:

“The provision of a quiet green space is an essential part of what we offer to our residents in Rotherham. We are very grateful to Esh Construction for the work done and the way they did it. They minimised disruption and were polite and courteous at every contact we have had with them.”

Megan Roberts, Social Value Manager at Esh Construction, added:

“The facilities at Lighthouse Homes are incredible. Their work to help young men in the local community is invaluable, and the new garden will provide them with the opportunity to further enhance the support that they offer.

Esh is committed to delivering social value initiatives like this one in the local areas where we are operating. The work that we do is long-term, to create a legacy, and we hope that the new garden will provide support to the residents for many years to come.”

Rotherham Council also praised the partnership. Councillor Sarah Allen, Cabinet Member for Housing, said:

“We are extremely grateful for the work that Esh Construction and the RNN students have completed for the residents at Lighthouse Homes, as the benefits they will gain from the new garden are endless.

Lighthouse Homes, as evidenced by this particular project, is really important to us. We have a rough sleeper and homelessness strategy for the borough, and Lighthouse Homes make an important contribution to this.”

This project reflects the power of community collaboration and the value of hands-on learning for students.

It not only enhanced a vital local service but also gave RNN students an opportunity to build skills and contribute to lasting social impact in their town.



Latest News and Blog

Our University's Vibrant Higher Education Fair

The buzz of excited chatter filled the air as University Centre Rotherham recently threw open its doors to host a dynamic and inspiring Higher Education Fair.

The event aimed to illuminate the diverse pathways and exhilarating possibilities that higher education offers.

Stepping into the fair felt like entering a vibrant marketplace of opportunities. Our own university proudly showcased the breadth and depth of its higher education programs through internal stalls. Representatives from various departments were on hand to answer questions, share course details, and offer a glimpse into the enriching academic journeys awaiting prospective students.

Complementing our internal offerings, we were thrilled to welcome a fantastic array of external university and company providers. Their presence added another layer of insight, allowing attendees to explore a wider spectrum of institutions, each with its unique character and specialisms.

This exposure was invaluable in demonstrating the sheer variety that's available within the higher education landscape.

Beyond the informative stalls, the day was punctuated by a series of insightful talks and interactive workshops designed to equip students with practical skills and broader perspectives. We had sessions where students gained advice on crafting CVs, going through UCAS application preparation and navigating the often-nerve-racking mock interview process.

These sessions collectively painted a picture of higher education that extended far beyond the lecture halls, showcasing the exciting personal and professional development opportunities it fosters.

The atmosphere throughout the day was electric, a testament to the genuine interest and curiosity of our visitors. We were particularly delighted to welcome learners from across our colleges, many of whom were taking their first tentative steps into exploring their higher education options.

Some of our music students performed live throughout the afternoon outside in our amphitheatre which helped create a positive friendly ambience!

The Higher Education Fair was more than just an information event; it was an experience designed to inspire and empower. By showcasing the varied routes of higher education, we aimed to demystify the process and ignite a passion for lifelong learning.

The positive energy and engagement witnessed throughout the day left us feeling incredibly proud and optimistic about the bright futures awaiting all those who attended.

We are confident that this event has sown the seeds of ambition and provided a solid foundation for the next generation of university students.

[Click to visit one of our open events](#)

[Click to read more about University Centre Rotherham](#)



Latest News and Blog

RNN Group Finalist in Quality Professionals Awards 2025

RNN Group made the finals of the Quality Professional Awards 2025 in the award for Quality Improvement Team of the Year with over 500 individuals and teams nominated this year.

Reaching the finals for the RNN Group (made up of campuses including Rotherham College, North Notts College, Dearne Valley College and University Centre Rotherham (UCR)) was a significant achievement in itself and a real testament that the judging panel recognised the early impact of our work.

RNN Group was represented alongside other education providers within the region of whom already have a strong track record in national recognition.



The Quality Professionals Awards shine a spotlight on the often “unsung” heroes of quality improvement, recognising those who drive positive change, raise standards and make a lasting difference across education and training.

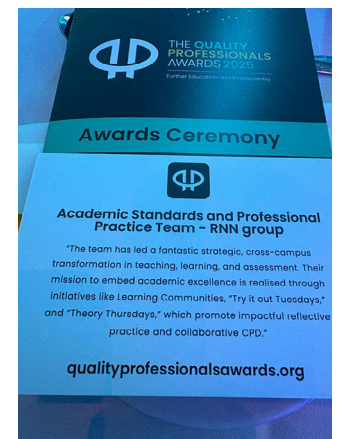
The awards ceremony last Friday 6th June was a celebration of excellence across both the Further Education & Skills and Employability sectors, bringing together professionals committed to improvement, assurance and compliance.

Cheryl Martin, Director of Quality and Academic Standards for the RNN Group said,

“It was a privilege to be part of such an inspiring event, and to see the work of our team acknowledged on a national stage.

“Being a finalist is a testament to the hard work and unwavering commitment of the RNN Group Quality Team to driving up academic standards and ensuring an outstanding quality of education and experience for our learners.

“This achievement reflects our ongoing efforts to create a supportive and strong academic and learning environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential.”



Click for more information on the RNN Group and its Colleges, visit our website: <https://www.rnngroup.co.uk/>.

Latest News and Blog

20-year collaborative partnership aims to strengthen fusion energy skills and workforce in the East Midlands

The UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) and East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) have today announced a new twenty-year collaboration to advance fusion energy training and skills development.

The collaboration will focus on developing and delivering fusion related skills, including apprenticeships and wider vocational training programmes, to support the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) project – the UK's first prototype fusion energy power plant that will be built on the West Burton site in Nottinghamshire.

This new collaboration will not only provide crucial skills for STEP but also support a growing fusion industry across the region. An Economic and Wider Impact Assessment commissioned by relevant local authorities has calculated that by the time it is fully operational, the West Burton site is anticipated to accommodate 6,500 full-time jobs across STEP and the surrounding business park, equivalent to 12.5 percent of the current total workplace jobs in Bassetlaw.

Around half of the forecast STEP Campus construction jobs are expected to require Level 3+ qualifications, and it is estimated that nearly three quarters of the on-site jobs on the STEP Campus are expected to require individuals with Level 4+ qualifications.



Fusion has the potential to provide abundant, clean power, and deliver energy security, and bolstered by the government's record £2.5 billion investment, the sector promises to create thousands of jobs and empower the UK to export its world-leading technology to a global market, expected to be worth trillions of pounds in the future.

UKAEA is committed to facilitating the training of the next generation of British scientists and engineers. The East Midlands benefits from an outstanding base of training and skills providers, and universities. This EMCCA-led collaborative will bring together the best of this existing provision to empower people in the region to meet the skill needs of this globally significant clean energy programme.

Training provided through the new collaborative will be designed with flexibility to adapt as the STEP programme and the West Burton site evolves. Initial training will focus on the engineering and project skills needed to complete plant design, with construction and operational skills as focus areas for future stages of the programme.

Jason Austin, CEO & Principal of the RNN Group added,

"This collaboration marks a once-in-a-generation opportunity to align education with the future of clean energy. As a local education leader, I'm proud that our institutions will be at the heart of delivering the skills needed for the UK's first prototype fusion power plant."

From advanced engineering to cutting-edge construction training, we're preparing our learners not just for jobs - but for meaningful careers in a globally significant industry. This partnership ensures our region's young people and adult learners alike have a direct pathway into the green economy of tomorrow."

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The collaboration will deliver fusion-relevant courses through existing training sites across the EMCCA geography, South Yorkshire, and Greater Lincolnshire. Colleges, training providers, and universities are already mobilising to offer more places for construction and clean energy qualifications, gearing up the region to deliver on its emerging inclusive growth strategy even before the West Burton facility is in place.

“I am delighted to announce EMCCA as our partner in this exciting new training collaboration, which will be delivered out of our planned West Burton Training Facility,”

Said UKAEA’s Head of Fusion Skills and FOSTER (Fusion, Opportunities, Skills, Training, Education and Research) Programme Director, Nick Walkden.

“People are the most important element of any programme or project. We have listened and learned from other major research, engineering, and infrastructure projects and believe that an early and focussed attention to local skills and workforce growth will be a critical enabler to success.

“STEP is a programme with global impact and, as with the successive Governments who have recognised fusion’s potential to have a significant and positive impact on the nation’s economy, we are equally committed to leaving a lasting local legacy. The training provided will equip people across the East Midlands, Lincolnshire, and South Yorkshire with the skills needed for the prototype fusion powerplant at West Burton as well as long-term career opportunities in fusion and beyond.”



The STEP programme, led by UK Industrial Fusion Solutions (UKIFS), provides an enormous opportunity for regional growth and regeneration, with the potential to create thousands of jobs during construction and a pipeline of long-term highly skilled careers over decades of operations. Permissions and consents will be sought for construction to begin in the early 2030s, with the prototype powerplant targeting first operations in 2040.

Paul Methven, CEO, UK Industrial Fusion Solutions and Senior Responsible Owner of STEP said,

“Delivering STEP, and commercial fusion beyond that, will require a strong skills pipeline, not only in STEM subjects, but in every aspect of running a complex business. It is fantastic to see that UKAEA are leading on putting this essential enabler in place now to ensure local people benefit directly from the programme, in addition to ensuring we have the skills needed to deliver STEP.”

Claire Ward, Mayor of the East Midlands, said,

“The East Midlands is planning for our energy future today, and fusion energy is an exciting part of that future. One day – thanks to the Nottinghamshire-based STEP programme – the whole region will benefit from clean, affordable fusion energy. Right now, my priority is ensuring that local people can get the jobs associated with developing this new industry and its supply chains. This is what inclusive growth in practice looks like – investing smartly to ensure that growth is created, sustained, and experienced by local people.

“The Fusion Skills Collaboration embodies this goal, and our outstanding colleges, training providers, and universities will be front and centre in training people in the skills of the future.”

Latest News

and Blog

Fostering Wellbeing and Collaboration: A Dedicated Staff Wellbeing Day

RNN Group Staff Wellbeing Day

Dearne Valley Campus recently hosted a comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Day on site.

This event was all about giving our incredible teams the chance to step away from their usual work routines, connect with colleagues from different departments across the three sites, and most importantly, take some valuable time for themselves to relax and recharge.



Activities available throughout the day included practical engagement in gardening, tranquil wellbeing walks through the campus woods and surrounding areas, access to a designated relaxation and reading room for those seeking a quiet retreat.

Informative sessions on men's health and women's health were presented, alongside creative outlets such as cookie decorating and paper craft making in classroom settings. For physical activity, self-defence classes were offered, the on-site gym was made freely accessible, and meditation classes provided a focus on mindfulness.

That's just a small handful of activities that we had available for staff to book onto!

Here are some quotes from staff who attended the event:

Jane Hartog, Executive Director of HR, OD and Marketing said;

"We take the Health and Wellbeing of our staff really seriously and to that end we were delighted to be able to put together a health and wellbeing day designed for staff, with positive feedback from all who were able to join on the day."

Anna Wombell, HR Business Partner said;

"It was a pleasure to organise an event that would support the health and wellbeing of our staff. Its great seeing the hard work that went into it paying off on the day through people's enjoyment of the activities"

Feedback from the event

To ensure we got a true sense of the day's impact, we used an anonymous survey with a QR code, allowing staff to share their honest thoughts.

The feedback we received was invaluable, and here are just a few of the quotes:

"I think the set up and execution of the wellbeing day has been really appreciated by the staff and on the whole the event was really fun to participate in. And I personally am really looking forward to future events!"

"I love that we do these days and I really enjoy them - and chatting to staff from different campuses too. Huge well done to HR for organising these, I really appreciate them."

"Really great event, well organised, everyone happy and feeling relaxed too - the fish and chips were AMAZING!"

"Lovely day with a wide range of activities, there was something for everyone to enjoy. Enjoyed the food & complimentary items."

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External providers

We were grateful to have several external providers contribute their expertise and services to our Health and Wellbeing Day.

The following businesses provided excellent sessions and delicious food for our staff:

Ivy and Lace of Carlton in Lindrick

Jules Christian Transformational Yoga-EFT-Coaching of Workspop

Power for Women Self Defence of

Rotherham

Bravo Benefits Ltd

Westfield Ltd

Halfords

Temple Spa Consultant - Donna Scott

Smiths Fish and Chips of Sheffield

A huge thank you to these amazing teams for helping us create such a positive and engaging environment for the day!

The aim of the day was to strengthen our community by encouraging staff from different teams to get to know one another outside of work-related interactions. It was a wonderful opportunity to foster new connections and reinforce the supportive spirit of our campus.

We believe that by investing in the wellbeing of our staff, we create a happier, healthier, and more connected environment for everyone.



What's

Happening?

To keep up to date with all that is happening across the Group and the Colleges, click on the relevant news pages below.

RNN Group News and Events

[Click to read more RNN Group News](#)

[Click to read more RNN Group Blog](#)

Recommend

Us

Why not recommend friend / employer who might benefit from the RNN Group and the information included in this as well as the courses and programmes we have to offer.

Email: enquiries@rnnngroup.ac.uk

[Click to read more about the course and programmes we have to offer.](#)

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Ofsted

Good
Provider

**Rotherham College
North Notts College
Dearne Valley College
University Centre Rotherham
and
National Fluid Power Centre**

Part of

RNN GROUP

 **Rotherham
College**

 **Dearne Valley
College**

 **North Notts
College**

 **University
Centre
Rotherham**

 **NFPC** Integrated Systems Engineering
Hydraulics • Pneumatics • Electronics

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University Centre Rotherham

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National Fluid Power Centre

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