

Case Study: Liam Morris



May 2019

Liam Morris is one of the new generation of M.E.T. technicians now working in the vehicle repair industry. He completed his Level 3 apprenticeship with Thatcham Research and was one of three individuals to be crowned its 'Apprentice of the Year' for 2018.

Vehicle Repair Apprenticeships are a vital channel for bodyshops to recruit new staff and to develop a pool of highly skilled and talented staff.

The employers perspective

Liam Morris joined Solus Accident Repair Centre in Luton in 2015 as an M.E.T. apprentice. Solus, Aviva's own group of garages, has 18 locations across England and Scotland and repairs 32,000+ vehicles per year. Over 50 apprentices have graduated through its award-winning programme during the last four years and it continues to grow each year.

Solus Luton take, on average, two apprentices each year. Apprenticeships help Solus develop a pool of newly skilled and highly talented employees, trained to work on vehicles with complex technology.

Anthony Kendal Production Lead said:

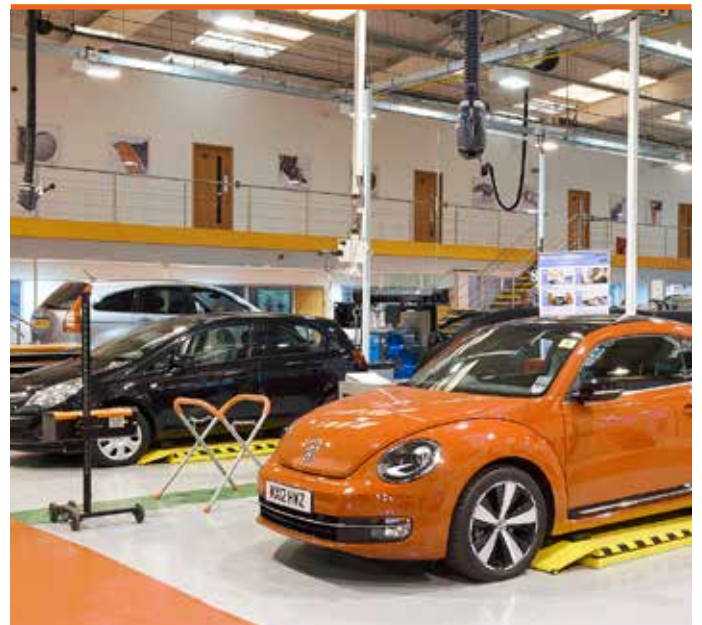
We at Solus Luton, and in fact across the entire Solus group, have identified that the new technologies being used on the latest vehicles will require technicians with a different skill set. The younger more IT literate guys and girls that we can attract via the apprentice scheme will help us to keep up with the fast-changing industry and world we are operating in.

Liam is an important addition to Luton's M.E.T. team. He has a really good grasp on the diagnostic tools we are required to use, and has continued with his training recently completing his ADAS certification, once again with Thatcham Research. Next step for Liam will be to begin his vehicle manufacturer training as part of our approval. It is my belief that he will once again excel at this latest challenge and continue to provide increasing benefit to Solus Luton. It has been a pleasure to see Liam develop both as a person and into a skilled technician during his time with us.

Brian Brinkley M.E.T. Senior ATA at Solus Luton said:

It was quite evident to me at an early stage that Liam was willing to learn and possessed the ability to be inquisitive without being prompted. Within a short period of time, I was confident to allow Liam to take on tasks without me, following an initial discussion about repair methods. I was confident that Liam would ask for guidance and support if he needed it.

The main observations for Liam during his 3-year M.E.T. apprenticeship was that he always listened and took on board anything that was explained to him. He continually strived to learn and develop which are characteristics that all employers want to see. We are all pleased with how Liam has developed and with how he has adapted himself in the M.E.T. department. Liam is our star of the future and a young man whom we are all extremely proud of.



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Liam talked to Dean Lander, Head of Repair Sector Services, at Thatcham Research about his apprenticeship experience and what it meant to him to win the 'Apprentice of the Year' award.

➤ **What was it about an apprenticeship that appealed to you?**

I really wanted to continue learning but preferred the route that enabled me to work and learn on the job. An apprenticeship offered me this option with off-site learning and onsite practical experience to develop my skills.

➤ **Why did you want to work in the vehicle repair industry?**

My granddad is a mechanic and as a child I spent a lot of time helping him. I always enjoyed fixing things and body repair really appealed to me because each day is so varied and interesting. Looking at a finished repair and knowing that I did that is very satisfying.

➤ **What did you learn during your apprenticeship?**

During my apprenticeship I learnt hands on skills such as swapping bumpers, removing and refitting dashboards and airbags. I also learnt how to manage unexpected challenges that can crop up when you start a repair.

➤ **What have been the highlights for you?**

I have been amazed at how my skills have developed. Overcoming challenges and seeing a finished repair is a great feeling. Personal resilience and belief in my abilities grew as my apprenticeship progressed.

➤ **Briefly describe your experience at Thatcham Research**

From day one the support provided was superb. Everyone at Thatcham Research treats you like an adult. The automotive academy is well equipped and provides a good working and learning environment for apprentices. The learning aids and methods used are excellent. My overall experience was a positive one.

➤ **Would you recommend the apprenticeship route to others?**

I would definitely recommend the apprenticeship programme to others. It's a fantastic way to learn alongside professionals. You can earn a wage and get a job at the end of it. The possibilities for me are endless now that I have completed my apprenticeship. My next goal is to become an VW/Audi approved technician.

➤ **Is there anything else you'd like to share?**

I just want to say thank you to everyone at Thatcham Research for helping me along the way. The Thatcham team really look after all the apprentices and are very supportive. My mentors at work and Thatcham Research have made me the technician I am today. I couldn't have done it without their support and encouragement.



Since 2004, Thatcham Research Automotive Academy have trained over 1,550 apprentices.


We offer exciting new career opportunities, exposing apprentices to the latest vehicles and technology whilst learning the latest technical repair methods to keep vehicles and road users safe.

In March 2019, the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) confirmed that Thatcham Research Automotive Academy had recorded 92% for our apprenticeship training Qualification Achievement Rates.



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