

# British Ceramic Tile

## Newton Abbot

Pick 'n' Mix isn't just something people fondly remember from Woolworths – it's also an approach to training that's paying off handsomely for Newton Abbot tile manufacturer British Ceramic Tile.

Hannah Russell, the Newton Abbot-based company's Human Resource Manager, knows exactly what she wants its employees to learn...and that doesn't mean accepting what happens to be most convenient for a training provider to offer.

That's why she's chosen South Devon College – and why she's so full of praise for the college staff who arrange and deliver a lot of the training.

**“They arrange something that suits our needs exactly”**

“Developing our employees is very important to us – and it's paramount that the right training is provided at the right time and in the right place,” she says.

“I tell the college what I'd like the course to include, how long it should be, and what the objectives are, then I either pick a suitable course or ask for a bespoke course which might mean merging the contents of two or more courses to get the one I need! Then they arrange something that suits our needs exactly. We've worked with South Devon College more closely than ever over the past year because of their flexibility and the working relationship we have with them.”

A key part of that flexibility is the college's willingness to deliver the training and assessment at British Ceramic Tile's site at times to suit the company.

“It's really good for us because we're expanding and it's convenient having the courses delivered on site at times that work for us,” says Hannah. “If we

take anyone off the shop floor or away from their day-to-day job for training, it must add value to the organisation and their role.”

Employees have been given one-day courses in communications, managing people, training to be trainers, making the most of being an employee forum representative, IOSH health and safety, and first aid, and some are taking NVQs in team leading.

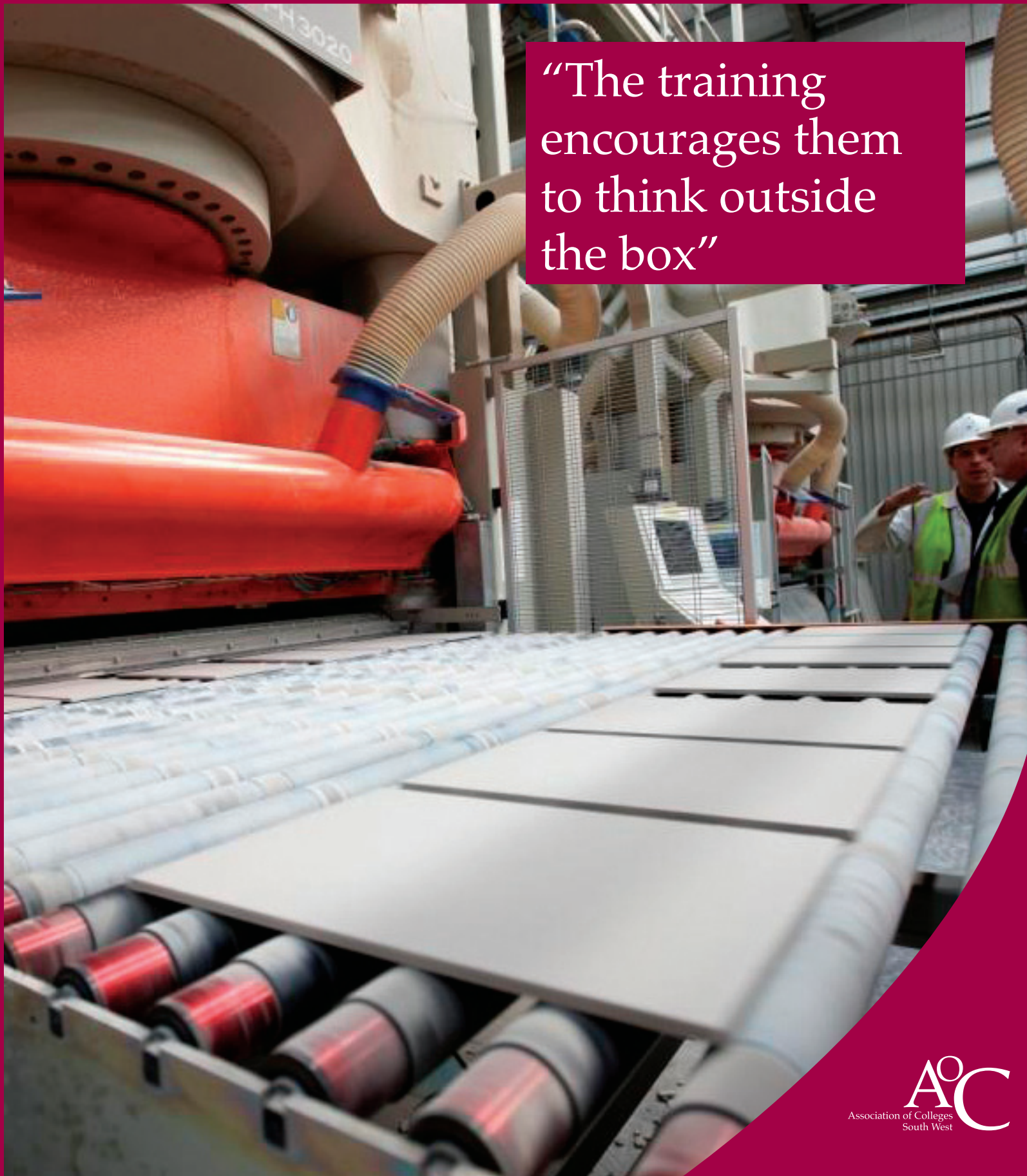
“A lot of our employees work shift patterns that rotate over day and night working. The college have been very good at accommodating this and it all runs very well. The assessors arrange to come in when the employee is available, which is convenient for both the company and the employee.

“Although we're only part-way through the NVQ programme, the feedback from employees and their line managers is positive. The training encourages them to think outside the box when overcoming any issues. The employees are really embracing it and wanting to do a bit more in their roles.

“This is about identifying potential in individuals and having a succession plan so that if they want to move forward we can help them develop their career with us. Now we're thinking about who to put on the programme next. A number of employees are really keen after seeing our investment in others. And some of the managers have come back saying it's brilliant and asking for more.”

Hannah says British Ceramic Tile pays for the one-day courses but considers them to be worth every penny, while the NVQs are mainly funded through college sources.

“That's a huge benefit because we're investing a lot in business expansion at the moment,” she says. “The training is affordable, it's flexible, it's bespoke, and it works!”



**“The training encourages them to think outside the box”**