What does an Aircraft Maintenance & Support apprenticeship include?

The Aircraft Maintenance & Support Advanced Apprenticeship provides a basic training programme delivered in year one at the RJ Mitchell Aircraft Maintenance Academy in Humberside, mixing theory with practical work experience. Vocational streaming for the rest of the apprenticeship means ‘on the job’ training, either working on fast jet aircraft or in the support areas. For this you’ll be based at a Royal Air Force base. This could initially include Coningsby in Lincolnshire, Marham in Norfolk or Valley on Anglesey, eventually transitioning overseas.

What will I be learning?

This apprenticeship will train you to work in the aerospace maintenance sector. Trades include:

- Aircraft Mechanical Systems (testing aircraft engines, mechanical component inspection)
- Avionic Systems (avionic component inspection, avionic diagnostic testing)
- Continued Airworthiness Organisation – CAO (Fleet Planning, Technical Support)

Time at the R.J. Mitchell Aircraft Maintenance Academy will be split between classroom learning, workshop training and on aircraft modules where you will carry out simulated maintenance tasks on a real aircraft.

Entry requirements:

5 GCSEs A*-C (or equivalent)

Length of Apprenticeship:

2–2 ½ years

Apprenticeship framework:

- Year 1: Residential and training undertaken at RJ Mitchell Aircraft Maintenance Academy, Humberside
- Year 2: UK RAF Base

Key facts:

- Recruitment undertaken throughout the year
- Opportunity to work overseas
- Opportunity to work closely with our UK Customer

How much will I be paid?

A competitive starting salary with increments throughout the scheme dependent upon performance and qualifications.

What qualifications will I get?

The first year will be spent developing your English, Maths and Information Technology skills plus studying Aeronautical Engineering and Maintenance which will include a number of European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) Cat A modules. These will contribute to the award of a City & Guilds Technical Diploma. The second year (on base) will see you working towards a Level 3 NVQ in your specified trade.

What are my future job prospects?

At the end of your apprenticeship, you’ll have had a good mix of learning experiences to ensure you develop the skills that will support you in the future. You will initially qualify as an aircraft maintenance technician or CAO Practitioner. Depending on the route you wish to take, you could become:

- a supervisor then a maintenance manager
- a systems specialist progressing to a line support engineer
- a CAO support practitioner, senior support practitioner and team leader

All of these routes could see you becoming a senior leader within the Aircraft Maintenance and Support business in the future whether this is in the UK or overseas.
Apprentice case study:
Matt

Background
Before starting my BAE Systems apprenticeship, I was at college studying Engineering, Mathematics, Physics and Product Design. I’ve found that these subjects have complimented the apprenticeship well and helped me with the academic stage of the course. I always had an interest with aviation and aspired to a career in engineering, so the Aircraft Maintenance & Support Advanced Apprenticeship suited me well.

What is the best part of the job?
Working on jets never gets boring. Every day my job offers a new exiting challenge. One day you could be fitting a jet engine and the next you could be doing hydraulic function testing. We got the chance to work on the English Electric Lighting restoration project at Bruntingthorpe Aerodrome. This was an exciting project to be involved with and gave us the rare chance to work on a Cold War aircraft.

How has the scheme and the experience helped you to develop and achieve?
The apprenticeship offers lots of chances for career development through the extra qualifications you can gain. As well as undertaking my NVQ, I have also had the opportunity to do a Forward Course, entailing flight line training such as aircraft marshalling. An Aeronautical Engineering degree can be done whilst you’re doing your regular work, so even if you don’t go to university you don’t miss the chance to gain a valuable qualification.

What has this experience lead to?
After completing the first year at the Training Academy, I am now working at Warton, in Lancashire, manufacturing Hawks whilst finishing my NVQ. Warton is a great place to gain valuable engineering experience whilst also gaining qualifications. I’ve been given an incredibly exciting opportunity to work in Saudi Arabia once I finish my apprenticeship. This will be a fantastic experience so early on in my career. The business is always expanding and there are opportunities to work on different aircraft such as Hawk, Typhoon and F-35 and to get the chance to work in different countries.

What would you say to people thinking about applying or following a similar path?
If you are looking for an interesting and challenging career, with rewarding work, constant personal progression and a competitive starting salary, this is the place to be. You’ll get the chance to work with some great people and make lots of friends.

When going through the application process take your time and really think about why you want to work on aircraft – and make sure you’re prepared for your interview. Before applying make sure you’re willing to relocate, potentially all over the country, as there are endless opportunities.

To find out more and apply visit:
www.baesystems.com/apprentices

Application process
To apply for a place on our Aircraft Maintenance & Support (AM&S) Advanced Apprenticeship, simply fill out our online application form. If your application is successful, there are three more stages before you can be accepted onto the scheme:

1. Aptitude tests
2. Assessment Centre including an interview
3. Medical and security checks

“One day you’ll be fitting a jet engine and the next you could be doing hydraulic function testing.”