

Working with a university

In almost all cases university departments are keen to engage with industry and will on the whole welcome any contacts from industry. Universities are large organisations and often difficult to find a way into. This document aims to help people find their way through the morasses of terminology and systems that often makes it difficult to make good contacts.

Why work with a university?

Universities have a wealth of talents and will be able to help solve problems from staff training to industrial testing, from prototype development to market intelligence. It is probably true that if you want information, a university will be able to supply it. However, it is worth bearing in mind a few things about universities:

The primary function of Universities is learning, which means that their interests revolve around acquiring this learning, which they usually call research; disseminating this learning, that is teaching people about it; or applying this learning, which is often termed consultancy. If you want to learn about better ways of running your business, or learn more about your products, or processes, then a university can help. It must be remembered, though, that Universities are not set up to provide free services and so will want something in return for providing them.

It is difficult to be precise about how universities will want to engage with industry and it is often necessary for business to ask how it is going to use the learning that exists. The following list should indicate some of the ways that universities interact with industry.

Finding information about the training needs of industry.	Most university departments put considerable emphasis on making sure that the students they train fulfil the expectations of industry and so are always keen to hear what industry thinks should be on the courses. Often there will be formal boards set up to do this.
Providing employment for their students.	Increasingly students are looking for work during their university course. This employment may take many forms, from part time work during the week, to sandwich placements for long periods, to work on completion of their course. There are many opportunities to work with the university to identify students to fill gaps in your labour market. In some cases, universities may be interested in you taking on part of the student's learning in your workplace.
Providing input to their courses.	Many courses benefit from industrial input, whether it is in the form of visits by students to your industry, projects set in conjunction with the industry to deal with particular identifiable challenges, or direct teaching input from industry. Visits to the industry allow employers to advertise the sort of work they have available and so help

attract students to seek employment with them. They also allow students to understand a product which they may make use of in their future employment. Projects set in conjunction with industry allow industry to tap into a vein of original and unconventional thinking. This may be to design a solution to a manufacturing bottleneck or to suggest better management techniques. The students' solutions may not be usable but they will make you think. Finally providing teaching input to courses may provide you with ways of improving your understanding of your business and your communication skills as well as forming invaluable networks within the university.

Providing staff updating for the university.

Although hard to arrange, university departments will often welcome the opportunity for a member of their staff to spend time working within industry, in order for them to gain first hand experience of the workplace. Such academic secondments will often bring a new vision into the company and produce new insights into how the business is operating.

Updating of employers.

Universities have a wealth of knowledge about new techniques and operational methods that they are able to pass on to members of industry giving the recipients a challenging new outlook on their work. Often universities will be able to upgrade staff without too much disruption to the working routine.

Testing of new ideas

Universities have a wealth of resources that they use for teaching, or research. These vary from wind tunnels to soil tanks, electron microscopes to materials testing equipment; from computer networks to libraries, not to mention a selection of the best brains in the country. It is possible to work with universities to make use of these resources in an infinite number of ways, from developing prototypes to finding out what the best material is for a job, or setting up better marketing systems.

How to tap into this

Firstly, it is worth making the point that universities are collections of people. Some are rude, some are arrogant but on the whole most are genuinely interested in engineering and all its activities, so do not feel intimidated by them. Even if you have never worked with a university before, you will usually find it a rewarding and enlightening experience.

Probably the best way of forming contacts with a university is through personal introduction. If you are a member of an engineering institution you may well get to know people who work at a university through these. Such contacts are invaluable and will often help you speedily to the correct person, so do not be afraid to ask people you come in contact with. Some of the best links between universities and industry have started in the pub over a beer.

Every university in the country will have a formal method for industry to tap into its facilities and most will be helpful but remember universities are big organisations and will often be far better geared to finding a student a place on a course, than putting you in touch with the right person to hire a wind tunnel facility from, so be patient and be persistent.

Below is a list of engineering universities and the relevant site for industry to use to contact that university.

But first some terms that universities use on their web sites:

Research	This does not always mean people in white coats writing indecipherable equations on blackboards. Often it is far more applied and may lead you to someone who is applying new ideas to your industry, or merely offering to work with you to help solve your problems.
Professional development	Usually this means courses that are run to train people in work.
Partnerships	Links with people other than the university and could mean you. Only expect to get your logo here if you are well known but universities are usually happy to work with anyone.
Knowledge Transfer Partnerships	Government-funded collaborations that enable business to access the academic expertise and resources of UK universities for strategic advantage.

Name**Department/School**

[University of Birmingham](#)

[School of Engineering](#) | [Chemical Engineering](#) | [Civil Engineering](#) | [Electronic & Electrical Engineering](#) | [Manufacturing & Mechanical Engineering](#) | [Metallurgy & Materials](#)

[Business & industry](#)

<http://www.industry.bham.ac.uk/>

[University of Brighton](#)

[School of Engineering](#) | [School of Environment](#)

Business

<http://www.brighton.ac.uk/business/>

[University of Bristol](#)

[Engineering](#) | [Aerospace](#) | [Civil Engineering](#) | [Computer Science](#) | [Electrical Engineering](#) | [Engineering Maths](#) | [Mechanical Engineering](#) | [Engineering Management](#)

Links with Business and industry NOT CLEAR

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/business/>

[University of Cambridge](#)

[Department of Chemical Engineering](#) | [Department of Engineering](#)

Business Services Guide

<http://www.cam.ac.uk/cambuniv/business/>

[Coventry University](#)

[Engineering and Computing](#)

Services for business

<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/business>

Services offered

<http://www.coventry.ac.uk/services-for-business/services-off>

[University of Aston](#)

[School of Engineering and Applied Science](#)

The Business Partnership Unit (BPU)

<http://www.aston.ac.uk/from-business/business-services/bpu/index.jsp>

[University of Wales, Bangor](#)

[School of Electronics](#)

Need to identify what you want

<http://www.bangor.ac.uk/innovation/knowledge/businesssup>

[Bournemouth University](#)

[School of Design, Engineering and Computing](#)

Services to business

<http://www.bournemouth.ac.uk/s2b/>

[University of Bradford](#)

[School of Engineering, Design and Technology](#)

Research and business

<u>Oxford Brookes University</u>	<u>School of Technology</u>	http://www.brad.ac.uk/gateway/ Services for business and employers http://www.brookes.ac.uk/business_employers
<u>Brunel University</u>	<u>School of Engineering and Design</u>	Business http://www.brunel.ac.uk/business/
<u>Cardiff University</u> <u>City University</u>	<u>Cardiff School of Engineering</u> <u>School of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences</u>	Not yet clear Business and Community http://www.city.ac.uk/business/
<u>Derby</u>	<u>School of Computing</u> <u>School of Technology</u>	Regional Enterprise & Development at the University of Derby http://www.red-derby.co.uk/cms/1/home.html
<u>DeMontfort University</u>	<u>Computing Science and Engineering</u>	Partnerships http://www.dmu.ac.uk/partnerships/index.jsp
<u>University of Durham</u>	<u>School of Engineering</u>	Business http://www.dur.ac.uk/business/
<u>University of Edinburgh</u>	<u>Engineering and Electronics, Informatics</u>	
<u>University of Essex</u>	<u>Electronic Systems</u>	
<u>University of Exeter</u>	<u>Camborne School of Mines</u> <u>School of Engineering, Computer Science and Mathematics</u>	
<u>Glasgow Caledonian University</u>	<u>School of Engineering, Science and Design</u>	
<u>University of Glasgow</u>	<u>Aerospace Engineering</u> <u>Electronics and Electrical Engineering</u> <u>Civil Engineering</u> <u>Mechanical Engineering</u>	
<u>University of Glamorgan</u>	<u>Faculty of Advanced Technology</u> <u>Division of Civil Engineering</u> <u>Division of Mechanical Engineering and Technology Management</u>	

<u>University of Greenwich</u>	<u>School of Electronics</u>	
<u>University of Hertfordshire</u>	<u>School of Engineering</u>	
<u>University of Huddersfield</u>	<u>Aerospace, Automotive & Design Engineering</u> <u>Electronic, Communication and Electrical Engineering</u>	
<u>Heriot Watt University</u>	<u>School of Computing and Engineering</u>	
<u>Imperial College London</u>	<u>School of Built Environment</u> <u>School of Engineering & Physical Sciences</u> <u>School of Mathematical & Computer Sciences</u> <u>School of Textiles & Design</u> <u>School of Petroleum Engineering</u> <u>Aeronautics</u> <u>Bioengineering</u> <u>Chemical Engineering & Chemical Technology</u> <u>Civil & Environmental Engineering</u> <u>Computing</u> <u>Electrical & Electronic Engineering</u> <u>Materials</u> <u>Mathematics</u> <u>Mechanical Engineering</u> <u>Earth Science & Engineering</u> <u>Institute of Biomedical Engineering</u>	
<u>University of Lancaster</u>	<u>Department of Engineering</u> <u>Department of Communications Systems</u>	
<u>Loughborough University</u>	<u>Department of Aeronautical & Automotive Engineering</u> <u>Department of Chemical Engineering</u> <u>Department of Civil and Building Engineering</u> <u>Department of Electronic & Electrical Engineering</u> <u>Institute of Polymer Technology and Materials Engineering</u> <u>Wolfson School of Mechanical & Manufacturing Engineering</u>	<u>Consultancy & Business Support</u> <u>http://www.lboro.ac.uk/business/</u>
<u>University of Leicester</u>	<u>Engineering Department</u>	
<u>University of Leeds</u>	<u>Faculty of Engineering</u>	
<u>University of Liverpool</u>	<u>School of Architecture</u> <u>Department of Electrical Engineering & Electronics</u> <u>Department of Engineering</u>	
<u>Liverpool John Moores University</u>	<u>School of Engineering</u> <u>School of the Built Environment</u>	
<u>Leeds Metropolitan University</u>	<u>Faculty of Innovation North</u>	
<u>Manchester University</u>	<u>Electrical & Electronic Engineering</u> <u>Materials</u> <u>CEAS</u> <u>Mechanical, Aerospace & Civil Engineering</u> <u>Computer Science</u>	Business <u>http://www.manchester.ac.uk/business/</u>

<u>Manchester Metropolitan University</u>	<u>Department of Engineering and Technology</u>
<u>Napier University</u>	<u>Faculty of Engineering, Computing & Creative Industries</u>
<u>University of Newcastle Upon Tyne</u>	<u>School of Chemical Engineering & Advanced Materials School of Civil Engineering & Geosciences School of Electrical, Electronic and Computer Engineering School of Marine Science & Technology School of Mechanical and Systems Engineering</u>
<u>Nottingham University</u>	<u>Chemical, Environmental and Mining Engineering Civil Engineering Electrical & Electronic Engineering Mechanical, Materials and Manufacturing Engineering School of Computer Science and Information Technology School of Mathematical Sciences</u>
<u>The Open University</u>	<u>Design and Innovation Environmental & Mechanical Engineering Materials Engineering Information and Communication Technologies Centre for Complexity and Change</u>
<u>University of Paisley</u>	<u>School of Engineering and Science School of Computing</u>
<u>University of Plymouth</u>	<u>School of Engineering School of Computing, Communications & Electronics School of Mathematics & Statistics</u>
<u>University of Portsmouth</u>	<u>Civil Engineering Electronic & Computer Engineering Mechanical & Design Engineering School of Computing</u>
<u>Queen Mary and Westfield College</u>	<u>Department of Engineering</u>
<u>Queen's University of Belfast</u>	<u>School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering School of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering School of Planning, Architecture & Civil Engineering School of Electronics, Electrical Engineering & Computer Science</u>
<u>University of Reading</u>	<u>School of Systems Engineering School of Construction Management and Engineering</u>
<u>Robert Gordon University</u>	<u>School of Engineering</u>
<u>Royal Military College Shrivenham (Cranfield)</u>	<u>Aerospace, Power and Sensors, Engineering Systems Department</u>

<u>University)</u>	
<u>University of Salford</u>	<u>School of Computing, Science and Engineering</u>
<u>South Bank University</u>	<u>Faculty of Engineering Science and the Built Environment</u>
<u>Sheffield University</u>	<u>Automatic Control Chemical Engineering Civil Engineering Computer Science Electrical & Electronic Engineering Materials Engineering Mechanical Engineering Medical Engineering</u>
<u>Southampton University</u>	<u>School of Civil Engineering and the Environment School of Electronics & Computer Science School of Engineering Sciences</u>
<u>Staffordshire University</u>	<u>Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Technology</u>
<u>University of Strathclyde</u>	<u>Faculty of Engineering</u>
<u>University of Sunderland</u>	<u>School of Computing and Technology</u>
<u>University of Surrey</u>	<u>School of Engineering School of Electronics and Physical Sciences</u>
<u>University of Wales, Swansea</u>	<u>School of Engineering</u>
<u>University of Teesside</u>	<u>School of Science & Technology</u>
<u>University of Central England in Birmingham</u>	<u>Technology Innovation Centres</u>
<u>University of Central Lancashire</u>	<u>Department of Technology Centre for Research in Fire & Explosion Studies</u>
<u>University of East London</u>	<u>Civil Engineering Electrical & Manufacturing Engineering</u>
<u>University of Ulster</u>	<u>School of Built Environment School of Electrical & Mechanical Engineering</u>
<u>London Metropolitan University</u>	<u>Department of Computing, Communications Technology and Mathematics Polymer Centre</u>
<u>University of Northumbria at Newcastle</u>	<u>School of Computing, Engineering and Information Sciences</u>

[University of West of
England](#)
[University of Warwick](#)

[Faculty of Computing, Engineering & Mathematical Sciences |
Faculty of Built Environment
School of Engineering](#)

[University of
Westminster](#)

[Department of Electronic, Communication & Software Engineering](#)

[University of
Wolverhampton](#)
[University of York](#)

[School of Engineering and the Built Environment](#)

[Department of Computer Science | Department of Electronics](#)

[Site design and build by
Rocket Science](#)