

EVENTS/CAUSES

BMW fuels future auto careers through specialized degree program

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BMW 328i

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker BMW is helping students get a head start in the automotive industry through a degree program it developed in partnership with Oxford Brookes University.

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The four-year Bachelor of Science in Business and Automotive Management will include classes at Oxford Brookes as well as at OTH Regensburg, Technical University of Applied Sciences in Germany and work placement at BMW plants. The coursework was designed to reflect the needs of BMW as an employer, which may help ensure that the automaker has qualified, knowledgeable candidates to fill positions in the future.

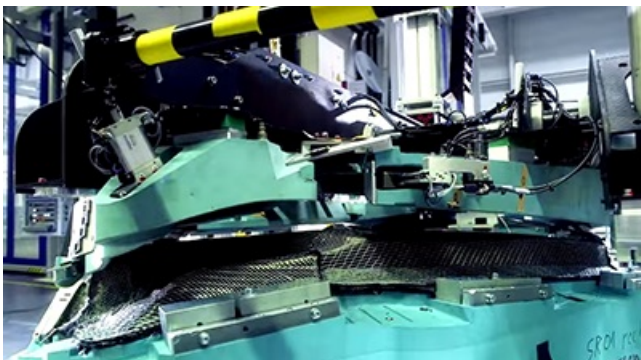
Molding minds

Students who opt for the specialized degree will spend their first year studying at Oxford Brookes. The sophomore year's curriculum is carried out at OTH Regensburg, Technical University of Applied Sciences.

A junior year work placement will put students at the BMW Group Plant Regensburg and the Mini Oxford Plant, spending six months at each. Study is completed with a senior year at Oxford Brookes.

Throughout their degree program, students will be mentored by BMW managers based at the two participating plants, reflecting different operational functions of the company.

BMW has previously worked with Oxford Brookes, taking on apprentices seeking foundation degrees and collaborating on research and development projects.



BMW i8 under construction

"Employers today are working far more closely with universities and colleges to ensure courses better reflect the skills and knowledge actually required in the workplace," said Bob Shankly, HR director for BMW Group Manufacturing in the UK, in a brand statement. "We're delighted to have had the opportunity to develop this new degree in collaboration with Oxford Brookes and look forward to welcoming the first students on the course."

Each company requires specific skillsets in its employees. A number of luxury houses have found ways to ensure that the next generation is able to take the reigns with university partnerships.

For one, Mot Hennessy Louis Vuitton is helping to train the engineers of tomorrow by participating in the Ecole Centrale Paris engineering school's Supply Chain management chair.

Specialists from LVMH brands, as well as companies Carrefour, Safran and Sanofi, will be involved in the Industrial Engineering curriculum at the school, and will also provide hands-on training through internships. Luxury brands often have trouble finding the right talent to fill particular roles, so this partnership will begin to develop long-term relationships with those who might be able to work with the conglomerate in the future ([see story](#)).

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