

case study oil and gas



Halliburton Energy Services

Halliburton Energy Services supplies a range of well services to the North Sea offshore oil sector from sites around Aberdeen and Great Yarmouth.

This operating environment presents particular challenges in the delivery of services to the required safety and competence standards. They have worked with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) to develop a comprehensive on-the-job Competence Assurance System (CAS), linked to SQA qualifications, which assists in the development of staff skills.

Over the last few years, the Competence Assurance System has evolved to become an integral part of Halliburton's business and staff development policies. The system now includes Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) and Customised Awards in 30 disciplines. Its success was recognised in 2003, when Halliburton received the Gold Award for Business of the Year at SQA's annual awards ceremony.

Halliburton Competence Assurance System - Overview

Key features of the Halliburton Competence Assurance System (CAS) include:

- *clearly defined standards of competence and vocational qualifications*
- *comprehensive training programmes and on-the-job assessment*
- *robust internal and external quality assurance systems.*

The CAS supports each employee from the commencement of employment to achievement of vocational qualifications and beyond.

From a small beginning in a single Section, the system has expanded to become an integral part of the company's business and staff development policies throughout the company. In particular, the system is being used to:

- *assist in winning new business*
- *improve customer service standards*
- *enhance staff development systems*
- *stimulate a demand for training.*

Business benefits

Staff training has always been critical to the safe and efficient delivery of services in the oil sector. Increasingly, the need to provide evidence of the capability of staff to customers has become an essential part of the tender process to win contracts.



Company commitment to competence

The business benefits of the CAS have now been recognised by other Service Sections and it has now been rolled out to a further seven Sections. The system has also been expanded from offshore jobs to include onshore support and management jobs.

As an SQA centre Halliburton is currently delivering vocational qualifications in various aspects of Well Services Operations and also qualifications for Management, Customer Services and Administration. The programme of qualifications is supported by coordinators, internal verifiers and assessors.

Once an individual has achieved a vocational qualification Halliburton is committed to developing and assessing their on-going competence - this is done by setting competence and training targets through an appraisal system.

Customer confidence was the key business driver for the implementation of the initial CAS and the first externally recognised vocational qualification in the company's Cementing Section.

Halliburton's staff development systems are audited by customers before and after a contract is awarded. The comprehensive nature of CAS and the fact that it was subject to external verification by SQA resulted in very positive audit reports for the Cementing Section.

A subsequent evaluation of the impact of the system and the use of qualifications identified a range of other clear business benefits, for example:

recognition of skills

Many staff working in the oil sector are highly skilled and qualified but few have qualifications directly related to the sector – the use of qualifications which define standards across the range of well services disciplines has allowed staff to achieve recognition of their specialist skills - this is valued by both customers and by staff. The value of qualifications for personal development and promotion can be illustrated by

the fact that approximately 20% of SQA candidates are now working towards their second or third qualification;

improved safety standards

The emphasis on safety throughout the qualifications has contributed to an increased awareness of safety issues – a quantifiable benefit of this has been a reduction in the number of accidents;

improved levels of customer service

The qualifications require staff to develop competence across a range of supporting skills in addition to their technical skills - this has promoted a better understanding of the importance of the relationship with the customer which in turn has led to improved customer satisfaction ratings – the qualifications directly support a company strategy to promote high quality customer service;



improved business processes

The assessment process for the qualifications has also reinforced existing working practices — one specific example of this has been improved efficiency in recording processes — not only has the quality of reports provided to customers and to internal staff improved but they have been submitted more quickly.



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