

## Semta now a QCF submitting body

Semta has achieved submitting body status for the new Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF).

This will enable Semta to continue to develop employer-led competency-based NVQs in science and engineering, knowing they will be supported to train in bite-sized units that can be accumulated into these recognised qualifications.

The QCF is a new way of recognising achievement through the award of credit for units and qualifications. This will allow different types of qualifications to be mixed and matched to learners' needs. To ensure we continue to meet employer and employee requirements, Semta has to move all the qualifications it has developed over to the QCF while maintaining the quality and integrity valued by employers.

After successful negotiations with key parties, employers will have access to work-based qualifications that retain the detail and rigour they want and also comply with QCF requirements. The first such qualification to be accredited in the Semta footprint is the Business-Improvement Techniques Level 2 NVQ Diploma (QCF). This positive outcome is the result of top-level co-operation and partnership working over a period of two years with the (then) Department for Innovation Universities and Skills, QCA, and latterly the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency and new regulator, Ofqual.

QCF-compliant qualifications put forward by Semta will have 'NVQ Diploma' in the title so employers can identify them as competency-based. They will also contain the technical detail based on robust National Occupational Standards developed in partnership with employers. Each unit will include web links to the unit assessment strategy and revised NVQ code of practice to ensure the rigour of quality assurance is maintained.

Work is underway to complete the challenging task of putting hundreds of NVQ units and associated qualifications into the format agreed with Ofqual by December 2010. They will be submitted to the QCF unit data bank so that awarding bodies can be accredited to offer them to employers via approved centres.

For more information on the QCF please see the enclosed flyer.



Positive outcome: NVQs keep their place in the new qualifications framework

## Baroness visits Kembrey to see training success

Skills campaigner, Baroness Wall, has visited Kembrey Wiring Systems Ltd to discover the benefits of Semta's funding compact and the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing workplace training programme.

Training in Business-Improvement Techniques (B-IT) helped the Swindon-based aerospace supplier double its customer base. It is now leaner, fitter and able to take on more orders.

Kembrey worked with Semta and the Skills Academy not only to identify how it could

improve its productivity and competitiveness by upskilling the workforce but also to align the training to the SBAC SC21 standard. As a result the company expects to gain SC21 bronze status early this year – evidence that it has achieved tangible, sustainable, improvements. Business First, the Skills Academy-accredited professional training provider at Swindon College, delivered the programme at Kembrey.

During her visit, Baroness Wall heard how 20 projects that employees tackled on the nine-

month programme had improved the quality of delivery to customers, cut waste and saved space on the shopfloor.



Baroness Wall (centre left) visits Kembrey Wiring Systems

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# Welcome to Issue 9 of Semta Matters from the Chief Executive

In 2009, our focus was helping employers survive the recession. Persuading companies to continue training, we supported them to invest in their workforce and improve their business.

We helped almost 1,000 companies to develop training plans designed to meet their business objectives and allocated £60million from our sector compact and other four nations funding.

No doubt, economic recovery will take time and increasing productivity and exports will be key. By ensuring the UK has an adaptable workforce with strong technical skills, our traditional strengths in research, development, and innovation will mean we are well placed to support advanced manufacturing, life sciences, green and emerging technologies.

Armed with our latest research into advanced manufacturing and bioscience, Semta's 2010 strategy is to focus not only on recovery but also future skills needs. Through our efficient Semta/NSAM Learning Engine based service which supports companies from identifying their business needs through to implementing an effective skills solution, we will need to work more closely with regional development agencies and other key partners to meet our aims when public funding is certain to reduce substantially.

We will also help build a talent pipeline for the sector. With 30% of bioscience employees and more than 40% of the engineering workforce aged 45-64 years old we need to encourage young people into our industries. So the improvements in attitudes to engineering revealed by the latest Engineering UK survey is welcome news and Semta will continue

supporting them along with our other key partner STEMNET.



Philip Whiteman, Semta Chief Executive

## Public opinion of engineering lifts

Latest research from Engineering UK (formerly the Engineering and Technology Board) shows a 19% increase between 2008 and 2009 in members of the general public who would recommend a career in engineering to their children, family and friends.

Key findings include:

- 85% of the general public would recommend a career in engineering to their family, friends or children compared to 66% in 2008
- 62% of parents and guardians view engineering as a desirable or very desirable career compared to 56% in 2008
- 57% of the general public view engineering as a desirable or very desirable career, compared to 49% in 2008
- 45% of 16-24 year olds view engineering as a desirable or very desirable career, compared to 40% in 2008

Turquoise Thinking undertook the research as part of Engineering UK's annual Engineers and Engineering Brand Monitor. It was produced for Engineering UK with support from Semta.

To download the ETB report visit:

[www.etechnology.co.uk/\\_db/\\_downloads/EEBM\\_Report\\_September\\_2009.ppt](http://www.etechnology.co.uk/_db/_downloads/EEBM_Report_September_2009.ppt)

## Marine agreement

The Shipbuilders & Shiprepairers Association (SSA) and Semta have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to further strengthen and promote the activities of both organisations for the benefit of the marine sector. SSA President, Alan Dickinson, and Semta's Employer Engagement Director, Lynn Tomkins, signed the agreement at the House of Commons in October.

The MoU formed part of a networking event hosted by Chris Mullin, MP for Sunderland South, and attended by nearly 60 representatives from marine companies, employer organisations, government and education. Delegates were addressed by Ian Lucas, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Co-chair of the government's Marine Industry Leadership Council. Newcastle East and Wallsend MP, Nick Brown, also gave a speech.



Alan Dickinson and Lynn Tomkins sign the memorandum

# Aircraft apprentice achievements

Ryanair has celebrated the success of its first seven apprentices to complete the Engineering Modern Apprenticeship with Prestwick Aircraft Maintenance Ltd (PAML). Their training programme was delivered by Ayr College.

Ryanair-PAML Technical Training Manager, Robert Park, sought advice and guidance from Semta in meeting the organisation's skills needs. The first trainees began their apprenticeships following meetings between the company, Semta and Ayr College – a provider experienced in delivering Semta's framework. Further Ryanair apprentices are undertaking training over the next three years, demonstrating the company's commitment to investing in apprentice training.

Ayr College Engineering Curriculum Manager, Alastair Heron, said: "Ayr College is committed to supporting local industries. We have been successful in building partnerships with aerospace companies and servicing their apprenticeships and we're delighted to recognise the success of the first class of Ryanair apprentices at their award ceremony."



Magnificent seven: Ryanair-PAML's first apprentices celebrate success with their managers

# Award for SSG chair



Indro Mukerjee (centre): recognised for his contribution to skills

Indro Mukerjee, CEO of C-MAC MicroTechnology, has been honoured for his work as Chair of Semta's Electronics Sector Strategy Group. He was presented with the National Microelectronics Institute (NMI) 2009 Contribution to Industry Award at its awards dinner in November.

Derek Boyd, CEO of the NMI, said: "Continuous investment in skills is crucial to the long-term productivity and global competitiveness of the UK's microelectronics industry. Indro has made a tremendous personal contribution in this vital area of activity and the award reflects this. He has played a leading role in re-vitalising Semta's Electronics Sector Strategy Group and providing it with new impetus."

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) sponsored the award which was presented by Keith Hodgkinson, Head of its Electronics and IT Services Unit.

# 14-19 Diplomas

## Diploma in Science

Consultations on the Diploma in Science at the foundation and higher levels are now complete and consultations on the advanced-level are to begin in February.

Three new science employer champions have given their backing to the Diploma. They are David Crellin, founder of Abington ScienceScope, Steve Emery, owner of Instruments Direct (Services) Ltd, and Dr John Wheeler, Associate Dean in the Faculty of Sciences at Staffordshire University.

Abington ScienceScope is a research-driven company that focuses on high-technology sensing systems. David Crellin said: "The Diploma in Science is a once in a generation opportunity to transform science teaching and learning in schools so that it delivers exciting activities for

students and offers employers the chance to shape the skills that students acquire to meet the needs of 21st century employment."

Dr Wheeler said: "The Diploma in Science will provide a unique opportunity for our young people to really engage with what science is all about in today's society. It will open up the eyes and minds of young people to the fascination, excitement and challenge that is at the heart of science, and provide opportunities for progression to further study and employment in countless directions."

"The new Diploma in Science will give students the insight and encouragement needed to progress into the science-based industries," said Steve Emery, whose company supplies high-quality measurement solutions to industry and education. "And it will give employers the confidence to employ young people who have obtained the necessary skills."

For more information on the Diploma in Science, and details on the consultations please visit [www.sciencediploma.co.uk](http://www.sciencediploma.co.uk)

# Semta supports 'Bigger' Bang

Big Bang 2010 promises to be even bigger and more spectacular than last year's hugely successful initial event which reached its target of 6,000 visitors. This year over 10,000 young people aged 7 to 19, along with teachers and parents are set to attend the UK Young Scientists and Engineers Fair at Manchester Central from 11 to 13 March.

Big Bang aims to bring STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) to life in a fun, exciting way: there will be theatre shows, hands-on workshops, competitions and a massive array of exhibits. Semta will again join big-name companies to unravel the wonders of science and engineering and enthuse school and college students to take up careers in these fields. As a major sponsor, Semta is teaming up with lead sponsor Siemens in the 'Go Global' zone. Along with corporate sponsors Airbus, Lockheed Martin UK, Selex Galileo and United Utilities, we will demonstrate the global opportunities science and engineering have to offer and show how UK scientists and engineers compete with the best in the world.



Big Bang engages young people in science and engineering

## Top level regional engagement

Leading employers and stakeholders from across the regions have been giving their direct feedback on Semta's three-year plan.

Throughout 2009 Semta organised events in the nine English regions, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to confirm that the skills priorities and solutions our research has identified are correct. Input from these events is then used to shape annual plans for Semta and the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing.

The outline priorities were agreed as providing an easy-to-access system for employers that will:

- Ensure the match between skills supply and demand
  - Apprenticeships, higher level skills and qualifications (HE/business links), strategic skills
- Re-skill those with no qualifications
  - Business-Improvement Techniques, pre-employment skills, quality programmes
- Improve management and leadership
  - Leadership Development Programme, Managing for Success Programme
- Tackle issues relating to an ageing workforce
  - STEM careers/networks, Diplomas, lifelong learning, mentoring, strategic workforce planning

## Semta and NSAM give Stannah a lift

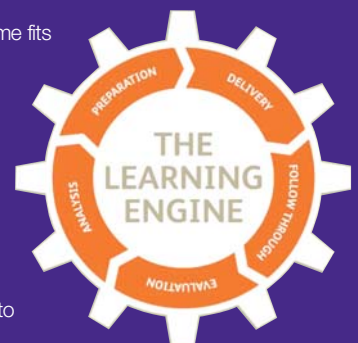
Despite difficult trading conditions this year, Andover-based Stannah Lifts Ltd has been investing in staff development and reaping the benefits.

The company has piloted an NVQ Level 2 in Business-Improvement Techniques developed by the Skills Academy. This was developed in line with the Learning Engine approach which links training to business objectives and ensures that skills learned are put into practice in the workplace.

The shop floor improvements have developed a total preventative maintenance system, led to reductions in working hours per unit and increased the sales of spares by 16%.

The pilot has proved so successful that a new cohort of learners has started on the Level 2 while the original learners are embarking on a Level 3 qualification.

According to Stannah Lifts Operations Director, Kim Saville, the B-IT programme fits well with the company's approach to continuous improvement. "Continuous improvement runs in the veins of the company and at any one time 40% of our staff are engaged with some form of training activity. However, we felt we had reached something of a ceiling with continuous improvement and we needed new tools to take this to a new level."



## Welsh project success

A project to develop business skills within the Welsh manufacturing and engineering community has reached successful completion, with 55 companies and 900 employees benefiting. Steered by Semta and funded by the Welsh Assembly Government, the initiative set out to improve leadership and management skills. It was extended to include training in lean techniques when Semta identified the need to develop leaders to bring about productivity and competitiveness gains.

Semta joined forces with providers and other support agencies to help companies identify and meet their skills and training needs, using its Business to Skills model in the process. In addition to improving business performance, the project has strengthened Semta-provider links and increased referrals to Semta for training advice and support.



Semta's project developed managers' lean leadership skills

## Strategic employer guidance

Semta has kicked off its three-year planning cycle with input from its Advisory Council.

The top-level employer group consists of Ian King, BAE Systems, Sir Kevin Smith, GKN, Dr David Pulman, GSK, Graham Love, Qinetiq, Mike Terrett, Rolls Royce, and James Smith, Shell UK.

Their input included the need for Semta to give easier access for employers to the right training programmes; to ensure that training programmes were of national standard quality; to focus on technical skills; to replace the ageing workforce and to encourage more STEM students through the education system.

Semta has a three-year plan which is reviewed annually, adding the third year to ensure

continuity while also taking account of environmental changes such as new government policy, employer needs, research and the economy.



Semta plans to address aging workforce issue

## NVQs continue upward trend

NVQ registration and certification figures for the third quarter of 2009 show a marked improvement over the same period in 2008. There were 19,755 registrations, representing an overall increase of 23% and a 29% increase at Level 2. A total of 30,361 certificates were awarded: up by 44%, the biggest increase being a 57% rise at Level 2. Business-Improvement Techniques appears to be the best performer once again. There was a 72% rise in B-IT registrations and a 194% rise in certificates awarded.

## Opening minds to lean

The National Skills Academy for Manufacturing and the British Quality Foundation (BQF) co-hosted a 'lean' seminar for employers at Honda's Swindon car plant in November. Fifty delegates from manufacturing companies attended the fully-subscribed event to discover how to improve their business performance. A tour of the plant, which showed lean manufacturing techniques in practice, was followed by presentations from the Skills Academy and Semta to explain the business-improvement training programmes, support and funding available to companies.

Jonathan Wilkinson, Chief Operating Officer at BQF award-winning company AESSEAL plc, also gave an inspiring talk from a practitioner's perspective.

Semta has a working partnership with the British Quality Foundation which promotes the EFQM Excellence Model used by thousands of organisations across Europe to self-assess business improvements and monitor progress.

There was very positive feedback from delegates at the joint event. Comments included: "The event was direct and specific with a simple, clear format;" "...a great opportunity to see lean excellence in operation;" "It opened my mind to lean and training."



Lean manufacturing at Honda

# Advanced Manufacturing Report

Semta will issue the summary findings of its 'Skills and the Future of Advanced Manufacturing' report in January.

A collaboration between five Sector Skills Councils, the report seeks to improve understanding of:

- the strategic context and drivers behind the development of Advanced Manufacturing technologies
- the range and scope of Advanced Manufacturing technologies and how they affect many areas of economic life
- the current skills issues facing the development of Advanced Manufacturing technologies
- anticipated future skills demand and supply issues, including the identification of skills mismatches
- cross-cutting issues affecting a number of individual Advanced Manufacturing technologies and industries

- key messages for government and priorities for action to support the development of Advanced Manufacturing.

The report will make vital reading not only for the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) which commissioned it, but also for Regional Development Agencies which, supported by sector skills councils, will lead the development of regional skills strategies, and education and training providers who need to gear up to meet demands of this crucial industrial sector.

The report covers the six sectors identified by BIS where Britain is already a leading player or has the greatest potential. These are aerospace, plastic/printed electronics, silicon electronics, industrial biotechnology, composites and nanotechnology.



Industrial biotechnology: one of the advanced manufacturing technologies covered in Semta's report

## WorldSkills competitors call

Entries are now being accepted for the following WorldSkills UK competitions, supported by Semta:

Aeronautical Engineering – Avionic  
Aeronautical Engineering – Mechanical  
CNC Milling  
CNC Turning  
Industrial Electronics  
Mechanical Engineering CAD  
Mobile Robotics

The competitions are live events at which contestants compete against each other in public and are marked by judges against criteria set out in the competition brief. The highest-scoring competitors across all heats are invited to compete in the UK final. UK Skills will consider outstanding performers from the 2009/2010 cycle of competitions to join the short list for the team that goes on to represent the UK at WorldSkills London 2011.

To enter visit [www.worldskillsuk.org/competitions](http://www.worldskillsuk.org/competitions)  
Closing date for entries is 19 March 2010.

## Maintenance Matters

This year's Northern Ireland Maintenance Matters conference attracted 120 maintenance professionals and 18 exhibitors. Organised by Semta's partner, ETC NI, the Belfast event featured a keynote address by Semta's David Kilpatrick. David Peart, former head of maintenance at Nissan UK, ran a workshop on 'Reliability Needs Analysis' – a fourth generation maintenance management system. A second workshop dealt with health and safety aspects of maintenance management and was delivered by EEF NI's resident expert, Graham Clarke.

The event also celebrated the achievements of young maintenance engineers. Clare Jamison, an apprentice with rail and bus network operator, Translink, was announced as Northern Ireland Maintenance Apprentice of the Year. Nearing completion of her apprenticeship, Clare is responsible for train carriage systems maintenance and is studying for an engineering degree at the University of Ulster. Presentations were also made to Northern Ireland's maintenance apprentices who won bronze and gold medals in the UK Skills mechatronics competition.



Northern Ireland Maintenance Apprentice of the Year, Clare Jamison, receives her trophy from ETC NI Chief Executive, Bill Brown



Semta Employer Engagement Director, Lynn Tomkins, has been declared Boss of the Year in the national Executive PA Awards. Part of her nomination was for actively developing others to their maximum potential.

### Contact details

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