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|  | Media Information |
|  | Date as: 13 November, 2012 |
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|  | BMW Group Academy UK helps students and teachers Discover Automotive RetailIndustry-leading dealer training centre opens doors to find new apprentices |
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Today, the BMW Group Academy UK near Reading hosted a visit by students and teachers as part of Discover Automotive Retail, an automotive industry scheme that will see young people given the chance to experience the diverse range of apprenticeships available in the UK’s automotive retail sector. Launched this month, the initiative is being co-ordinated by the Society of Motor Manufacturers (SMMT) in partnership with the Retail Motor Industry Federation (RMIF) and the industry’s Sector Skills Council - the Institute of the Motor Industry (IMI).

Students and teachers from schools across the Thames Valley were given the chance to meet current apprentices and see first-hand the broad range of career opportunities the BMW, MINI and BMW Motorrad dealer networks have to offer, as well as gaining a deeper insight into the national BMW Apprenticeship Programme at the Academy.

Tim Abbott, managing director of BMW Group UK, said: “Recruitment and retention of skilled people are critical issues facing the retail automotive sector. By providing an industry-leading apprenticeship programme we are confident that we can address this issue and ensure our dealers can continue to deliver the highest levels of customer service.

“At a time when school leavers face a challenging employment landscape, apprenticeships in the automotive industry offer a wide variety of exciting opportunities.”

During their visit to the Academy, the students and teachers were briefed on a selection of courses which run over a two or three-year period. They met current and former apprentices and while touring some of the Academy’s 32 workshops and 22 classrooms, got some hands-on experience of the type of work undertaken on the courses.

This year 110 apprentices have joined the BMW Apprenticeship Programme. Around 600 dealer apprentices have been trained at the BMW Group Academy UK over the past five years in Service, Parts, Motorcycles and Body and Paint programmes and retention rates are among the best in the automotive sector ranging from 94 per cent in 2009 to 100 per cent in 2012. The BMW Group’s UK dealer network has invested around £6 million in training apprentices since 2007 and delivers 7,000 training days per year at the Academy.

Discover Automotive Retail builds on the success of the Government-supported See Inside Manufacturing initiative which underlines the importance of the automotive industry to the UK economy and the range of exciting career opportunities it offers in the automotive manufacturing sector.

Teachers or students who would like further information on the BMW Apprentice Programme can contact the BMW Group Academy UK:

Via phone: 01189 480447

Via email: apprenticerecruitment@bmw.co.uk

Web: [www.bmw.co.uk/careers](http://www.bmw.co.uk/careers)

Via post: Apprenticeship Recruitment

BMW Group UK Ltd

Ellesfield Avenue

Bracknell

Berkshire

RG12 8TA

**Ends**

**The BMW Group**

The BMW Group is one of the most successful manufacturers of automobiles and motorcycles in the world with its BMW, MINI, Husqvarna Motorcycles and Rolls-Royce brands. As a global company, the BMW Group operates 29 production and assembly facilities in 14 countries and has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2011, the BMW Group sold about 1.67 million cars and more than 113,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax for the financial year 2011 was euro 7.38 billion on revenues amounting to euro 68.82 billion. At 31 December 2011, the BMW Group had a workforce of approximately 100,000 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been built on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy. As a result of its efforts, the BMW Group has been ranked industry leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes for the last eight years.

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**For further information please contact:**

Angela Stangroom Group Communications Manager

Tel: 01344 480283 Email: Angela.Stangroom@bmw.co.uk