

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD**FINALIST: Achuthan Rajendram**

Achuthan is a proactive and technically capable apprentice within GKN Aerospace's composites technology team, supporting advanced composite manufacturing and technology development. He produces composite test articles using materials including CFRP prepreg and Dry CF, managing activities from material preparation and lay-up through to curing and trimming, while coordinating with materials and NDT teams to support testing and validation.

His work contributes directly to progressing key technologies towards TRL 6, while also supporting recycling-related manufacturing development towards TRL 3. He has taken particular ownership of RTM coupon manufacturing and testing, consistently producing high-quality work and demonstrating excellent attention to detail in manufacturing documentation. He has also delivered presentations to senior leadership, communicating complex technical concepts clearly and confidently.

Achuthan has demonstrated a strong commitment to innovation and sustainability. A particular highlight has been his involvement in producing the first out-of-autoclave panel using advanced fast-cure thermoset prepreg systems – an important milestone in developing more sustainable composite manufacturing methods. He has also completed training on resin injection systems, sustainable OOA manufacturing ovens and bespoke RTM tooling, alongside his formal college studies.

Beyond his technical responsibilities, Achuthan is a valued and supportive team member who readily shares his knowledge and helps colleagues develop their skills. He is also an active member of GKN Aerospace's STEM committee, regularly supporting career fairs and engaging confidently with young people to promote engineering.

Achuthan has shown remarkable resilience and professionalism throughout his apprenticeship, continuing to deliver his work to a high standard during a particularly difficult personal period.

He stands out for his technical ability, positive attitude, initiative, reliability and commitment to continuous learning. His combination of practical skills, innovation, teamwork and potential makes him a strong candidate for Apprentice of the Year.



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