

# Making sure that the **best levels of training** are on hand

Kevin Faulkner, Director of Banham Academy, speaks to Security Buyer about some of the accreditations they offer, and just how beneficial they can be for professionals within security.

## What makes training from Banham Academy especially fundamental to the professional?

The security systems industry is facing a skills shortage in various roles and it is vital that a new generation of professional technicians are given the skill sets to support our sector going forward. It is fundamentally important that our workforce can embrace new technologies and everything that is smart and digital, as well as the traditional requirements surrounding the installation and maintenance of security systems.

Banham Academy was established with the sole purpose of delivering high quality training and to support this, a purpose-built Academy was established. The engaging academy learning environment consists of workshops, classrooms and an e-learning suite.

We also have the staff to compliment this environment and to ensure excellent delivery. Our delivery team is made up of industry experts, further educationalists and experienced senior management / directors who bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the delivery programme.

## What accreditations do you offer?

The main emphasis of our training is geared towards our apprenticeship programme and the skills required to supplement the workforce of the future. We currently have apprentice technicians from a number of large and small employers coming to the end of their first year of the Advanced Apprenticeship in Fire, Emergency and Security Systems.

Whilst the standard itself may have been

written by employers with no formal accredited qualification mandated, Banham Academy has embedded the added value of four online Level 3 BTEC courses, used as milestones towards completing the apprenticeship programme. The online courses cover Electrotechnical Principles, CCTV, Intruder Alarm and Access Control.

## How much emphasis does Banham place on practical exercises, in comparison to written tasks?

Modern blended learning has moved away from the old style 'chalk and talk', or sitting in the classroom being regaled with tales from the facilitator, as amusing as they are!. It is important to blend in the right amount of practical exercise to endorse the much-needed theory element and embed the new knowledge. For example, we have panel boards fitted with various types of alarms, enabling our apprentices to carry out install or fault-finding activities in the workshop.

Each of the online courses has a practical assessment that is required to be successfully completed before certification is achieved. Finding the right balance between written and practical exercises is important, and the new apprenticeship standard provides the platform for all skills, knowledge and behaviour requirements both in the classroom and the workplace.

## How important is security training at this current time?

Training is a tool most often overshadowed by more strategic arms of any business. It's not to say anyone devalues or is lacking in understanding of the benefits that training and development bring, but it's often not



seen as a key priority among the more pressing everyday issues of a business.

Today's climate does put security somewhat in the spotlight and heighten the need to be better equipped and prepared, and it is more important than ever to be proactive and not reactive to your own, and others needs.

We should be having the foresight, and belief, to see that development is for today's goals and tomorrow's successes.

The only thing worse than training your employees and having them leave is not training them and having them stay. — Henry Ford, Founder, Ford Motor Company

## How substantially does it improve career prospects for people wishing to enter the security industry?

Research has proven that an employee will earn over £100k more in their working



Banham Academy Apprentices

lifetime if they have completed an advanced apprenticeship compared to someone that hasn't.

We have apprentices that are adding value to the bottom-line of a business at the end of year one of their training programme and it surprises me that more employers are not using the apprenticeship scheme to their benefit.

At the end of the 3 year apprenticeship an individual will be better equipped to undertake most tasks than the average technician currently working in this sector, so career prospects will be excellent.

### How much help and support is offered throughout the course/courses?

Ensuring there is a robust support mechanism is fundamental to the development of anyone who embarks on a 'Learning Journey'. We have flexible measures in place to meet an individual's needs and use of the e-learning suite and all other training resources is always accessible.

We measure the impact of our training through the various learning activities and modular test results, as well as the subjective methods - such as behaviour and reactions. Regular reviews with the employer and learner ensure that if anyone needs more help and support, it can be provided.

### Who are your courses most suited to?

The urban myth is that an apprenticeship is for young people only. And as those of us of a certain age can testify, it certainly was in our day. But like with everything - times change and training and development has evolved.



One of the current apprentices, Elliot

With the introduction of an advanced apprenticeship that involves a challenging end point assessment over 2 days, consisting of a knowledge test, practical assessments and a professional discussion, you could say that a minimum training standard for our sector has been set. Apprentices that have completed 3 years of training and experience in the field will be able to demonstrate their competence.

We are developing a fast-track training programme to enable current technicians to complete the end point assessment and demonstrate their competence to an advanced standard.

In summary, our training is suited to anyone with the desire to improve their skills and knowledge.

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Kevin Faulkner, Director, Banham Academy