



Toyota, Training Academy

Toyota is the second largest manufacturer of automobiles and the seventh largest company in the world with production facilities in 26 countries. In 1992 the Toyota Carina E was the first model to be built at Burnaston, Derbyshire in England's East Midlands.

Now, with the creation of Toyota Great Britain's (Toyota GB) state-of-the-art Academy, nearby Nottingham could soon gain the recognition it deserves as a hub for the vehicle training industry.

In a major partnership with Nottingham's Castle College, a £14m centre of excellence planned for the Highfields Science Park will accommodate 350 apprentices from Toyota dealerships around the country as well as providing opportunities for Nottingham's school leavers looking for a career in the Motor Vehicle industry.

This new State of the Art Academy will help to fill a sector skills gap that was identified by Toyota and its local project partners – England's East Midlands' International Investment team, the Learning and Skills Council, Castle College, Nottingham Regeneration Ltd, Greater Nottingham Partnership and Nottingham City Council - all of whom recognised the importance of the scheme in helping to further develop the region's manufacturing sector and skill-base.

The academy is the latest in a long line of developments following a number of years of investment by Toyota in the area. Since 2002, Toyota has run the successful Toyota and Lexus academies on Nottingham Trent University's Clifton site, and its apprentices currently carry out their training to the south of the city with specialist firm Carter and Carter.

The new academy will focus on all aspects of Toyota's business from pre apprenticeships to foundation degrees in retail and manufacturing and production as training at the academy is geared to deliver the full sector requirements.

Toyota began talking to partners and looking at possible sites when a need to expand and consolidate the company's training in one building was identified. It soon became apparent that the academy had the potential not only to provide top-quality facilities for Toyota trainees, but also to offer essential training for 600 young people aged 14 to 19 from all over Greater Nottingham wanting to prepare for a career in the automotive industry through Nottingham-based Castle College.

These students will spend one day a week at the academy studying for motor vehicle maintenance and repair qualifications whilst school leavers who wish to continue their studies in automotive engineering will also attend the academy.



Gary Harlock, Technical training manager for the Toyota Academy, is leading the project.

He said: *"I started to run out of space because the training scheme had become so successful and we were spread between three different sites. We needed a facility to house the national scheme and identified a lot of young people in Nottingham who could benefit from this type of training."*

"The city has two excellent universities and high-quality secondary education but had limited provision for motor vehicle training, which the academy will provide. We worked closely with Sam Hopwell at Nottingham City Council and the England's East Midlands team and a feasibility study was commissioned to make sure the project was viable. We had to take into account student numbers, finance, rent and land issues before a site could be identified and a building concept could be drawn up."

The result is a centre of excellence that will house nine, separate workshops, an assessment centre and training rooms. It will be split into different areas catering for Toyota's national apprenticeship schemes and a T-TEP (Toyota Technical Education Programme) sponsored facility.

The academy will offer training in all aspects of the business conducted at Toyota retail centres and apprenticeships in bodywork, paint, sales and parts work will run alongside the essential technical training.

The T-TEP academy will largely be run by Castle College with Toyota having input into the way it operates while also supplying all the vehicles, parts, equipment and expertise. The academy will be financially supported by external partners.

Gary said; *"This is not about building something from scratch – it's a new facility to house an existing, very successful programme. The England's East Midlands team, the Learning and Skills Council and Castle College have been absolutely brilliant throughout the process and vital partners in making this happen."*

The academy, which will be an enormous boost to Nottingham's motor vehicle industry and put it at the forefront of innovative learning, is a strong vote of confidence in from Toyota. Training at the prestigious centre will give students real experience in the motor vehicle industry and great job prospects.

Despite being integrally involved in the project, Toyota will make no profit from its new centre of excellence.

"We make nothing out of it," Gary Harlock explained. "The money that comes in as a grant goes back into the programme and back into training the workforce. England's East Midlands' reputation for excellence in the automotive manufacturing sector was a key driver for Toyota's initial investment here back in 1992. That reputation has continued to grow and our investments in the region have grown with it as we continue to tap into what is a centre of excellence for our industry."

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