The recruitment and training of technicians as well as graduates is critical to developing and retaining the workforce we need to continue to take on the world’s toughest energy challenges. The mixture of learning on and off-the-job enables apprentices to develop the skills that work best for our business and allows the knowledge and experience of our existing technicians to be transferred and enhanced.

The programme provides a highly effective and efficient means of attracting and developing new technicians while reducing the burden on individual employers and sponsors.

David Cook, Chairman of Steering Group and Training & Development Coordinator Mobil North Sea LLC
The Upstream Oil & Gas Industry Technician Training Scheme

History
Established in 1999, The Upstream Technician Training Scheme is the oil and gas industry’s response to the need for a competent, stable and flexible technician workforce to meet its current and future needs.

A partnership between Oil & Gas UK, Offshore Contractors Association and the training organisations that support them (OPITO – and the Engineering and Construction Industry Training Board) has resulted in the development of a fully integrated industry approach to attracting new talent that provides a visible and long-term commitment to technician training in the UKCS.

The Scheme
Stewarded by a steering group on behalf of the sponsors to ensure quality and value, the scheme has one of the best retention rates in the UK with 91% of apprentices completing the course and securing employment (national average 55%). It is a tailor-made apprenticeship framework of underpinning knowledge and skills development targeting four key disciplines:

- Process Operations
- Electrical Maintenance
- Mechanical Maintenance
- Instrument and Control Maintenance

The UK wide four year training programme combines on and off-the-job training:

1. College Phase: 21 months during which trainees attend an industry appointed college for 90 weeks (thirty five hours per week) with a view towards gaining:

- SVQ Level 1: Process Operations Hydrocarbons
- NC (National Certificate): Engineering Systems
- SVQ Level 2: Performing Engineering Operations
- HNC (Higher National Certificate): in chosen discipline
- Specialised Skills Training: discipline and operational knowledge

2. Worksite Phase: two years on-the-job training with a sponsoring company, being mentored and working alongside experienced staff to gain job specific skills, with a view towards gaining:

- SVQ Level 3: in chosen discipline

Any well motivated individual aged 16 or over with the necessary Standard Grade, GCSE or equivalent qualifications is eligible to apply for a place.

www.opito.com
Participation can help make your organisation more productive and competitive by addressing your skills gaps directly whilst supporting the development of a new generation of highly skilled and motivated technicians.

**Role of a sponsoring company**
Companies are expected to provide on-the-job training placements, appointing an individual to act as the scheme’s focal point within the organisation. Each focal point has the option to be present during interview, assessment and selection processes.

**Benefits**

**Scheme management**
OPITO and ECITB provide a turnkey service that includes:

- Demand forecasting
- Recruitment and advertising
- Management of assessment workshops, interviewing and selection
- Management of quality delivery through Further Education colleges
- Management of accommodation, HR and welfare requirements
- One to one mentoring/monitoring of performance

**Stay competitive**
The scheme is widely supported across industry with £82 million invested to date and over 1200 apprentices going through the programme.

**Improve productivity**
Trained apprentices can have an immediate and meaningful effect on your business.

**Offer relevant training**
Apprentices have expertise that’s not only industry-specific but directly relevant to your business.

**Avoid skills shortages**
By taking on apprentices, you develop the specialist skills needed to keep pace with advances in your sector.
Adding value to your business

OPITO’s role
OPITO – can provide you with a focal point for collective action across your industry sector. From wells services and catering to drilling and subsea, a collective approach will help meet your organisations requirements. If you currently have identified skills and training gaps OPITO is here to help.

Benefits
Flexible model:
We will work with you to develop flexible training programme models that can be adapted to suit identified skills needs across all sectors.

Bespoke programmes:
We will work with you to produce tailored training programmes that will suit your organisation, meet your business needs (i.e. full time, part time, day release, block release) and be delivered through a network of quality assured training providers.

Influence:
As a collective we will work with a network of quality training providers to ensure the correct investment in plant, equipment and people is in place to support newly developed training programmes.  

Cost effective:
Work collectively and avoid the high costs of individual action whilst still achieving your key objective – sustaining a safe, skilled and motivated future workforce.
Industry support

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The programme provides a highly effective and efficient means of attracting and developing new technicians while reducing the burden on individual employers and sponsors”

David, Cook, Chairman of Steering Group and Staffing & Development Co-ordinator, Apache North Sea

“\nBP has been part of the OPITO industry apprentice scheme for the past seven years and this has now become our only source of offshore designate technicians. We intend to increase our intake from the scheme over the next few years reflecting our confidence in the training the apprentices gain on this programme.”

Louise McGill, Discipline Capability Advisor, BP

“\nThe UOGITT scheme is perfect for delivering the right training in the correct area’s to support the oil industry. The quality of the apprentices ensures the healthy future of our industry.”

Neil Taylor, Training & Competency Coordinator, Marathon Oil
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David Cook, Chairman of Steering Group and Training & Development Coordinator Mobil North Sea LLC

Having joined us as young trainees, some technicians have successfully developed into supervisory and even OIM positions within our organisation. We view the training scheme as an integral part of our offshore and site based succession planning.

Liz Thornton, Training & Competence Manager, Talisman Energy (UK) Ltd

The Technician Training Scheme has provided Marathon Oil UK with the opportunity to recruit first-class, well-trained and qualified technicians since it started in 1999. I would actively encourage the involvement of any oil and gas organisation as we move forward and work collectively to attract and develop the next generation of highly competent individuals.

Neil Taylor, Training & Competence Coordinator, Marathon Oil UK, LLC

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