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## **DAVICON SHOWS ITS COMMITMENT TO TRAINING**

With more than 20 years' industry skills and knowledge apiece but no formal training or qualifications, six West Midlands-based self-employed mezzanine floor installers have each received a nationally recognised formal qualification, working with Davicon and Sandwell Training Association (STA).

Davicon, the UK's leading manufacturer of mezzanine floors, has a strong commitment to training, health and safety and the welfare of its installers. Twelve months ago the company identified there was no nationally recognised training scheme which could help improve the skills-set of its fitter workforce, and its own business in turn. It approached STA to create a bespoke course to meet its needs.

Peter Watson, Davicon's general manager, says, "By working with STA we tailored the NVQ Level 2 Performing Manufacturing Operations course by selecting the modules that were applicable to installing mezzanine floors. Once we were happy with the course's content and structure, three teams of sub-contractor fitters we use regularly in the Midlands, were invited to go on the in-depth 12 month course.

"All our installers are self-employed and so the fact they took time out of their day to go on this year-long course, which is assessed three or four times a year, is testament to their commitment to improving their skills and their desire to attain a formal qualification.

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“Their achievement means we have the most professional representatives on site who have a heightened awareness of health & safety, satisfying our needs and that of our customers.”

One of the fitters, 41 year old Mark Beardsmore, says: “As a sole trader I have been in the business for 22 years, and have worked with my business partner Mark Jones for 17 years. Mark and I work all over the country on jobs for Davicon and together we have both attained the NVQ over the past year. This is a personal achievement because I have not had a qualification specific to mezzanine floors which recognises the job we do as a stand alone trade within the construction industry. Everyone deserves to gain a formal qualification for the work they do and be recognised for it.”



The course worked to a set of national standards through the Science Engineering Manufacturing and Technologies Alliance (SEMTA) and was independently assessed by STA. Davicon hopes to extend the West Midlands pilot, which represents 10% of its fitter workforce, to other UK regions linking up with other employer-led training organisations.

Pictured left to right are: Peter Watson, Davicon's general manager with Mark Jones (centre) and Mark Beardsmore.