

APPRENTICE OF THE YEAR AWARD**FINALIST: Riley Bannister**

Riley has spent the past two years developing a broad understanding of composites within Syensqo's Applications Centre, gaining experience across panel manufacture, automation and material testing. He has approached every area with enthusiasm, professionalism and a strong desire to learn, quickly gaining a reputation for his autonomy and capability.

Alongside his practical development, Riley is nearing completion of the Composites Technician degree apprenticeship at the Sheffield AMRC. He has also undertaken extensive supplier and equipment training and has become the equipment owner for a high-temperature press used to consolidate thermoplastic panels, taking responsibility for its safe operation and documentation.

A particularly notable example of Riley's contribution came when the Analytical Department was left significantly under-resourced due to staff illness, with several customer deadlines at risk. Although working in another department, Riley volunteered to help. He quickly adapted, operated analytical equipment with limited prior training and provided accurate data to engineers, enabling project deadlines to be met. He completed the work independently, safely and to a consistently high standard.

Riley has also made meaningful contributions to workplace safety, identifying and implementing improvements to processes, equipment and facilities. Beyond his formal training, he actively develops his knowledge through technical literature and has become a local subject matter expert in 3D printing, demonstrating exceptional curiosity and self-motivation.

What sets Riley apart is his autonomy, technical competence, safety leadership and commitment to continuous improvement. He consistently operates beyond the expectations of an apprentice, taking ownership of his development and supporting the wider team. His growing confidence and communication skills have further strengthened his contribution, making him an outstanding candidate for Apprentice of the Year.



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