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North East
Local Enterprise Partnership



ENGIE is a leading energy and services company with a turnover of £3.3bn, employing 17,000 people in the UK.

**John Haynes,
Partnership Director, ENGIE UK**

How would you describe Engie in a nutshell?

We are a diverse business but if I were to try and distil it down we operate in three main areas: energy, regeneration and services.

We operate across a wide spectrum in each of these areas - for example within our Energy division we are developing renewable energy sites, and also helping customers reduce utility bills through smart technologies in the workplace.

Simply put, we work with our customers to help them deliver their core activity more effectively by

implementing customer focussed technologies and solutions, whether we're helping a hospital reduce its energy consumption or working with a data centre to re-design their electrical system.

On a more local level, here in the North East there are number of different ENGIE group companies operating in their own right but working closely together. I work for ENGIE's Services team but work closely with colleagues from RED Engineering and Fabricom Offshore Services. We all think ourselves as ENGIE people at the end of the day so when we're thinking about how we can attract the best talent it's useful to being able to demonstrate the breadth of our activity and the different career paths and opportunities this can provide.

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What are the benefits to a company like Engie to retaining graduate talent?

We are predominantly a people business. Our teams are our greatest asset and because of this we invest in them heavily. Ideally, we want to enjoy the benefit of this investment for as long as possible and this is particularly the case with graduates. Often the graduates that we take on are the future leaders and experts of our business, so it is really important for us to encourage and incentivise them to progress their careers with us so that their knowledge is retained within the business.

What can businesses do to encourage graduates to stay in the region?

I think it's all about offering a really well understood career path, so people don't feel any 'pull' to leave the region to further their careers. As a place to live I think that the North East sells itself, and as businesses we just need to do our part so that people aren't forced to face that difficult choice of 'where I want to live' versus 'where I want to work'.

What kinds of career paths can graduates follow at Engie?

There are many different paths that graduates can follow at ENGIE, some are very specific with a clear goal at the end, for example becoming a chartered accountant, a qualified HR professional or a chartered mechanical engineer. Some are more generalist in their nature, focusing on broader business and operational management skills.

What's really nice is we have a number of staff who have been with us for 20 plus years who joined as graduates who are now Regional Directors, Finance Directors etc, having always worked in the North East.

What are the benefits to Engie of being located in the North East?

The main benefit is the quality of people – the talent of the workforce and the capacity for growth. As an example of this, we established our UK Shared Service Centre in North Tyneside back in 2012. Since then it's grown to some 300 staff with plans to double this in the next 24 months as more of our UK back office operations are brought to the North East. Scaling up for this growth has been possible because of the depth of talented labour in the region.

Adam Kent, Project Engineer at Fabricom Offshore Services, part of the ENGIE UK group

Which university did you graduate from and what did you study?

I am originally from Sunderland, now based in Newcastle, and I've been working in the industry for 12 years. I completed a Mechanical Engineering Apprenticeship after school and then when I moved to Fabricom in 2012 I completed my BEng in Mechanical Engineering at Northumbria University, studying part time while working. I finished that in June last year and am now currently studying my MSc through distance learning.

Can you tell me a bit about what your job involves?

My job involves working across different engineering disciplines, managing projects. I have a focus both on the technical aspect and the project management side of things, ensuring projects run as scheduled while supporting the technical teams. You need to have a technical background as well as commercial awareness and the ability to work with clients to make sure projects are delivered on time and within budget.

What do you enjoy the most about your job?

I enjoy solving problems and delivering projects. It's a dynamic industry and no day is the same as there are always new challenges and although difficult at times it's a very pleasing feeling when you successfully overcome the problems and that allows you to deliver the project. Being a Project Engineer is a very varied role and there are a lot of different areas of engineering you could get involved in – for example, I've recently become involved in managing multi discipline engineering construction projects from the initial design based in the office in Newcastle through to the construction and commissioning stages offshore.

Why did you decide to stay in the North East after graduating?

I'm originally from the area and, while I've worked in Belgium for six months on a secondment and I've also carried out numerous offshore visits to two or three weeks at a time, I am based here and I think there's quite a community feeling in the North East that you don't get elsewhere – the people are really friendly.

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Do you think the North East offers graduates and young people good career opportunities?

The North East has historically been a hive of offshore activity, from the days of the shipyards through to today's offshore industry. There are a lot of companies around here working in the offshore and engineering sectors and a lot of them have good graduate programmes - anyone graduating with an engineering degree should aim to make the most of the opportunities with those companies.

Outside of work, what do you enjoy most about living in the North East of England?

The social life in the North East is great. We have the coast and we've got cities and outside of work there is a very relaxed atmosphere and people are very friendly. It feels much more of a community than other places in the country.

Why would you encourage other graduates to live, work and stay in the North East?

If you are graduating here, there are lots of schemes with companies in the North East for graduates and in terms of lifestyle, there are good transport links to get around the region and the people here are friendly.



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