

Thales in the UK receives industry accolade for its innovative Graduate Development Programme

Submitted by: Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE)

Tuesday, 20 September 2016

Thales in the UK has scored top industry recognition from the Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange (IKE) for the high levels of innovation within its Graduate Development Programme (GDP).

The IKE Assured®

(http://innovationinstitute.org.uk/product/ike_assured_-_innovation_skills_accreditation) standard benchmarked innovation capability and associated knowledge, skills and competencies within the company's graduate intake. It examined how the GDP was designed, structured and delivered against innovation best practice, assessing its impact on graduates, business units and line managers.

The company's 24 month GDP takes in up to 200 graduates and apprentices annually, placing them into 12 business units including defence, space, aerospace, ground transportation and security. A major focus (70%) of the programme is on experiential work-based learning. Graduates develop innovative and collaborative competencies, learning how to work with and influence company stakeholders across different sectors.

Thales also encourages its new graduates to work on independent projects, developing new applications for emerging and disruptive technologies. This can be through activities such as Innovation SPRINTs and Hackathons, to involvement in business challenges at Thales Design Centres. Areas of innovation interest for the company include smart cities, digital railway, autonomous vehicles and cybersecurity.

Within the IKE Assured accreditation, Thales scored strongly in curriculum planning and teaching and was praised for its knowledge capture mechanisms for translating learning and development back into the wider organisation, including its road-mapping of technology and markets.

Now that the Graduate Development Programme (GDP) has achieved IKE Assured status, all those who successfully complete it will receive a Certificate of Professionalism in Innovation Practice and will be offered an accelerated route to membership with the Innovation Institute.

Lynne Watson, Director of Professional Development at Thales UK said:

"Innovation is at the heart of what we do at Thales. We see innovation as the 'golden thread' that helps our new graduates to imagine the future and embrace new and emerging technologies to create value for us and our customers. It allows people to pursue their ambitions within the company and creates a rich environment to help satisfy career development.

"The Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange is providing us with an ongoing partnership, helping us to reflect on the challenges and synergies of training within our organisation.

"Going through the IKE Assured process for our GDP ensures we're taking the most effective actions to embed innovation skills in our daily activities, and to ensure that learning and knowledge is efficiently internalised and disseminated across the business. Achieving external validation for innovation skills is particularly important for employees at the beginning of their careers."

Professor Sa'ad Medhat, Chief Executive of the Institute of Innovation and Knowledge Exchange said:
"Our independent accreditation panel drawn from the Innovation Council found a genuine innovation buzz within the GDP delivery team, graduates and stakeholders. Thales has demonstrated a strong commitment to nurturing innovation skills and practices such as design thinking and creative problem solving, thus igniting interactions between graduates and other parts of the company and moulding the innovation capability throughout its workforce.

"Achieving the IKE Assured accreditation underlines Thales' dedication to ensuring that the company keeps pace with fast changing technologies, maintains a strong pipeline of commercial innovation and maximises the potential of new talent to enhance and strengthen its business."

Press Contacts:

Michelle Medhat

michelle.medhat@thenef.org.uk

Tel: 07720286633

Emma Crates

emma.crates@thenef.org.uk

Alessandra Grassotti Alessandra.Grassotti@Thalesgroup.com

Notes to editors

Thales UK – www.thalesgroup.com/uk is part of the Thales Group - a global technology leader for the Aerospace, Transport, Defence and Security markets. With 62,000 employees including over 20,000 engineers and researchers in 56 countries, Thales has a unique capability to design and deploy equipment, systems and services to meet the most complex security requirements. In the UK, Thales demonstrates its capability of being at the forefront of safeguarding people and organisations through such examples as follows:

- More than 130,000 passengers use Thales in-flight entertainment systems every day, equivalent to almost 50 million viewers per year
- Thales secures the information systems of 19 of the world's 20 largest banks
- Provides the UK Royal Navy with the key situational awareness sensors and systems to allow the fleet to operate effectively at sea
- Almost every train in the UK is fitted with the Train Protection & Warning System provided by Thales UK
- Thales Alenia Space UK is a critical partner on the latest generation of Telecommunication satellite systems as well as part of the Exomars mission.

Most of Thales's business activities are technology intensive, making innovation a strategic priority and the driving force behind the long-term development of the company. Thales Research, Technology and Innovation achieved the Investor in Innovations award in December 2015.

Institute of Innovation & Knowledge Exchange (IKE) – www.InnovationInstitute.org.uk is the professional

body for innovators in the UK. It accredits and certifies innovation practices, and confers the Investor in Innovations® standard and the IKE Assured® accreditation. The Institute influences the inter-relationship between education, business, and government through research and collaborative networks.

IKE's Innovation Manifesto highlights its commitment to support the development of innovative people and organisations. IKE's accreditation work is guided by the Innovation Council, which brings together over forty c-suite executives representing different economic sectors.

IKE Assured® is an organisation-level accreditation that demonstrates the value and relevance of innovation skills and competencies within learning and development programmes. IKE Assured uses a structured process and an Innovation Skills Framework® to help organisations create a sustained culture of innovation.