

What Success Looks Like



At an event held in a Manchester hotel at the end of January, representatives from the Institute and training provider Scott-Grant Limited gathered with recently qualified productivity professionals and their managers from different companies around the UK to celebrate the annual recognition of the best students throughout the world who had completed their IMS Productivity Analyst course during 2025.

Every year the Institute considers all the people who have completed their studies on this four-week long course. The review, based on the individual marks and lecturer assessment of those students around the world, determined who is to be awarded the IMS Student of the Year and the runners-up. A further award is made to the best student who lives and works overseas, thanks to the Russell Currie Memorial Fund (RCMF).

Hosted by Scott-Grant, the winners for 2025 were invited with their managers to come to the presentation and receive their certificates and gifts from both the IMS and Scott-Grant. Ian Winstanley, Operations Director at Scott-Grant, welcomed IMS Chairman Mark Cooper and David Blanchflower, RCMF Trustee Chairman, to present all the winning students with their awards and celebrate their success. Senior lecturers and other staff from Scott-Grant were also there.

The Versatility and Relevance of the IMS Qualification

After the introductions, Ian Winstanley explained that Scott-Grant had delivered IMS professional qualification training to people from a wide variety of business sectors including retail, distribution, logistics, vehicle manufacturing (mainly cars but also trucks, construction vehicles and e-bikes) and automotive suppliers, aerospace, electronics, medical equipment as well as government departments in the UK and overseas. Additionally, he listed people from businesses involved with the manufacturing of plumbing accessories, boiler manufacturing, lead products, footwear, kitchen furniture, food industry equipment and submarines – to name but a few! "This demonstrates the versatility and relevance of the qualification and the course content, which can be applied to any business or organisation.



Front row left to right: IMS Chairman, Mark Cooper, Hamza Aman, Philip Marr, Ian Winstanley, Steve Heathcote
 Back row: David Blanchflower, Anthony Bickerdike, Richard Clark, Steve Royle.

It also highlights the value of the industrial engineering (IE) disciplines of work measurement and method study as a means of supporting business improvements," he said.

Supporting Today's Business Challenges

Ian explained, "The various industrial engineering techniques that are covered during the four week IMS course are as relevant and fundamental today as they ever were, to address the challenges facing industries and organisations throughout the world, whether it's businesses in the retail and logistics sector trying to give their customers what they want more quickly and with more competitive prices, those in the defence sector needing to increase output and deliver more quickly due to demand, or businesses having to operate effectively with increases to the national minimum wage, NI costs and the like."

Who is Applying These Techniques?

"Some businesses have their own dedicated people employed as IEs, others are looking to bolt on the techniques and skills to other roles such as Production, Process or Manufacturing Engineers, Continuous Improvement Analysts, Lean leaders etc," Ian said. "We see students with a mix of job titles attending the IMS courses. There are certainly more companies looking to develop the skills of people in existing roles, if this last year is any guide. Over 50% of delegates attending last year were adding the IE skills to their existing portfolio." He felt that this is a strong indication that businesses are still recognising the need to measure and understand work content to enable them to manage their business more effectively.

"As well as people attaining their IMS Productivity Analyst qualification, we are also at Scott-Grant seeing a growing number of businesses recognising the need for more of their people to gain a better understanding of work measurement, performance and ways to improve productivity. This is very

evident in the increased demand for us to deliver shorter appreciation courses both in the UK and overseas," he added.

A Positive Message

"All of this provides a positive message that the application of IE techniques is an important part of supporting businesses and organisations to identify and implement improvements," Ian declared. "And it's great to know that with the standard and calibre of the delegates attending our courses and, particularly our highest performing delegates this year, that businesses have people returning from their training with skills that can make a positive impact."

And the Winners are....

Institute Chairman, Mark Cooper was delighted to declare that the IMS Student of the Year for 2025 is Hamza Aman of Elcometer Limited. Joint runners-up are Philip Marr from GXO and Oliver Davies from BAE. The winner of the best overseas student and recipient of the Russell Currie award is Onteboge Archie from the Air Arm Command HQ of the Government of Botswana.

Before presenting the awards Mark shared that, as our careers as productivity professionals progress, we develop an understanding of a wide range of techniques, including many aspects of Lean, all aimed at reducing cost and improving performance. "Operational excellence and continuous improvement feature highly in the toolkit of productivity professionals now," he said, "and increasingly we will need to both accept and harness the power of AI and its potential to support what we do." He then presented Hamza with a specially engraved trophy (shown on the opposite page), a certificate and a cheque from the IMS with his congratulations and best wishes for a fulfilling career.



<< Hamza is added to the top of the Award Board.

“My manager Anthony had warned me that after the course I might view everything through a different lens and that is exactly what has happened. I now see production in a new light, I’m ultra observant and looking for detail beyond the norm. I’m using the course content all the time and I can’t imagine life without it now.”

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Hamza Aman, already with a B Eng and an MSc in electrical and electronic engineering under his belt, had previously been among the runners-up in the Institute of Engineering Technology awards at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. His excitement at the news of his success was infectious. “Now I’ve won this international award as IMS Student of the Year – I’m on top of the world!” he said.

“My manager Anthony had warned me that after the course I might view everything through a different lens and that is exactly what has happened. I now see production in a new light, I’m ultra observant and looking for detail beyond the norm. I’m using the course content all the time and I can’t imagine life without it now. I apply lots of it in my own personal life too – weighing up things, measuring and evaluating. To be honest, even when I’m waiting at the station for a train, I find myself rating people walking past!” he grinned.

“I had found the exams challenging. But it’s great to see this result – good for me, good for my manager and good for the company, as they can see it was worth their investment.”

Hamza had started employment just over three years ago straight from graduating from university. He is a Junior Production Engineer at the UK headquarters of Elcometer Limited in the Manchester area – a leading company in the design, manufacture and supply of inspection equipment to the coatings, concrete and non-destructive test industry.

Hamza’s manager, Anthony Bickerdike, Senior Production Engineer, had nominated him to attend the IMS Productivity Analyst course, which he himself had attended over 10 years ago. “I did the course with Scott-Grant and was unbelievably impressed with the delivery of the course and the support from the instructors. The most amazing thing I found after the



<< Phil celebrates his success.

Philip Marr

The other joint runner-up is Philip Marr, a Continuous Improvement Analyst with GXO, a global organisation providing cutting-edge logistics solutions. Phil had worked for Currys for 20 years after joining as a teenager apprentice and getting a distinction in the National Diploma Apprenticeship scheme... "and found enough to keep me going there for 20 years," he said.

"When I moved to GXO to look after the Currys contract, I joined the company to replace my predecessor in the CI and Transformation Dept – and we had just a two-week handover! I looked round for the best sort of course to help me get a good qualification for my new role and decided on the IMS Productivity Analyst course with Scott-Grant – and what an excellent decision that was. I loved the course, the content, the whole thing of studying, interacting with several others on the open course over four full weeks in Manchester. The lecturers were both fantastic (Steve Royle and Steve Heathcote) and very engaging – they made it fun as well and as for the course content... it's done lots for me. I was thrilled from Day 1 of the course to see the content and how it would align with what I need to do in my work." He publicly thanked the lecturers for the time and effort they gave to train him on all the modules.

Phil's role is to oversee new projects as they introduce automation, robots etc and he knows he will be using the content of the course every day in time measurement, method studies etc. "There'll be a lot to get my teeth into – there are over 1000 employees at GXO for Currys."

His boss, Transformation General Manager Richard Clark was able to join the celebrations for Phil's success and was delighted to bask in reflected glory with his qualified productivity professional! "Phil's is a remarkable achievement and he has a very varied role in a huge logistics operation. I've seen a big difference in him since the course: he has increased confidence in carrying out his work. Phil has worked very hard for this level of success and we will be very proud to share this news around the world. GXO is a company very committed to maintaining a professional approach to productivity."

The RCMF Award Winner

Scott-Grant arranged for David Blanchflower, Chairman of the Russell Currie Memorial Fund to meet the winner of their award online before the other guests arrived in Manchester, to accommodate the time difference between the UK and Botswana.

The Trust Fund was created in 1968 following the death of Russell Mackenzie Currie OBE, a former President of the IMS, who himself worked overseas for many years in the field of work measurement and productivity improvement. The annual award continues to be made to encourage education in the same fields overseas and to recognise the highest achievement of students living and working outside of the UK, whose first language is not English.

The winner of the award for 2025 was Onteboge Archie, a Colonel in the Botswana Defence Group who works for the Government of Botswana. He was "delighted and very honoured" to accept the engraved silver salver from David Blanchflower and a certificate of outstanding achievement from Scott-Grant. "This

course was coming back into the workplace and seeing so many opportunities to implement improvements," he enthused. "I've done the course myself so I really do know how hard it is to get top marks! We knew Hamza has special talent and now we're looking forward to seeing what else he can do in the future."

"We focus on the quality of products and breaking new boundaries in technological advances – we maximise continuous improvement," Anthony added. So, no wonder the Productivity Analyst qualification is an essential at Elcometer.

Student of the Year (runners-up)

Ian Winstanley announced the two runners-up for the Student of the Year award. IMS Chairman, Mark Cooper had a cheque for each of the joint runners-up and senior lecturer Steve Royle presented a Scott-Grant certificate.

Oliver Davies

Oliver Davies had joined BAE Systems just over three years ago after he had completed his BSc and MSc in aerospace manufacturing. "You can imagine it was a huge undertaking from being a student to being among the complexity of the products made at BAE," he recalled. "So, a year or so later when I went back to the learning environment for Modules 1 and 2, I was a different person." He joined an open course in the Manchester training centre of Scott-Grant and thoroughly enjoyed studying with people from many different industry sectors. Last year, he completed the remaining Modules as well as an additional five day MOST® course.

"I met a lot of competitive and talented people on all the modules I'd done at Scott-Grant. I'm competitive too, so I was really delighted to find out how well I'd done being a runner-up to the Student of the Year," he added. Oliver unfortunately was unable to attend the awards presentation but his certificate and gifts have been forwarded to him.



The online presentation to Archie in Botswana with Ian Winstanley, David Blanchflower, Mark Cooper and Steve Royle.



Colonel Archie, winner of the RCMF award.

award carries a legacy and I will honour it in all my future work," he said.

Archie has college and university diplomas in Computer Science and Defence and Security Studies, respectively, he has completed certified courses in key HR disciplines and is currently studying for a Master of Arts in Defence and Security Studies.

"As the Director A1 (Human Resource Management) at the Air Arm Command Headquarters, my role centres on the development and implementation of all HRM policies. The skills and methodologies from the IMS Productivity Analyst course are integral to this work, serving as a vital analytical framework that complements my expertise in core HR disciplines." Archie, whose first language is Setswana, went on to explain how he uses the course content in his role. "The integration of productivity analytics directly strengthens the rigour and impact of our HR policies. It enhances my personal capacity as a strategic HR leader and increases my contribution to the organisation by ensuring our HR practices are aligned with the core objectives of operational efficiency and mission readiness."

He was eager to compliment Steve Royle who delivered the course online, remotely managing all four weeks. "My success is largely thanks to our instructor, Steve Royle, who presented the course material with such clarity and passion that it became a truly enjoyable learning experience. His approach was particularly effective in helping me navigate and master the required online platforms, which allowed for a smooth and engaging educational experience." Commenting on the four week course content, Archie was very enthusiastic, "It hasn't just given me a new skill set, it has refined my entire approach to problem-solving and value creation. It encourages a constant, constructive curiosity about how things work and how they might work better – a perspective I now carry with me everywhere."

Archie's manager, Brigadier Jenamiso Mountain, Govt of Botswana said, "I was certainly delighted that Archie has

won the Russell Currie award – but not surprised! I know Archie's potential and I am overjoyed to learn that he actually surpassed that and beat the rest of his peers globally. The whole Directorate of Human Resource Management is certainly excited to learn of the achievements of one of their own. We select the people to study for this qualification based on merit from the pool of middle managers in the HR sector throughout the Botswana Defence Forces. We rate the IMS Productivity Analyst qualification and the content of the course very highly; we feel the main benefit of this course to our organisation, both now and in the future, is organisational credibility in the jobs we perform."

Changing Lives for the Better

Each of this year's winners was eager to share that the IMS Productivity Analyst course has changed their life in a really positive way.

Hamza: "I can now re-arrange a whole production line! And if, even in my personal life, anything is broken, I now have the confidence to fix it. I'm empowered on a personal and professional level. Who knows what other benefits it will bring in the future."

Philip: "Studying for the IMS Productivity Analyst qualification was the best decision I'd made in years and I'm 42! It has increased my confidence tremendously and I am a very happy productivity professional!"

Oliver: "I'd previously studied for a Bachelor's and a Master's in aerospace manufacturing and I found the IMS Productivity Analyst course content very interesting – and value added."

Archie: "In short, the course hasn't just added a skill set; it has refined my entire approach to problem-solving and value creation. It encourages a constant, constructive curiosity about how things work and how they might work better – a perspective I now carry with me everywhere."