

Case Study

BAE Systems Surface Ship Support

semta

The Sector Skills Council
for Science, Engineering and
Manufacturing Technologies



“Semta's introduction of the Apprenticeship and Advanced Apprenticeship, specifically for marine engineering, has been of considerable benefit to BAE Systems, Portsmouth. The frameworks are also deployed across the company's other ship repair and ship construction facilities throughout the UK. For those who may be considering adopting the programmes, I can thoroughly recommend this range of Semta awards.”

Eddy Perry
Training Manager

Staying ahead with apprentice training

Following Semta's Advanced Apprenticeship framework has helped BAE Systems Surface Ship Support develop the skills it needs to take the business forward. High completion and retention rates have delivered a good return on investment, securing the craft skills base and developing management potential for the future.

The company (formerly Fleet Support Ltd) employs 7,000 people in the maintenance and repair of warships and commercial vessels at HM Naval Base, Portsmouth. The work demands craft skills in mechanical, electrical and electronic engineering, welding and fabrication, yacht and boat building and joinery, and pipework construction. BAE Systems has been able to satisfy the training and development needs of new entrants across this full range of skills through Semta's apprenticeships.

The company relies on apprentice training to replace workers who are due to retire and to bring new capabilities and technologies to the business such as ICT, CNC and CAD skills. An annual intake of upto 60 advanced apprentices on a mix of programmes has generated a strong and sustained skills pool which has

allowed Portsmouth Naval Base to stay ahead.

Apprenticeship outcomes are impressive. “Successful completions have exceeded 90 per cent since 2005, when the scheme became fully established. Post-apprenticeship retention has remained at about 75 per cent,” says Apprentice Training Manager, Eddy Perry. “Around 15 per cent of apprentices demonstrate the competence of a skilled craftsman after about 30 months on the programme and so deliver a real cost benefit to the company.” Apprentices have made a significant contribution to the business since Semta's frameworks were adopted in 1999. A number have progressed to managerial positions, strengthening the organisation's home-grown management capability.



“The generation of a significant number of apprentices over the last ten years has contributed to the ability of Portsmouth Naval Base to remain at the forefront of ship maintenance and repair. This has resulted in its selection as the base port for the Royal Navy’s six Type 45 destroyers and the two Queen Elizabeth Class aircraft carriers, as well as a number of other vessels,” Perry says.

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