

Naval Service Apprenticeships

Employer

Inspection dates

8–13 March 2018

Overall effectiveness		Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding	Apprenticeships Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding	
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding	
Outcomes for learners	Outstanding	
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection		Good

Summary of key findings

This is an outstanding provider

- Apprentices conduct themselves in an exemplary manner, in line with the Naval Service standards.
- Apprentices benefit from theory lessons that link well to working practice on ships and submarines. This prepares apprentices well to live and work on ships of all types, including the newest vessels such as HMS Queen Elizabeth.
- Apprentices make exceptional progress towards becoming experts in their job roles; they become excellent engineers, caterers, administrators and Royal Marines. They receive exemplary practical training that helps them to work in highly challenging situations to a precise standard.
- Trainers employ highly effective coaching and mentoring techniques that help apprentices to fulfil their potential. Apprentices work to extremely high standards; engineers expertly solve complex electrical problems and administrators use highly effective methods to communicate in demanding environments.
- Staff at all levels place a strong emphasis on apprentices' development of skills in English, mathematics, and information and communications technology (ICT) that prepare them well for their careers.
- Senior officers and leaders provide clear strategic direction. They provide a supportive and caring environment, which enables apprentices to thrive during their learning programmes and throughout their naval life.
- Staff expertly equip apprentices to become resilient and well-prepared service personnel who can work in very challenging environments.
- In a small number of theory lessons, trainers do not plan and make use of effective and motivating teaching methods that challenge and inspire apprentices. As a result, a few apprentices make slower progress.
- Subcontractor managers do not always provide senior leaders with sufficient information about the quality of all aspects of the apprenticeship scheme. Consequently, in a very small number of areas senior leaders and managers do not have a precise view of apprentices' performance.

Full report

Information about the provider

- Her Majesty's Naval Service consists of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary. The Naval Service has recruited around 50,000 apprentices since 2002 and around 10% of the workforce is currently enrolled on an apprenticeship programme. The four main branches of employment are in engineering, warfare, logistics and the Royal Marines. Currently, there are around 950 apprentices aged 16 to 18 and 2,800 apprentices aged 19+ enrolled on intermediate apprenticeship programmes. Around 1,200 apprentices aged 19+ are enrolled on advanced apprenticeships.
- Recruits are enrolled onto intermediate apprenticeship programmes in subjects such as manufacturing technologies, ICT, hospitality and catering, public services, transportations and operations and sport and fitness. The vast majority of apprentices follow framework qualifications with a small number following public services standards apprenticeship programmes. The subcontractor, Babcock Flagship Ltd (Babcock) is responsible for all training for theory-based vocational subjects and English, mathematics and ICT functional skills qualifications.

What does the provider need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in theory lessons by putting in place actions to ensure that:
 - trainers plan and teach lessons that are challenging, motivating and inspire apprentices
 - trainers make use of information about apprentices' starting points to plan teaching and learning that ensures all apprentices make the progress of which they are capable.
- Ensure that subcontractor managers provide the senior leaders with timely and accurate reports about apprentices' progress at all the centres to enable greater challenge and scrutiny.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- Senior leaders provide very clear strategic direction for development of career-long learning across the Naval Service. They ensure that staff provide stimulating and excellent quality training which helps apprentices to develop the very strong personal, social and work-related skills that underpin successful naval careers.
- Senior leaders, together with the recently appointed head of Naval Service apprenticeships, have brought about significant improvement to the areas of weakness identified at the previous inspection. For example, leaders have ensured that all trainers, who are highly experienced in their trades within the Naval Service, are now also well qualified to teach before being appointed.
- Leaders and managers at each establishment and subcontractor managers closely monitor the progress, achievement and welfare of apprentices. They ensure that the training closely meets the needs of apprentices and the Naval Service. Leaders and staff quickly identify apprentices who make excellent progress and enrol them on a 'fast track' programme. These apprentices are deployed quickly to their professional positions, gain promotions in their roles and complete well before the time allocated to them.
- Leaders and managers expertly plan apprenticeship programmes, and they ensure that high-quality learning and assessment continues when apprentices are at sea. Babcock managers use detailed and effective planning to ensure a seamless integration of skills, knowledge and understanding developed both in training and at sea. For example, managers use a very successful buddy system to collate evidence from apprentices' work and provide apprentices with useful feedback that helps them develop new skills when they are deployed on naval ships.
- Leaders and managers provide highly effective support and mentoring for new trainers to help them develop their skill in the craft of teaching. This initiative has helped trainers to gain improved peer support and to identify teaching skills that are broader than the subject or qualification requirements. However, managers at Babcock do not use the information they gain from observations of training sessions sufficiently quickly to identify actions for improvement in the quality of training across all courses and establishments. For example, managers are aware of the lack of pace and challenge in a few theory lessons, but they have not yet taken action to resolve this.
- The head of Naval Service apprenticeships holds managers at Babcock to account fully to ensure that apprentices who make slow progress, or who are at risk of not achieving, receive excellent support to succeed. As a result, overall and timely achievement rates of apprentices are high in all subjects and at all levels.
- Senior leaders and managers within Babcock have prioritised their efforts to ensure that all apprentices develop very high standards of skills in their English, mathematics and ICT. Staff ensure that apprentices develop their English, mathematics and ICT skills beyond the requirements of the apprenticeship to further enhance their capacity to progress to higher-level qualifications or enhanced roles. Most apprentices understand how attainment of these skills will support their aspirations. As a result, almost all gain qualifications up to level 2 in each subject and many progress to higher level

qualifications.

- Leaders and managers are fully involved with the trailblazer schemes for the new apprenticeships standards and the introduction of levy-funded training. The head of Naval Service apprenticeships has put secure strategic plans in place to introduce end-point assessment for apprentices, including while on board naval ships.
- Senior leaders and managers within Babcock demonstrate an accurate view of the quality and impact of the apprenticeship programmes within their self-assessment report. However, a few of the strengths cited do not take into account information across all establishments and courses; for example, the comparatively lower achievement data on groups of learners from some minority ethnic groups.
- Senior officers and managers make sure that apprentices gain a secure understanding of the options available to them both within the Naval Service and externally. Managers provide very good advice and guidance, and clearly identify the possible career pathways available to apprentices through their branch and trade pipelines. Those apprentices who leave the Navy during their course receive helpful advice and impartial guidance on employment opportunities and/or further education.
- Staff do not tolerate poor behaviour and where incidents occur action is swiftly taken to ensure that apprentices follow the code of conduct in the Naval Service.

The governance of the provider

- The current head of Naval Service apprenticeships has put in place new and effective governance arrangements. There is now a revised management structure to ensure effective oversight of the provision and the management of subcontracted training.
- The base commanders at each training establishment, and Babcock managers, provide the head of Naval Service apprenticeships with accurate and timely self-assessment reports on the progress of apprentices within each centre. However, Babcock managers and leaders do not analyse in sufficient detail all the information they receive. For example, they do not evaluate reasons for the variations in the achievement of learners with a declared learning disability. As a result, the governing body is unable to provide challenge on these matters.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The head of Naval Service apprenticeships ensures that any reports or concerns are followed up and resolved. Managers at Babcock make the necessary checks to ensure staff suitability prior to working with apprentices. All trainers receive comprehensive training to ensure they are able to identify safeguarding concerns such as those related to bullying and harassment, self-harm, mental health and well-being. Trainers and apprentices know who to report any concerns to should they arise. Most apprentices report that staff swiftly resolve incidents of bullying and tackle inappropriate comments as part of a zero-tolerance culture within the organisation.
- Staff carry out risk assessments at each establishment to protect apprentices from harm. These are effective, and staff and apprentices understand their roles and responsibilities well. Apprentices and staff follow health and safety practices precisely while working in

workshops or at sea. For example, when apprentices are on board naval ships they must work with a 'safety buddy' to ensure they adhere to health and safety regulations and protect each other from harm.

- The welfare and duty of care steering group works in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence to ensure that staff and apprentices understand 'Prevent' duty policy and guidance. Most apprentices have a firm grasp of the risks of radicalisation and extremism and know what steps to take should they require further guidance or to report a concern.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Trainers set exacting standards and have very high expectations for their apprentices. Trainers have extensive technical skills and experience, which they use very effectively to motivate and inspire apprentices to achieve at a high level. Apprentices value their trainers highly. Apprentices benefit from highly effective training, demonstration and questioning which enable them to grasp complex skills and knowledge at a rapid pace.
- Apprentices learn in high-quality training rooms; they use industry- and Service-standard equipment to develop their practical skills effectively. For example, apprentices following maritime warfare programmes use state-of-the-art simulation rooms, which replicate operations rooms on naval vessels to develop high-level skills in a realistic setting. Trainers provide apprentices with challenging scenarios set in a range of worldwide locations with different levels of threat. These challenge apprentices to complete precise and high-quality tasks successfully within tight timescales under realistic operational pressures.
- Apprentices benefit from a range of useful and well-designed online resources that help them to make frequent and meaningful links between theoretical and practical tasks. For example, in a theory lesson, engineering apprentices gained confidence in using and understanding how hydraulic circuit processes function, using an online resource. Apprentices in engineering quickly and adeptly diagnose weapons faults by operating the online system available to them. They articulate clearly what the problems are and record them to the exact standards expected if working on a naval vessel, where speed and clarity are vital.
- Most apprentices gain excellent knowledge and skills during their practical lessons and make rapid progress. Trainers relate the topics they teach effectively to naval vessels such as HMS Queen Elizabeth, and to submarines, through well-planned activities. Apprentices become experts in their roles. For example, engineering apprentices learn about viscosity and additives and become very knowledgeable about carcinogenic properties, emulsification and, in particular, contamination. Public services apprentices carry out commando training where they strip rifles proficiently, check their functioning, and correctly use these in drills.
- Apprentices benefit from highly effective English, mathematics and ICT teaching and learning during their functional skills lessons. For example, apprentices develop their skills using emotive language, adverbs and grammar by writing text after watching a video clip of the D-Day Omaha Beach landings. Apprentices successfully apply their mathematical skills to situations such as planning heat insulation; engineering apprentices attend very effective technical mathematics lessons where they make accurate calculations.

- Staff review apprentices' progress frequently. During progress reviews, they check carefully what apprentices have learned and ensure that apprentices know what to do if they have any questions or concerns. When apprentices fall behind because of health problems or injuries, they benefit from timely and good-quality extra support. Staff ensure that apprentices understand fully how the theory they have learned applies to the practical work, and its application in their future job roles.
- Apprentices receive frequent assessments of their theory and practical skills development, including when they are at sea. Most apprentices receive valuable developmental feedback from their trainers. For example, trainers identify quickly where apprentices need to improve their work. They identify spelling errors, poor sentence structures and grammatical errors in written work. Apprentices receive very helpful feedback and they know how to improve the standard of their work. They benefit from effective individual coaching, evening lessons and peer assessments while at sea.
- In a small number of cases, trainers do not set sufficiently interesting learning activities in theory lessons. As a result, not all apprentices participate fully in their lessons and at times they become distracted. A few trainers do not make effective use of their assessments of apprentices' existing knowledge, experience and skills to plan individualised learning that will help apprentices to excel.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

- Apprentices make exceptional progress in their vocational subjects and in their English, mathematics and ICT courses. Apprentices are confident and self-assured. They become highly proficient in preparation for their deployment, training and their future careers. Apprentices develop an extensive range of skills and knowledge. They frequently extend and deepen their skills beyond the requirements of the qualifications they follow.
- Apprentices produce practical work to expert standards. Engineering apprentices demonstrate expert skills in their metalwork and produce tools of industry quality; electrical engineers produce high quality schematic diagrams to monitor and carry out effectively fault diagnosis to ensure power is correctly distributed to all components of a system, and hospitality apprentices temper chocolate proficiently when making artisan-styled chocolates.
- Apprentices exhibit excellent levels of behaviour and exemplary conduct in all settings. They demonstrate high levels of professionalism have a secure understanding of the behaviours expected within their Service.
- Apprentices are highly motivated by their job roles and career prospects. They and their trainers make efficient and effective use of the real-work environments, which include simulations and well-crafted industrial kitchen and dining areas that closely match on-ship environments. For example, in catering and business administration, trainers have very high expectations and they ensure that apprentices work in fast-paced and intense environments to challenging deadlines. Apprentices respond well to feedback and individual coaching they receive from their trainers to produce excellent standards of written and practical work.
- Staff are very skilled at identifying needs and putting in place good support for those apprentices who require it. Apprentices benefit greatly from the range of support they

receive. For example, apprentices who are at risk of falling behind in their studies attend evening classes and intensive training opportunities that help them to enhance their skills. Apprentices who require additional specialist support receive this to a high standard to enable them to work effectively and independently. For example, specialist staff conduct assessments to diagnose apprentices' specific learning needs and communicate these precisely to teaching staff.

- Staff make sure that apprentices receive timely and independent careers advice and guidance. These are particularly beneficial for early Service leavers, where guidance to provide them with options for their next steps is sourced externally by the Ministry of Defence. This support is available for up to two years after leaving. Apprentices are clear about the routes they can take to gain promotions or enhanced roles. Many apprentices take on the role of leading hand to support and mentor fellow apprentices.
- Staff make sure that apprentices follow closely the health and safety working procedures in workshops and kitchens. Apprentices are very knowledgeable about ways to keep themselves and others safe; they are well aware of the consequences of poor practice, and dangers that they may face at sea. Apprentices use a range of tools safely, for example, vices, clamps and files, and in one lesson apprentices made excellent-quality clamps. Electrical engineering apprentices are very knowledgeable about the procedures they must use to isolate and 'tag out' systems when working on electrical equipment.
- Apprentices make valuable contributions to the communities they serve through charity work. For example, apprentices supported 'operation pitchfork' to support the local community with placing of sandbags during a period of flooding; catering apprentices sell the food they produce to raise money for charities, and other apprentices painted local schools and care homes. As a result, apprentices develop a good understanding of living and working in their local community and liaising professionally with external clients.
- Apprentices take part in a range of extra-curricular activities to develop their personal, social skills and team working skills. For example, they take part in the 'battle of the bases' skills competitions and sporting events across the Naval Service.
- Senior officers make sure that apprentices have a good understanding of British values. Apprentices also understand how British values and Royal Navy core values align to each other. All apprentices understand the consequence of stepping outside the law, or of not following the code of conduct within the Naval Service.
- Apprentices benefit from a wide range of support should they have any concerns. These include a chaplaincy service for a variety of faith groups and civilian support services for advice and guidance. Apprentices demonstrate a good understanding of the 'Prevent' duty through discussions during their English functional skills lessons and they are acutely aware of recent terror events. They know who to report any concerns to and can identify behaviours that may cause concern.

Outcomes for learners

Outstanding

- Almost all apprentices achieve their programmes, and a very high proportion achieve within expected timescales. Most apprentices following intermediate level apprenticeship programmes in manufacturing technologies, ICT practitioners and business administration achieve their qualification at a high rate and in the time allocated. Advanced level

apprentices, who follow predominantly engineering, transportation and operations, and sport and fitness courses, also achieve their qualifications at a high rate. The vast majority of current apprentices make rapid progress towards achieving their qualifications.

- Current apprentices make excellent progress in their vocational subjects. The significant minority of apprentices who demonstrate higher-level abilities and skills follow a 'fast track' programme in engineering. These apprentices make very rapid progress in their subjects and receive enhanced roles and promotions.
- Apprentices' work-related skills are of the high professional standard that is vital for working on board naval ships and submarines, mostly in very challenging environments. Almost all apprentices gain exceptional skills by using very high quality resources that enable them to demonstrate their professional competency at sea.
- The standard of apprentices' work is excellent. Apprentices develop skills in their vocational subjects that are above the requirements of their qualifications. As a result, many enhance their prospects for further education and/or enhanced roles and promotions.
- A high proportion of apprentices gain additional qualifications and most gain them at a level above their current vocational level. For example, apprentices seeking promotion to leading hand successfully gain level 3 leadership qualifications and apprentices in engineering complete higher level mathematics qualifications successfully to levels 4 and 5. In a minority of cases, apprentices take higher education courses and gain degrees. However, the proportion of apprentices progressing from intermediate level to advanced level apprenticeships programmes is relatively below that normally seen. This is because in some cases naval training structures prevent easy movement from intermediate to advanced level.
- Apprentices benefit from a well-organised and comprehensive induction programme. Staff conduct thorough assessments of apprentices' skills, abilities and personal resilience. As a result, the vast majority of apprentices enrol onto the right course and level. Most apprentices stay with the Naval Service and the majority gain enhanced roles and promotions. However, senior officers and managers do not routinely gain information on apprentices' next steps beyond their initial apprenticeship programme to enable them to evaluate fully the impact of their programmes.
- Although senior officers and managers monitor individual apprentices' progress very carefully, they do not place sufficient emphasis on the progress of different groups of apprentices. As a result, they do not ensure that all groups of apprentices perform equally well. For example, the very small numbers of apprentices who are from Asian ethnic groups and some apprentices who have a learning difficulty and/or disability do not achieve as well as their peers.

Provider details

Unique reference number	58403
Type of provider	Employer
Age range of learners	16–18/19+
Approximate number of all learners over the previous full contract year	4,995
Principal/CEO	Commander Allan Youp (Head of Naval Service Apprenticeships)
Telephone number	01329 332177/333533
Website	www.royalnavy.mod.uk

Provider information at the time of the inspection

Main course or learning programme level	Level 1 or below		Level 2		Level 3		Level 4 or above	
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of learners (excluding apprenticeships)	Intermediate		Advanced		Higher			
	16–18	19+	16–18	19+	16–18	19+		
	959	2,873	-	1,163	-	-		
Number of apprentices by apprenticeship level and age	16–19		19+		Total			
	-		-		-			
Number of traineeships	-							
Number of learners aged 14 to 16	-							
Number of learners for which the provider receives high-needs funding	-							
At the time of inspection, the provider contracts with the following main subcontractors:	Babcock Flagship Ltd							

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the head of Naval Service apprenticeships, as nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. Inspectors used group and individual interviews, telephone calls and online questionnaires to gather the views of learners and employers; these views are reflected within the report. They observed learning sessions, assessments and progress reviews. The inspection took into account all relevant provision at the provider.

Inspection team

Harpreet Nagra, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Rodgers	Her Majesty's Inspector
Gerard McGrath	Her Majesty's Inspector
Judy Lye-Forster	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Bennett	Ofsted Inspector
Fadia Clarke	Ofsted Inspector
Chris Dearnley	Ofsted Inspector
Joy Montgomery	Ofsted Inspector
Alun Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Mathers	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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