

Taking over the Survey School - Interview with Ruth Adams



Ruth Adams, a distinguished geomatics and geospatial professional, is the energetic new manager of The Survey School. She explains her ambitions for the school and its potential to be a world class training facility.

Interviewer: How do your experiences with the UK Hydrographic Office and then with a smaller commercial survey company inform your new role at The Survey School?

Ruth Adams: Working for the MOD for 25-years on geospatial maritime products and projects has given me a broad perspective on processes, systems and quality control in a

large organisation. Sailing with HMS Endurance to establish shore control in South Georgia, for example, involved teamwork, collaboration and motivating people - skills that readily transfer to education and training. Later, running a smaller survey company, I worked with multi-disciplinary, multi-national teams on civil engineering and land survey projects. I have a range of global contacts to draw on from my previous experience that I hope will greatly benefit the school and the students.

Interviewer: What is your vision for developing the school's potential?

RA: The Survey School has great facilities, not just on our site but on the surrounding land, and I would like to see that utilised more. There is scope for us to develop more external partnerships and work collaboratively with companies that provide both training and content. This will allow us to expand the range of short courses we offer in Worcester. We already work with Sygma Solutions to host an Underground Utilities course and we've been approached by a company that could deliver GPR training. There is interest in the Survey School hosting a SUA (Small Unmanned Aircraft) processing course and I am currently looking for a GNSS course provider. I'm also exploring the opportunities to develop 'pack and go' bespoke courses. This would enable a Survey School tutor to deliver bespoke training where it's needed, both in the UK and internationally.

Interviewer: Does the Survey School have an international reach?

RA: We get regular enquiries from overseas, most recently from Nigeria. Two students from Abu Dhabi graduated from the TSA Course last term. The TSA Course is our flagship offering and is a well-respected successful course. Students receive practical experience and then consolidate their learning in the workplace. We have a good stream of TSA Members that send their employees here and the students benefit greatly from the close association and support we have from TSA.

Interviewer: Will the school be involved in delivering the geospatial apprenticeship?

RA: The TSA Surveying Course helped shape the content for the new Geospatial Apprenticeship and an application for TSA to be the End Point Assessor will be submitted shortly. Dudley College are running this course and we look forward to exploring potential collaboration with them. I have been involved in educational initiatives throughout my career, so I am pleased we are involved with ProQual's Level 3 Diploma in Engineering Assessment. This is a desktop qualification of five units for which we are an Assessment Centre. Successful completion gives experienced surveyors a professional qualification, accepted and recognised by CSCS and a route to a Gold card.

Interviewer: What are you enjoying most about your new role?

RA: The Survey School has a great buzz and I'm enjoying the challenge of building a team of professional talent to educate and develop the surveyors of the future. These will be people that can help us develop specific course content and teach it at Worcester. We also need assessors for the Level 3 Diploma who will work with candidates via email and Skype. This latter activity would suit someone with a full- or part-time job, looking for an additional paid surveying activity, aligned to their own career.

For further details on teaching and assessing opportunities, contact Ruth Adams at The Survey School (manager@surveyschool.org.uk).

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