In 2013, SSE launched the SSE Business Academy in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU).

This innovative new programme is recruiting talented people to support key areas of SSE’s expanding business and to accelerate the development of employees with management potential in support of SSE’s Management Development Framework.

Those successfully recruited as employees into the SSE Business Academy are undertaking work-based learning in SSE’s Retail, Networks and Corporate business areas in Perth and Glasgow whilst studying for a Diploma in Business Management through Glasgow Caledonian University.

The programme ensures that employees will enhance their learning and put that learning into practice, with the chance to understand the dynamics of the SSE organisation and its core values.

On completion of the Diploma, SSE aims to place successful employees throughout its business operations, spanning customer services, energy sales, energy service, marketing and corporate areas.

SSE’s Director of Human Resources John Stewart says: “SSE identified a need to build a talent pipeline to support succession needs across its commercial areas. We are excited by this programme that combines real business experience with structured learning support.”

One of SSE’s core values is ‘teamwork’, believing the organisation will only be successful financially if it exercises a wider corporate responsibility to others, including customers and employees, on whom SSE’s success ultimately depends.

The new SSE Business Academy builds on SSE’s existing relationship with GCU, developing the professional skills of its managers through a bespoke range of programmes in Business Management by Learning Contract.
SSE believed that its employees could benefit greatly from GCU’s flexible, work-based approach to earning an undergraduate top-up degree. Further incentive was the opportunity to earn a qualification in as little as one year, with the application of Recognition of Prior Learning to managers’ work experience and other qualifications.

GCU worked closely with SSE’s Learning and Development Manager to ensure that a one-year degree was developed to fit SSE’s human capital and business strategy, with clear business benefits.

The aim of the partnership was to contribute to the expansion of management skills within SSE through an understanding and application of key perspectives of management; to enable managers to undertake effective people and process management; to foster the development of academic, personal and professional competencies bringing about responsible attitudes to business environments and strategic objectives; and to impact on the business by demonstrating a visible change in performance by individuals.

The programme incorporated over 60 managers from SSE operations throughout the UK. In a Return on Investment study measuring the personal and organisational benefit from participation GCU’s work-based learning programmes, it was found that all respondents agreed that their learning had improved their ability to think strategically. 97% found improvements to their critical thinking and research skills. 97% of respondents reported an increase in their capability, while 90% of respondents agreed their learning had increased their knowledge about what other departments at SSE do – thus enabling more effective cross-organisational working. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the programme at learner level, team level and organisational level.

“We are excited by this programme that combines real business experience with structured learning support.”

At Glasgow Caledonian University, we work with industry and public sector partners to ensure our expertise responds to the need for real-world innovation. GCU’s strategic business development and knowledge transfer teams work with academic experts in our Schools and Research Institutes to support businesses with a problem-solving approach.

Contact us to find out more about building a brighter future with GCU at www.gcu.ac.uk/business.