

CAREER STRUCTURE - PRINCIPAL ENGINEER

The Principal Engineer has the option to follow various career routes, including 'Engineering', 'Management' or 'Project Management'.

The 'Engineering' career route recognises a career path for those individuals in a skill area with a deep and thorough knowledge of their speciality, enabling them to get to the top of the structure. This contrasts with past perceptions where the only perceived way to improve career prospects was by moving into a generic management role. Career structures should offer the same opportunities for technical capabilities as those of generic management.

Career Entry Points

- Internal promotion for Senior Engineer or equivalent
- External recruitment of very experienced professional engineer
- Advancement from the Advanced Apprenticeship, Higher Apprenticeship or Graduate Apprenticeship

Principal Engineer Job Role

- Responsibility for the definition of requirements and specification at a high level in the design hierarchy. A capacity to define work packages for complex projects that can then be implemented successfully by other engineers.
- Expertise and leadership in a technical capacity both with a project or team.
- Successful completion of work packages, both complex and incapable of clear definition, that have contributed to the early or innovative introduction of a product or service.
- Involvement and understanding of all aspects of these processes including 'conceptual'.
- Integration of a range of skills and specialisation with business and product knowledge that assists in the preparation of business plans and new products or services.

Qualification and Competence

- Academic - relevant Masters Degree or equivalent at National Qualification Framework (NQF) levels 7 and/or 8
- Work-based competence - N/SVQ Level 5
- Professional registration - UK Spec Standards
- Generic skills - Key Skills Levels 4 and 5

Professional Development

- Eligibility for full membership of relevant chartered professional institution.
- Broadening the range and depth of skill specialisation and knowledge by ongoing and active Continuing Professional Development (CPD).
- Short course attendance - technical, managerial and safety updates to meet personal and business needs.