



Creating a safe and secure world, together

CASE STUDY

ASTUTE CLASS SUBMARINE QUALIFYING DRY COURSE (SMQ(DRY))

To design, develop and deliver a shorebased SMQ(Dry) course, to support the requirements of the Astute Class Flotilla

- › To equip trainees with the requisite skills and knowledge to be able to continue their submarine training at sea during the “wet” phase in a safe, situation-aware and competent manner

Considerations

In designing the course some key factors had to be taken into consideration especially as this course is likely to be the student's first exposure to naval training outside their initial training period. They are often under 18 and therefore require a greater level of duty of care than other students within the facility. Added to this is the application of service discipline where the civilian training staff have no jurisdiction.

The training environment needs to be as vibrant and modern as possible whilst maintaining the traditions of the service and imbibing the students with naval and submarine ethos in preparation for their time in the service.



SMQ classes are made up of sailors from the various departments on board, from Chefs to Marine Engineers. Taking students with little or no knowledge of a submarine to being a safe member of the crew necessitates a structured, modular approach to training. The student is taken through generic systems and procedures and on to those specific to the Astute Class submarine. The amount of material to be delivered and the variety in experience, background and academic ability of the class also means that regular progress testing and assessment of the course attendees must be carried out throughout the duration of the course before a final formal assessment at the end of the 10 week course. Finally, we are contracted to deliver a 100% pass rate.

The Solution

The course is delivered by both Babcock and RN instructors, allowing the Duty of Care and service discipline requirements to remain under the Clyde Command. Babcock provides continuity of staff, and ownership of

course content. The modular design of the course breaks each system down and allows easy identification of weak areas through continual assessment. It also allows for minor amendments to be quickly identified and implemented.

Progress tests are designed to fit in with RN progress monitoring systems, allowing poor performance to be identified and managed at an early stage. The final assessment consists of an oral board based in the 3D Virtual environment mirroring the final assessment that will be employed onboard at the end of the "wet" phase of training before a submariner gains his Dolphins. The student is now 'Safe for Sea' and able to progress with his On Job Training (OJT) designed by Babcock as a follow on from the SMQ(Dry) course.

The training environment was developed to best suit a course of 20 students in an up to date classroom with the latest facilities and an environment conducive to learning. The classroom has bespoke desk design that allows the students to raise or lower their computer screens according to the

lesson requirement along with multi-screen projectors and smart board giving the instructor access to a wide range of media presentation tools. The result is over 200 separate lessons over a 10 week period. The whole package ensures a sufficient level of knowledge has been delivered and retained by the student prior to his sea phase of training.

Conclusion

We are maintaining the 100% pass rate during the dry phase of the course with feedback from the follow on wet phase showing the pass rate continues, but, importantly, with an average reduction of 50% in the time taken to complete the wet phase, even as low as 9 days! This achievement should not be underestimated especially when you consider that due to asset availability, the first time some of the trainees get onboard a submarine is at the start of the wet phase. Feedback from trainees and training assessors has been very positive with many elements of the training being hailed as examples of best practice.