

Penrith Firm Secures Top Ministry of Defence Award

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Universal Tankers, a Penrith-based company specialising in liquid waste management and clean water services, has been honoured with the prestigious Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Gold Award by the Ministry of Defence. This accolade, the highest recognition offered under the scheme, celebrates the firm's exceptional commitment to supporting the Armed Forces community across the UK.

The company, with its depot in Penrith, has earned praise for its proactive efforts in employing and supporting veterans, reservists, service leavers, and military families. From offering guaranteed interviews for ex-service personnel to providing additional leave for reservists' training and deployments, Universal Tankers has embedded a culture of respect and opportunity for those with military backgrounds.

In a recent interview with The Cumberland News, Managing Director Toby Gunn expressed his pride in the achievement: "This award isn't just a badge; it reflects how deeply we value the Armed Forces community. The skills, discipline, and resilience that veterans and reservists bring to our workforce are unmatched. They've strengthened our operations and leadership, and we're committed to supporting their transition to civilian careers."

The firm's initiatives include tailored recruitment processes, flexible policies for reservists, and the fostering of an inclusive environment for military families. Gareth Ratcliffe, a veteran now working as an HGV driver for Universal Tankers, shared his experience: "After leaving the forces, I needed an employer who understood my background. Universal Tankers gave me a chance to apply my skills and grow in a civilian role, which has been incredibly rewarding."

Jan Cox, Defence Relationship Manager at the Ministry of Defence, commended the company's efforts: "Universal Tankers' dedication to supporting Defence and its people is exemplary. This Gold Award is a testament to their outstanding work, and we are deeply grateful for their commitment."