



# IRTE Skills Challenge 2023

7 September 2023

Jaguar Experience,  
Castle Bromwich



Get involved



#IRTESkills

# Thank you to the following companies for taking part in this year's IRTE Skills Challenge



**First Bus**



**Go-Ahead**



**Trentbarton**



**Lothian Buses**



**National Express**



**Arriva**



**Metroline**



**Excel Technical Resourcing**



# Welcome to the IRTE Skills Challenge 2023



The IRTE, as a professional sector of The Society of Operations Engineers, takes immense pride in championing apprentices and technicians throughout their careers. We aim to support them in meeting the technical and technological challenges of the future.

The IRTE Skills Challenge brings together the best in bus and coach to test their skills and support each other in best practice. The competition is a unique opportunity for apprentices and technicians to come together and demonstrate their skills across bodywork, electrical and mechanical disciplines.

In addition to the competitive element, the IRTE Skills Challenge also provides a forum for apprentices and technicians to share ideas and best practice. All competitors should be extremely proud of themselves for stepping up and taking part. You are all helping to raise the standards of engineering in this industry.

The competition could not take place without the support from our sponsors: FCL, Freeway, Imperial Engineering, Knorr-Bremse and Teng Tools. It also relies on our partners S&B Automotive Academy and DVSA.

Many congratulations to all the winners and runners up in 2023. We look forward to your continued support in 2024.

**John Eastman**

President, Society of Operations Engineers

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# Bodywork Apprentice

## Winner



**James Lockyer**  
Arriva

Fourth year mechanical and bodywork apprentice James works on several brands of buses ranging from Wrightbus to Volvo. James is particularly proud of his welding ability and is looking forward to improving his skills.

## Runner up



**Hasan Girach**  
First Bus

Sponsor:







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# DVSA Inspection Apprentice

## Winner



**Hollie Smith**

Arriva

Third year mechelec apprentice Hollie is grateful for the opportunities she experienced as an apprentice and is most proud of her ability to learn, adapt and overcome any challenges while adding to her skillset.

## Runner up



**Charles Burrows**

Metroline

## Supporter:



Driver & Vehicle  
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# IRTE Skills Challenge

The Skills Challenge is the ultimate contest for PSV apprentices and technicians who specialise in:

- Bodywork
- Electrical
- Mechanical



See you next year!

Get involved



#IRTESkills

Find out more at [irteskills.org.uk](http://irteskills.org.uk)

Email [irteskills@soe.org.uk](mailto:irteskills@soe.org.uk)



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*John Simmons, Sales Manager*



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# Electrical Apprentice

## Winner



**William Keith**  
Go-Ahead

Third year apprentice William works with the transport industries latest hybrid and electric buses. William is most proud of overcoming challenges and continuing to learn as he approached his final exam.

## Runner up



**Sophy Smith**  
First Bus

Sponsor:



# Electric Driveline Apprentice

## Winner



### Diego Duran Cuadros Go-Ahead

As an apprentice engineer, Diego enjoys examining and working on vehicles, particularly working on engines. He is proud of his methodical and orderly approach to examining and replacing ESS modules.

## Runner up



### Tom Lees National Express

Partner:



# Mechanical Apprentice

## Winner



**Scott Blakesley**  
Go-Ahead

As a fourth year apprentice, Scott has worked on several vehicles including ADL, Volvo, and Mercedes. He is particularly proud of getting his level 13 qualification and hopes to continue to learn and develop.

## Runner up



**Hollie Smith**  
Arriva

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# Mechelec

## Winner



### **James Day** First Bus

Second year apprentice James is a mechelec for First bus. Working primarily on Diesel and CNG buses James is proud of his ability to carry out tasks independently and is looking forward to taking on even more responsibility in the future.

## Runner up



### **Aleksander Derkach** Go-Ahead

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# Outstanding **Apprentice Team**

## Winners



### **Diego Duran Cuadros**

#### **Go-Ahead**

Diego also took home the Award for Electric Driveline Apprentice demonstrating his skills as an apprentice engineer with a particular aptitude in ESS modules.



### **Cameron Barton**

#### **Go-Ahead**

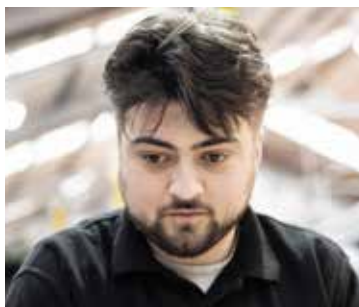
Second apprentice Cameron Barton works on a range of buses. Cameron recently won an award for Apprentice of the Year and can now add the IRTE Skills Challenge Award for Apprentice Team to his collection.



### **Fabio Janota**

#### **Go-Ahead**

Fabio is a third year apprentice and is most proud of his timekeeping skills and his ability to maintain his composure in the face of tight deadlines.



### **Tiago Da-Silva**

#### **Go-Ahead**

Tiago is a second year apprentice. He is extremely grateful to have been selected for the IRTE Skills Challenge and can be justly proud of his performance.

**Partner:**



# DVSA Inspection Technician

## Winner



**Harry Burns**  
Trent Barton

Workshop supervisor Harry runs a skilful and coherent team. He is proud of his performance in the IRTE Skills Challenge in 2018 which led his team to victory. He now has this award to add to his achievements.

## Runner up



**Morgan Bond**  
First Bus

## Supporter:



Driver & Vehicle  
Standards  
Agency

# Bodywork Technician

## Winner



**Glen Kelly**  
Metroline

Glen qualified in 2021 and has had the opportunity to work on some of the latest models of vehicles. He is most proud of his ability to perform well in an ever-growing and evolving industry.

## Runner up



**John Buchan**  
Lothian

Sponsor:

**IRTE** Workshop  
accreditation



# Electrical Technician

## Winner



**Barrie Lear**

Arriva

Barrie has been qualified since 2011 and been working on vehicles such as Optare and ADL. He is most proud of becoming a master technician and can also celebrate his performance in the Skills Challenge.

## Runner up



**Ben Stacey**

Go-Ahead

Sponsor:



**KNORR-BREMSE**

# Electric Driveline Technician

## Winner



**Joe Davis**  
Metroline

Joe recently qualified as an electrical technician. He is proud of completing his apprenticeship and is looking forward to his future career.

## Runner up



**Luke Gorton**  
National Express

Partner:

ROUTE  
**ONE**  
NUMBER ONE FOR COACH & BUS

# Mechanical Technician

## Winner



**Pawel Dudziec**  
National Express

Pawel is a mechanical technician who qualified in 2021. He works primarily on the compression ignition for Alexander Dennis, Scania and Volvo models and is also trained on EU. Pawel constantly strives to learn and enjoys taking on new courses and challenges. He is proud of jobs he has completed, particularly engine builds.

## Runner up



**Arren Pidden**  
First Bus

Sponsor:

**IRTE**



# Philip Margrave Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement

The Philip Margrave Memorial Award for Outstanding Achievement is given to the individual who has greatly contributed to the promotion and development of apprenticeships, standards and training within the bus and coach industry. Philip Margrave MSOE MIRTE was a Group Engineering Director at Go-Ahead London and spent more than four decades in the bus industry. He was instrumental to the IRTE Skills Challenge in its early years with his knowledge and generosity.

## Winner



### Richard Harrington Go-Ahead

Richard embarked on his journey in the transport industry in 1984 as an apprentice engineer at London Transport before joining Go-Ahead London. During the course of his career he has been responsible for a number of momentous projects such as introducing London's first diesel-hybrid route, the capital's first electric buses and Europe's first all-electric bus depot. Richard is well respected by his peers and is known for being highly knowledgeable and dependable. Richard is currently Group Engineering Director at Go-Ahead with responsibility for leading best practice in engineering across the company.



Proud hosts of the  
IRTE Skills Challenge



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# Master Technician

## Winner



**Chris Bisset**  
Go-Ahead

As a previous winner Chris is no stranger to the IRTE Skills Challenge. He works on a variety of vehicles ranging including ADL, BYD and Wrightbus. Chris is proud of his progression from apprentice to lead technician and looks forward to continuing to work with Go-Ahead.

## Runner up



**Andy Knowles**  
First Bus

Sponsor:





# IRTE Workshop accreditation

IRTE Workshop Accreditation is an independent audit which recognises and promotes best practice in workshop procedures. By successfully passing the audit you will be placed on the IRTE Workshop Accreditation Register, which sends a message to manufacturers and operators that your organisation runs to the highest standard, enabling them to use your services with confidence.

- Commercial advantage
- Independent assurance
- Raising standards

For more information on IRTE Workshop Accreditation and to book, contact us:

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# Judges' Choice Award

## Outstanding First Year Apprentice

### Winner



### Thang Tang

#### First Bus

Thang is a first year mechelec apprentice working primarily on double decker Wrightbus and Streetdeck buses. After passing his forklift training he was encouraged to undertake his apprenticeship with First Bus. He impressed the judges by scoring very highly while still in his first year of apprentice training.



## The accreditation for proven knowledge in road transport

irtec not only enables individual technicians to develop their skills as they move through their career, but also helps employers to demonstrate their commitment to technical excellence. irtec is managed for the IRTE by the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI) and delivered by accredited centres in the UK and abroad.

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e: [irtec@soe.org.uk](mailto:irtec@soe.org.uk) w: [irtec.org.uk](http://irtec.org.uk)

Commercial advantage

Independent assurance

Raising standards

# Outstanding Qualified Team

## Winners



### Barrie Lear

#### Arriva

Winner of an award for Apprentice of the Year in 2005, Steve is an experienced technician who is keen to pass his knowledge to apprentices learning their trade. In his spare time, Steve, follows F1 and takes his children to automotive shows.



### Anthony Denman

#### Arriva

Anthony won an award Apprentice of the year in 2009. He is extremely proud of becoming a master technician and having the opportunity to work on cutting edge EV vehicles.



### Wayne Stanton

#### Arriva

Wayne, qualified in 2012 and currently works on a range of buses including Volvo, Wrightbuses, ADL and Optare. Wayne is most proud of bringing in buses to the paint shop and giving them a new lease of life.

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## Congratulations to all our winners and runners up

For more information on the **IRTE Skills Challenge**, and to take part or sponsor the 2024 edition, please call us on **+44 (0)20 7630 2174** or **IRTESkills@SOE.org.uk**

[irteskills.org.uk](https://irteskills.org.uk)

**IRTE**

IRTE is a Professional Sector of  
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