



CASE STUDY: Kier – Partnership with WMG Academy for Young Engineers

As a Partner of the Considerate Constructors Scheme, Kier always strive to contribute to and support the local communities in which we construct.

Kier Construction Central has recently commenced works on Materials Engineering Centre (MEC) for University of Warwick on behalf of Warwick Manufacturing Group on their main campus in Coventry.

The scheme involves the design and build of a new three storey teaching facility including classroom, laboratories and engineering workshop. The steel frame building will comprise Kingspan Longspan and SFS framing system, with a bespoke internal wall system to separate the engineering hall from the teaching spaces.

Kier have built numerous facilities for both University of Warwick and Warwick Manufacturing Group, with the MEC site being closely situated to WMG Academy for Young Engineers, which Kier completed in 2014 for Warwick Manufacturing Group. WMG Academy is an academy for students aged 14-19 with an interest in science, technology, engineering and maths.

Our site team at MEC, most of which were part of the team that constructed WMG Academy, were keen to offer support to the Academy, which is under a mile from our MEC site, and provide opportunities for students to experience a construction site and construction as a career choice.

We met with Miss Burns, Learning Resource Manager at WMG Academy, to set out a plan for how Kier could support the Academy. The Academy has many students who go on to have careers in engineering, surveying, project management and manufacturing, and Miss Burns was keen to introduce the students to the world of construction.

Kier attended the annual Careers event held by the Academy with the adjacent Westwood Academy in November 2017 and engaged with the students about what a career in construction may look like. Through our Shaping Your World initiative, we took along several ambassadors and graduate and apprenticeship trainees to offer guidance on the different ways into the industry.

Following up the interest with the students at WMG Academy, Kier came into the Academy and held an hour workshop, with several people from both MEC site and other local sites providing an insight into their role, daily routine and where their career has taken them. The students were very engaged, with questions aplenty from interested students causing the session to overrun.



WMG Careers Fair November 2017

Keen to nurture this interest in the industry, the MEC site team offered a site tour for interested students, with over 30 students attending a guided site tour. Our site engineer Matt Stevens and site manager Ciaran Clifford gave the students a tour of the site, detailing progress and how a site is organised, planned and programmed to meet the client's deadline. Again, the students were full of questions, with the planned 45-minute tour lasting nearly two hours. Questions ranged from how we programme a job to how you work out the loading of the structural steel.



Students from WMG Academy visit Materials Engineering Centre, April 2018

The students got as much from the visit as the site team did. It was a great opportunity to engage with the local community and to utilise the site to engage and inspire the next generation of potential construction workers. The students gained an insight into not only the world of work, but also to see what a career in construction or engineering may look like for them.

"This visit...has given me a real insight into the market. It has confirmed the career path I want to take."

Sean Griffin, 16, WMG Academy

"Fantastic opportunity for our students to work in conjunction with Kier. Excellent advice and guidance about the different careers available - very much looking forward to working with the team at Kier in the future."

Miss Burns, careers advisor, WMG Academy



Students from WMG Academy visit Materials Engineering Centre, April 2018

Following on from the site tour, Kier offered the opportunity of work placements for students who were keen to find out more about working in construction. We were contacted by WMG Academy to see if we could accommodate two students on a work experience placement in June 2018, which we were delighted to accept.

Holly and Jessica, both 17 and just completing their first year of A Level study, were both keen to explore what a quantity surveying career may look like for them. Both students came to MEC for a week, and during that week we also provided the opportunity to visit our site at Cryfield Student Village, which Kier are constructing for University of Warwick on their main campus.

The students worked with our quantity surveyors on several tasks including site measurements, information gathering and cost analysis exercises to give them an insight into what life as a QS is like, whilst also seeing the other roles present on site and how they all work together to manage a construction site. Holly and Jessica enjoyed their week and will be returning in the summer holidays for further work placements to gain more experience.

Through the site at MEC, Kier have established what we hope to be a long term partnership with WMG Academy. A partnership we hope will introduce many students to considering construction as a long-term career aspiration and to the opportunities that construction can provide for them, fulfilling our pledge to contribute to and support the local communities in which we construct.

