

Constructionarium®

Turning the theory into practice

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Bircham Newton, Norfolk, England

Constructionarium occupies a 15 acre site which has been specifically designed and built to provide a range of challenging teaching and learning conditions in a dedicated learning facility within the grounds of the National Construction College, Bircham Newton, Norfolk, PE31 6RH. There are various work areas including a scaled down river, a lake, stabilized flatbeds, mountainous terrain and poor ground conditions with a high water table.

Residential accommodation is provided separately by CITB.

Blackridge, West Lothian, Scotland

Constructionarium is held at the site of Sibbald Ltd, Shona's Way Sibbald Park, Blackridge, West Lothian, EH48 3BN. The two acre site offers a bridge and two civil engineering projects.

Accommodation is available in nearby hotels.

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A not for profit organisation

“When Alice falls down the rabbit hole and arrives in Wonderland, she is confronted by chaos, stupidity, confusion, bureaucracy and the ridiculous. Not unlike some construction sites. She is also faced with wonder, beauty and achieving the seemingly impossible.

Not unlike some construction sites. Constructionarium isn't there to gloss over the wonderland that the industry is. It simply presents it as it is, to those who will be its future custodians.”

*Abigail Tomkins, Deputy Editor,
Chartered Institute of
Civil Engineering Surveyors (May 2015)*

Why Constructionarium

Constructionarium is a one week residential field trip suitable for students studying for a qualification in the built environment.

It provides the opportunity for groups of students to construct with their own hands, scaled down versions of iconic bridges, buildings, dams and civil engineering projects from around the world. The students work in controlled environment supported by both academic and industrial staff. It provides a unique link between the theory and practice giving the students the opportunity to experience just how things work in the real world.

At the end of the course the students will have gained a huge amount of knowledge as to what happens on a construction site and will have dealt with a number of challenges that they will face in the future.

“Constructionarium spurred my interest to pursue engineering as a career by demonstrating how dynamic each day at work can be.” Jenny Austin, former student at Imperial College.



Academic Involvement

At the present time approximately 1000 students are taking part each year.

Universities will usually bring a cohort of up to 100 students and they are supported by staff from a contractor and staff from a consulting engineer.

Students are assessed throughout the week in respect of health and safety issues, budgetary control and project management capability, developing together with teamwork, leadership and other interpersonal skills.

Many Universities offer Constructionarium either as an integrated module of the degree syllabus or as an optional field trip.

Constructionarium has also been attended by F.E. and University Technical Colleges.

The Joint Board of Moderators, Institute of Civil Engineers, Chartered Institute of Building and the Institutions of Structural Engineers fully support the programme.



Industry Involvement

Participating Companies get huge benefits from taking part. It gives them an opportunity to partner with academic institutions which will help them to recruit the right people from those institutions which will benefit their future growth.

They will also be helping to develop future talent for the industry as a whole, which is vital for the future prosperity of the industry.

The programme can also be incorporated into a company's CSR strategy.

Companies use Constructionarium to develop some of their emerging stars and as part of their summer school or graduate induction process.

