



# Interview with ARCA ILM Candidate

*In May I caught up with Chris Dobson as he started his penultimate unit towards gaining the ARCA ILM Leadership and Management qualification.*

## Q What is your background and current role?

I have a MSc in Environment and Health & Safety, and have been with Thompsons of Prudhoe for nearly 14 years as their Health, Safety and Quality Manager. I cover H&S management across the business which includes demolition, asbestos removal, earthworks and site clearance & reclamation, across a range of industries, such as nuclear, petrochemical and industrial.

## Q Why did you choose to undertake the ARCA ILM qualification?

I was looking for a further management qualification, as I have a level 4 certificate in asbestos removal for contract managers, and heard about the ILM qualification at an ARCA regional meeting. I thought this would be ideal as it is tailored to the specialist asbestos industry. Also it is a route to membership of ARMI (Asbestos Removal Management Institute) which I am keen to join. I'm already a chartered member of IOSH and a chartered member of the Institute of Demolition Engineers.

## Q What is the view of your employer?

The company is very supportive of staff development, in fact, they see my ILM studying as a 'pilot,' as there are other senior managers who could undertake this qualification with ARCA and become ARMI members too.

ARMI membership is very relevant to Thompson of Prudhoe, as the company is a member of both ARCA and NFDC (National Federation of Demolition Contractors) which are two of the three Associations which form ARMI.

## Q What are your thoughts on the ARCA ILM qualification content?

I think ARCA has put together four excellent unit topics. They complement each other and are well structured, with each unit's assignment relating to the industry. Everything learnt so far has been very relevant and on occasion I've found myself referring to my notes.

## Q Is there any advice you could give to those just starting the ILM qualification?

When I started the ILM qualification it took some time to get back into academic work!

For the two units I've already completed I undertook the assignment straight after the classroom sessions, as you do need to keep momentum. Initially I found one element of the assignments particularly tricky, that was, meeting the word count – I seemed to be able to write too much!

My aim is to complete this third unit, communications management, as soon as possible, as I then hope to be able to complete the final unit and gain the qualification before the end of the year.

## Q Would you recommend this qualification?

Yes, I would. As managers we need to continually develop our skills to be the most effective managers we can be. So for existing managers, and those new to the role and industry, I would recommend undertaking this qualification, as there is always something new to learn.

*Thank you for talking to me Chris. I hope you manage to complete the final unit this year, and I wish you every success in gaining your ARMI membership. Sarah Haslam, Editor.*