

## New industry leading CLAAS Academy opened at Saxham

As part of the redevelopment of its Saxham headquarters, CLAAS UK has opened a new purpose built CLAAS Academy, designed to provide industry leading training for dealer sales, service and parts staff, but also customer operator training.

CLAAS has long recognised the importance of offering customers a high level of service and support for the CLAAS machinery that they operate, and the key to achieving this is through the service and support training it offers. The new CLAAS Academy is the seventh on the Saxham site since the first was opened in 1954, employing just one trainer. Advanced Master Mechanic training was first introduced 20 years ago and highest Master Technician level in 2002.

Today, the new CLAAS Academy employs a total of 11 staff and the has the capacity to offer over 5,000 training days a year. In addition to customer operator and dealer sales, service and parts staff training, the CLAAS Academy plays an integral role in the industry leading 4-step training pathway that young apprentices and service mechanics follow.

Currently there are 85 students in the CLAAS UK service and parts apprenticeship scheme. Once they have completed their formal training at either Reaseheath College or SRUC Barony in Scotland, they will then follow a training pathway of ongoing training, initially as young service mechanics with the opportunity for further train to the higher Master Mechanic or specialist Master Technician levels.

The new CLAAS Academy features extensive classrooms, break-out areas and five workshop areas capable of accommodating the largest CLAAS combines and forage harvesters, and the new facilities will enable trainers to fully demonstrate all the advanced features of the machines to customers and dealer staff.

In all, the new CLAAS Academy contains around £6 million worth of machinery. In addition to formal classroom training, the Academy is developing a new eLearning facility using videos and animations, with two staff dedicated to this new facility which is expected within three years will offer over 20 eLearning programmes. The Academy is also setting new standards in the use of bar and QR codes to support self-discovery training, in addition to the introduction of 3D printed training aids.

The number of training programmes has also been increased. A new sales training programme has been introduced, which mirrors the current Service and Parts training. Full in-house training to OEM level on the full range of third-party engines used within the CLAAS machinery range is to also be offered, using a dedicated workshop.

The new CLAAS Academy was officially opened by Lothar Kriszun, who has recently retired after 36 years with the CLAAS Group, most recently serving on the CLAAS Executive Board, where he was both the official Speaker for the Group and also responsible for the CLAAS Tractor division.



“Today, more than ever, training is crucial for the success of CLAAS as a company. Farmers are in an environment that requires a high level of professionalism, and our new Academy will help us achieve that. Trained people in sales and service are the backbone of our reputation.”

“The CLAAS Academy is never a static entity. By aiming to lead the field and striving to offer the most effective solutions, there is a constant need for ongoing development. Academy at CLAAS means the best in class education for equipment sales and service and this new Academy building will underline this role as market leader in operator training.”

“Only through the work of the CLAAS Academy can our dealers cope with the increasing complexity of machinery. Moreover, we are at the forefront of the fourth industrial revolution, leading by example and setting new standards in terms of online machinery training and the next generation of smart training.”

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## Notes to Editors - About CLAAS

CLAAS ([www.claas-group.com](http://www.claas-group.com)) is a family business founded in 1913 and is one of the world's leading manufacturers of agricultural engineering equipment. The company, with corporate headquarters in Harsewinkel, Westphalia, is the European market leader in combine harvesters and the world leader for self-propelled forage harvesters. CLAAS is also a top performer in world-wide agricultural engineering with tractors, agricultural balers and green harvesting machinery. The CLAAS product portfolio also includes state-of-the-art farming information technology. CLAAS employs 11,300 workers worldwide and reported a turnover of 3.6 billion Euros in the financial year of 2016.