

Surgical Innovations (SI) is investing in 'research expertise' by sponsoring a Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) programme, which is being delivered by the Advanced Materials Engineering Centre in the University of Bradford's world class Polymer Interdisciplinary Research Centre.

SI specialises in the design and manufacture of innovative devices for use in minimally invasive surgery and industrial markets and to complement their strategy of in-house manufacture and increased demand for its products, the company has made significant investment in the latest high technology equipment.

Incorporated within this investment has been the implementation of injection moulding and over the next two years a Medical Engineering graduate Giles Meakin will carry out a research project – sponsored by SI – to support this move.

KTP's are a major knowledge transfer mechanisms and are designed to apply leading edge knowledge and expertise from universities into real life business settings.

They enable academics to participate in rewarding and ongoing collaborations with innovative businesses who require up-to-date research-based expertise.

For companies like SI, KTP's helps improve competitiveness, productivity and performance through the better use of knowledge, technology and skills.

This also means the company can access the University of Bradford's extensive research into polymer technology, materials knowledge, processing equipment and experts who can help take the business forward.

Speaking about the collaboration Graham Bowland, Chief Executive Officer at SI, said: "The partnership between the University of Bradford and Surgical Innovations will add essential new product development skills to our existing team, and also greatly improve the company's technical knowledge of materials science, manufacturing methods and assembly techniques."

"The collaboration will help with the introduction of improved technologies and give support to the in-house moulding processes, which is vital to existing and new products, to develop polymeric materials expertise and processing expertise both of which will enhance design opportunities for innovative products."

Dr Leigh Mulvaney-Johnson, from the University of Bradford, said: "Working closely with a rapidly expanding business in such a high technology area is very exciting and of great benefit to our research group. This collaboration allows us to deploy our skills and knowledge, which is very satisfying.

"We also learn a great deal about this business sector and the specific challenges faced by the design and manufacturing teams; this updates me and that feeds in to the teaching of both undergraduates and higher degree students. I have identified possibilities for final year and masters projects that relate to Surgical Innovations products, specifically in the area of design for manufacture."

SI's new Injection Moulding facility will be officially opened by Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal during her visit to the companies head office on 17th February 2010.