

Written evidence submitted by BAE Systems

Education Committee inquiry into careers education

BAE Systems education programme and provision of work experience

At BAE Systems, we help our customers to stay a step ahead when protecting people and national security, critical infrastructure and vital information. We provide some of the world's most advanced, technology-led defence, aerospace and security solutions and employ a skilled workforce of 90,500 people in more than 40 countries.

From state of the art cyber threat detection to flight control systems that enable pilots to make better decisions, we never stop innovating to ensure that our customers maintain their advantage. This is a long-term commitment involving significant investments in skills. We also work closely with local partners to support economic development through the transfer of knowledge, skills and technology.

BAE Systems is committed to supporting young people in education and in our local communities; we depend on a strong pipeline of STEM talent to meet our current and future skills needs, and we are also committed to supporting the local communities in which we are based, in order to enable young people to have the best start in life. As a major employer, we recognise our responsibility to help provide careers advice in our local schools and colleges.

In 2022, BAE Systems recruited a record 1067 apprentices and 765 graduates and. This year, in 2023 we plan to recruit an even greater number, with c.1400 apprentices and c.1100 graduates and undergraduates.

We offer over 50 different apprenticeship programmes, ranging from electrical fitting and welding, to nuclear engineering and data analysis. Two thirds of our apprenticeship opportunities are at Levels 2 and 3, whilst the remaining third is aimed at higher and degree apprenticeships at Levels 4-6. More than 2/3 of our apprenticeship opportunities are in STEM occupations, many of which are difficult to recruit in the open market.

We are proud that BAE Systems is an Ofsted Grade 1 "Outstanding" apprentice employer and was ranked 9th in the Department for Education's Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in 2022.

To promote this range of opportunities, and enable greater diversity of talent in our company, BAE Systems has an active education programme that engages young people across both primary and secondary education:

- **Schools Roadshow.** Aimed at years 4-6 (9 to 12 year olds) and uses theatre in education to inspire young people in schools about STEM subjects and careers. It is delivered in partnership with the RAF and Royal Navy. In 2022, celebrated reaching its one millionth school pupil. It engages over 400 schools and 100k young people each year. The theme of the 2023 roadshow looks at technology from the depths of the ocean, all the way up to outer space.
- **Coding Success.** Developed as an online and virtual alternative to the roadshow, during the pandemic. Working again with the RAF and Royal Navy, BAE Systems has provided Lego robots to over 300 schools and in total c40k pupils in years 4-6 have taken part in the programme, which was designed to engage young people in STEM subjects by giving them coding skills. Its success means we will continue to help deliver the programme to more pupils in the future.
- **Work experience.** Our core work experience programme lasts one week, and is aimed primarily at 14-16 year olds. The placements are provided most typically at our largest sites and where we have significant Early Careers' job opportunities. Work experience is designed to give young people an insight into work in our company, and is focused on STEM careers

and providing insights into our apprenticeship programmes, in particular. The work experience programme is accredited through the Engineering Development Trust (EDT) and all young people completing the programme secure an EDT Silver accreditation. In 2022 we delivered just over 450 placements, of whom just under 100 were for females and just under 120 ethnic minority young people. We have received excellent feedback from participants, with one saying:

“I really enjoyed the week and found it covered a very wide range of skills and personal areas to focus on. I found the project challenging and interesting to take part in.”

During the pandemic, we adapted to a virtual delivery of work experience in 2021 and 2022. We will move back to face-to-face delivery in 2023, whilst retaining some elements of virtual delivery, such as bringing different groups of young people together and enabling them to meet and hear from role models from different sites.

- **Women in Craft Engineering work experience pilot.** In 2022, we trialled a new work experience programme to help attract more women into Craft Engineering apprenticeship roles such as welding and fabrication, where there have historically been the fewest female applicants. The scheme encouraged applications from women, but anyone was eligible to apply. With this pilot, we informed participants that there was a potential job offer at the end of the programme. We had 100 people take part, which led to a recruitment of 60 people into apprenticeship roles, of whom 45 were female. This helped contribute to females representing nearly 30% of our apprentice intake in 2022, our best ever figure. We are running the initiative again in 2023.
- **World of Work.** This one day virtual activity has replaced our annual *Take Your Sons & Daughters to Work Day* and following a pilot in 2021, we have developed the programme which primarily targets young people aged 14-16 years. We have also extended this to our businesses in Australia and Saudi Arabia. In 2022 we had just under 350 registrations, of whom just under 130 were female. The feedback has been very positive, with just under 70% in 2022 highlighting that the Apprentice Career Insights and Interactive STEM activities were the participants’ favourite part of the programme.
- **STEM Ambassadors.** We have around 1100 registered STEM Ambassadors, who support activities in schools close to our sites. Our apprentices and graduates are given roles as Ambassadors as part of their development – they are often the best advocates in schools for careers in our company and can speak with authority and personal experience. Just under 40% of our STEM Ambassadors are female, 10% are ethnic minorities and around 80% are under 35 years of age.
- **Movement to Work.** BAE Systems was a founder member of Movement to Work in 2014. The initiative is designed to provide a pathway into work for young unemployed people. We partner with The Prince’s Trust on the initiative and provide a week’s work experience to participants, alongside employability skills training offered by the Trust. We have provided just under 700 completed placements, with over 420 positive outcomes (defined as a job with us, or with another employer, or going into education). We have employed over 210 of these young people, 145 of whom have joined our apprenticeship programmes. In 2022, we won the Movement to Work Employer of the Year Award.

We are a Careers & Enterprise Company “Cornerstone Employer” and support their activities to help disadvantaged young people in the North West. We have worked with them in Blackpool in schools and involved our apprentices as role models to help raise career and academic aspirations.

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