



**EMTA Awards Limited**

*Part of the* **SEMTA** *Group*

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## EAL trainees forge ahead to national welding finals

EAL trainees have proved that they are among the nation's brightest sparks by securing six of the ten final places at a national welding competition.

Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, 'SkillWeld 2008', is an annual competition organised by The Welding Institute (TWI). It is open to *all* welders currently under training, encouraging people of all ages to go head to head to be crowned Britain's most talented trainee welder.

Following a series of 12 regional heats across England, Scotland and Wales, the live grand final was held at TWI's headquarters in Cambridge recently.

As well as testing trainees' interpretation of technical drawings and instructions, competitors were judged on their ability to set up equipment and their application of health and safety procedures. They were also given just four hours to complete a series of practical welding tests which were judged against working industry standards.

Among the finalists was 18 year old Margaret 'Flo' Kiely from Tenby in Pembrokeshire. Flo was one of two finalists who made the final cut from Providence Training, one of EAL's approved training centres.

Flo was the only female in the final line up, and was cheered on by her proud mum, Vanessa. In fact, it was Vanessa who first encouraged Flo to enter the competition, having been a finalist herself as part of SkillWeld 2004.

Flo has already achieved EAL's Performing Engineering Operations qualification at Level 1 and is now progressing to Level 2. She hopes to fulfil her ambition of pursuing an occupation related to coded welding and possibly follow her mum into weld inspection and training.

Both Vanessa and Flo were training at the Engineering Construction Skills centre in Neyland, Milford Haven. Currently operated by Providence Training the facility has submitted finalists to the last four SkillWeld competitions - the only centre in Wales with such a record.

Third place runner up was 18 year old David Gibb, a welding trainee at another of EAL's approved training centres, Angus College in Arbroath. David, from Brechin, is completing his Apprenticeship and Advanced Craft Quality qualification, and is in his 3<sup>rd</sup> year at Angus College. He was delighted to scoop one of the top three places.

Another finalist was 17 year old Harry Klein, an employee at Leibherr in the North East of England. Harry is a trainee at South Tyneside College and was the winner of the North East heat. As well as working towards a qualification in Performing Engineering Operations Level 2, Harry already has a string of other EAL qualifications to his name including Key Skills and Quality Control in Engineering.

As well as gaining an opportunity to showcase their talents, all trainees born after 1<sup>st</sup> January 1987 were also hoping to catch the eye of selectors looking for candidates to represent the UK at the International WorldSkills competition to be held in Calgary Canada in 2009.

Commenting on SkillWeld 2008, EAL's Managing Director, Ann Watson, explains: "As well as having the highest proportion of trainees among the finalists via our approved training centres, EAL was also delighted to be one of the main sponsors of this year's SkillWeld awards.

"SkillWeld is a fantastic way of showcasing vocational talent and rewarding those people who are taking steps to have the right skills and qualifications in place to further their careers and contribution to employment."

**For a full list of EAL qualifications, as well as details of approved training centres, visit [www.eal.org.uk](http://www.eal.org.uk)**

**Ends**

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**Notes to editors:**

**EAL:**

- has 76% of the market share for engineering NVQs at Levels 1-5
- awards a range of qualifications in other occupational areas including administration, aviation, business improvement, distribution and warehousing, learning and development, management, occupational health and safety, port operations
- awards Key Skills qualifications at Levels 1-3
- offers a range of Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs) including certificates and diplomas in engineering and technology, welding, electronics, business improvement, domestic electrical installation, air cabin crewing
- is part of the Semta group, the Sector Skills Council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies.

All of the following EAL approved centres had candidates in the final SkillWeld 2008 line up:

- |                           |                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Angus College           | Trainee: David Gibb           |
| • South Tyneside College  | Trainee: Harry Klein          |
| • Tameside College        | Trainee: David Quinn          |
| • Providence Training Ltd | Trainee: Margaret 'Flo' Kiely |
| • Providence Training Ltd | Trainee: Michael Lawrence     |
| • Colchester College      | Trainee: Shane Stewart        |