

8. All training schemes in aircraft maintenance should aim to graduate their students with a permanent qualification, such as AMSLAET, but with the potential to obtain licences at a later date, after the mandatory experience requirements have been met.

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Airline Engineering Apprentice Training

IN YOUR issue of July 1966 you published a letter entitled the "Industrial Training Act." In this letter mention is made of inadequacies believed to be in existence in the training programme of airline apprentices. As one who has recently completed training in this field I would like to reply to some of the statements made.

First, I disagree that syllabi at present are tailored solely to achieve passes in the City and Guilds and National Certificate examinations rather than an end product of staff skilled in the techniques of aircraft maintenance. There are in existence Block Release Courses in Aeronautical Engineering Practice complying with the City and Guilds courses 171 and 175, which are Technicians' courses leading to the awards of Part I and II certificates, and to the Full Technological certificate. The aim of the courses, as stated in the 1966 prospectus of Southall College of Technology: "Is to produce, first and foremost, an aircraft servicing and maintenance engineer who will have the necessary academic and practical training which will enable him to apply his knowledge and technique on transport by air under present and future conditions." The college provides the necessary tuition in all academic subjects, but the apprentices' employers must undertake to provide the necessary practical training. The employers are also asked to give some of the specialised aeronautical instruction pertaining to the course. However, certain colleges, I am led to believe, give this specialised instruction by part-time employment of appropriately qualified instructors.

This scheme is of four years' duration. The first year of the course is common to all students and is on a normal one-day release. This allows the basic workshop practice, undertaken by the college or the employer, to be completed

in the first year. The other three years operate on the principle of Block Release, *i.e.* apprentices are released for one whole week for attendance at the college, and for two whole weeks are fully engaged with the employers on the normal apprenticeship. During those periods spent with the employers, it is possible, throughout a five-year apprenticeship, to arrange for the necessary experience to be obtained to satisfy the minimum requirements for the granting of a licence.

The City and Guilds Aeronautical Engineering Practice courses have been carefully arranged to comply with the licence regulations of the British Civil Airworthiness requirements. A first class pass in a Part II certificate gives complete exemption from the appropriate ARB basic licence examination. The Society of Licensed Aircraft Engineers and Technologists also give certain exemptions from their examination requirements to holders of the City and Guilds Part II certificate.

This leads me to disagree with the comment made that the colleges do not keep in touch with the developments in this field. The college that I attended endeavoured to overcome any difficulty that might arise by having my employers' Training Manager on the College Governing Board and another representative of the industry was on the Mechanical Engineering Advisory committee. Courses are constantly under review in order to keep them up to date with the latest legislation.

As proof that this is possible, I followed a similar course during the years 1957-62, and was successful in obtaining licences in A and C Categories for the Vickers Viscount and R-R Dart respectively, within six months of finishing my apprenticeship.

Further, apprentices should not be discouraged from pursuing National Certificate courses, in addition to City and Guilds courses for, although they do not have any direct influence over the obtaining of licences, they do raise the academic standard of the individual. This will obviously increase his promotion potential.

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