

Knowledge  
Transfer  
Partnerships

# Graduate Case Study

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Biology/  
Biotechnology/  
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Design/  
Ecommerce/  
Engineering/  
Food/  
Management/  
Materials/  
Marketing/  
Quality/  
Science/  
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# Associate Profile: Neil Ryan

Name: Neil Ryan  
Qualifications: MPhil Mechanical Engineering  
Current Role: Operations Manager  
Location: Belfast

*“With KTP you are learning all the time. You gain knowledge, skills and support from both the University and the business and the partnership creates a fantastic learning environment.”*

## **IN MY KTP I...**

My KTP was with Canyon Europe Ltd and Queen’s University Belfast. There were two main parts to my KTP. The first was to reduce the overhead and manufacturing costs within the business and the second was to develop the existing product range and tailor it for the UK and European markets. The objective of both was to ensure the company’s competitive edge.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROJECT WERE...**

The first big highlight of the project for me was how successful we were in reducing the manufacturing costs. We reduced the costs by 35%, which in a low cost, low profit company is very significant and it meant we were still able to compete from a European base whereas a lot of our competitors could not.

The second significant highlight was that we secured our first multi-national customer as a result of bespoke design of some of the functions and components to match the European customer and market requirements. The success and importance of the design and development work conducted by myself to the future success of the organisation was very rewarding and has been recognised by the company.

## **THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A KTP ASSOCIATE IS...**

The best thing about being a KTP Associate is the training and development budget you receive, and the control you have over it. You can make it directly applicable to you, shaping your career the way you want, something you won’t get with most companies.

Another great thing is actually being able to make a significant and tangible impact on a company. You are there doing things and seeing the results of your input which is extremely rewarding.

## **FROM KTP I HAVE LEARNT...**

With KTP you have 10% of your time for training and development. I was able to complete a masters degree in polymer engineering, achieve a Chartered Management qualification and develop my design skills. I was also able to gain basic knowledge of the Japanese language which improved my communication with our Japanese colleagues enabling quicker results. With KTP you are learning all the time. You gain knowledge, skills and support from both the University and the business and the partnership creates a fantastic learning environment.

## **LIFE AFTER KTP IS...**

After my KTP project I stayed with the company and became the R&D Manager. I then progressed and took on responsibility for the production department as well. Now I am Operations Manager and part of the Senior Management Team. I soon hope to have a Director role. I believe that KTP really helped to fast track my career.

## **I WILL RECOMMEND KTP BECAUSE...**

I would definitely recommend KTP because of the great support structure, the training and development and the opportunities you get. The question is ‘Why wouldn’t you choose KTP?’

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