

Provision: Viewpoint

Yorkshire and Humber
assessment of current provision
workshop outcomes



Facilitated by
Summit SKILLS
The Sector Skills Council
for Building Services Engineering

HORIZON

the sector skills agreement
for building services engineering

Sector Involvement in Training

This is a 'work in progress' document. The views listed throughout these pages were suggested by delegates at the ACP meeting in Leeds and will contribute to the Sector Skills Agreement for Yorkshire and Humber. The recommendation numbers relate to the ACP report.

Use of training providers

Areas such as manufacturer training do not add to the formal qualification base of the sector. If formal mechanisms can be developed to recognise this kind of valuable training, skills development of this type can officially contribute to the sector's skills base.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

Develop credit-accumulation transfer and quality assurance with manufacturers and private providers.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Credit accumulation given as deliverable units – bite sized chunks for the here and now and one for the future covering green issues
- Ad hoc training needs to be formalised in some way to ensure learner experience is at right level
- Benchmark for Internal Verification
- Possibility of an industry "log" which details all training given and can be taken to other employers similar to the green card
- Manufacturers' training courses to be accredited and recognised

Employer willingness to pay for training

37% of businesses would be willing to pay more for their training. The sector will need some convincing to fund more than they currently do.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Get the curriculum and training structure right so that employers can see the benefit and value in training.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- A business plan template for small-medium employers to fine tune for their own businesses (with one-to-one support)
- Real benefits to small-medium employers communicated by examples from other small-medium employers
- Concentrate on success stories and case studies giving positive training messages
- Make greater links with Train to Gain brokers – this will raise awareness of benefits of training.
- Use relevant role models to sell training to reluctant employers. Engage with them at times and places to suit them.
- Use trade unions to make the case for training in organised workplaces.
- Case studies to demonstrate ongoing benefits – cost analysis of training vs cost of not training.
- Promote to employers the benefits of training – possibly by having a breakfast morning.
- Businesses need to be made aware of how training could improve their profitability – use real cases as examples of good practice.
- Consider management training in the sector which will identify benefits of developing staff to a business.

- Legislation-driven, Home Information Packs insurance, Part P, CORGI, etc
- Convert MD through any successful outside intervention in their business – not necessarily skills related, and they become more open to workforce development – role for business links, banks, accountants, consultants etc.

Employer spend on apprentice training

Considerable amounts of money (in this case via an employee's time) is spent on in-house mentoring throughout the course of the training programme. There are many hidden costs associated with training staff and employers are already making a significant contribution.

RECOMMENDATION 7:

Develop cost models further to achieve a sensible balance between employer and government training contributions

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Develop core competencies for the sector, i.e. literacy/numeracy/customer care as a minimum – then have specialist "bolt on" modules. Same starting point but allowing for different destinations.
- Small business incentive 'free' or heavily subsidised trainee (like New Deal programme) to encourage micro firms to take on apprentices, which could lead to employment or self employment
- Demographic issues – shortage of workers 'poaching' less likely.

Views on content of provision

Qualification content in particular is seen as being in some cases out of date or not suitable enough for the needs of the sector.

RECOMMENDATION 13:

Continually update existing qualifications in line with the sector's requirements. This also includes the development of new content such as environmental technologies

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Involve manufacturers when developing technical certificates and NVQs (will enable qualifications to be current)
- Introduce new diplomas for 14–19 year olds developed by employers which should provide more relevant curriculum, but they need to be reviewed regularly (QCA, Skills for Business)
- SummitSkills to make more links with employer networks
- Modular approach to provision
- Develop a CPD (Continuous Professional Development) points system to maintain qualifications
- Manufacturers to possibly provide facilities, linking with training providers
- Need rapid mechanism to accredit new courses
- Use of existing survey information e.g. CBI survey – add to questions

The Provision Itself

- SSC to set a standard of qualifications required in the industry and to ensure labour market information is made available in the sector including new technology, skill shortages etc
- Consider best practice abroad and can we learn from their structures for training provision. How do they keep up with change?
- Involvement and consultation with relevant trade union re. delivery, design and development.
- Partnership working with unions to identify the needs of the industry from an employee perspective
- Try to create more buy in from manufacturers and employers in the industry

Views on quality of provision

Generally there is more dissatisfaction with the quality of service and teaching provided by further education than for private training providers. Issues revolve around communication, the quality of teaching, resources and general curriculum planning.

RECOMMENDATION 12:

Work with partners to improve providers' service: administration, teaching and communication

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Improve communication links between all parties
- Move towards specific training providers for specific skills
- SummitSkills to encourage employers to make links with provision
- Provide fora for providers and businesses to come together to ensure a two way dialogue about provision. Some employer's views are based on out-dated information

Rationalising the number of courses and qualifications

There are training courses and qualifications currently in the system that have not been funded for a considerable amount of time. Because there has been no demand for this curriculum we suggest that it is no longer relevant to the sector.

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Remove curriculum that has been unfunded in the past three year to remove the confusion in the system.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Check out why some courses haven't been taken up before throwing out. Some parts may be relevant.
- Need NVQ that is relevant to employer
- Given funding restrictions, surprised that any unfunded courses still exist – this should therefore be easy to address
- Information, advice and guidance for employers
- Modularisation of courses
- More focused sector-specific information, advice and guidance provision

Technical certificate funding

There is a significant amount of funding directed at stand-alone technical certificates, which offer a theory-based qualification but no work-related experience. People undertaking a full-time technical certificate are typically not employed in the sector and have little prospect of gaining work-based experience to allow them to gain a National Vocational Qualification.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

Only fund technical certificates as part of a full-framework apprenticeship or as part of an NVQ.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- SummitSkills in a position to place technical certificates in a pathway route as part of the SQS strategy
- Currently full-time FE courses attract more technical certificate funding than apprenticeship programmes this must be changed or colleges will continue to offer them
- Don't leave out those young people with basic skills they may need LI but could progress to apprenticeship or other qualifications.
- Link technical certificate to employment i.e. public funded
- Have clearly mapped out progression routes – with stages supported by current labour market information
- Develop a framework of agreed qualifications to share with partners to ensure appropriate training is given to meet industry needs

Profile of learners

Access to the sector is still dominated by white males. Despite various initiatives and mechanisms being introduced to encourage under-represented groups to join the sector, there seems to have been little impact. There are also significant numbers of non-employed learners, both adults and 16–19s, who are on technical certificates that the sector deems to be non-economically valuable (NEV).

RECOMMENDATION 9:

Reduce the large number of NEV courses and instead develop innovative and sustainable entry and progression routes into the sector for a reduced number of non-employed status learners.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Need to be careful with apprenticeship access for older women as this is discriminatory to older men
- Encourage positive action programmes
- Resource and responsibility – it's the only way it will happen
- Make education & development targets financial targets as starts and frameworks are on apprenticeship programmes
- Funding crucial here, as is information, advice and guidance and image of the sector as white and male
- Information, advice and guidance through continuing professional development and HE
- Monitor the diversity of participants on technical certificates
- Consistent information, advice and guidance from school to adult (unite school careers advice, university advice, Connexions and Next Step)
- Consider ex-offender programmes
- Work with the specialist colleges for disability
- Work in partnership to develop routes to move minority groups into the sector – there are currently 62,000 lone parents and 83,000 unemployed in the region.
- Redeployment of some funding to work with sole traders/partnerships from minority groups to encourage take up – with training!
- Communicate positive aspects of a more diverse workforce to an employer by highlighting how their business will gain and profits increase
- Labour market information to determine what current and future vacancies may arise – how does this match the labour pool? Training would then be demand driven

Higher education

There are a low number of higher education establishments offering building services engineering courses. This poses a problem for individuals who need to gain a professional qualifications alongside their work.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Develop a sustainable network of providers offering degree and sub-degree courses within all regions.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Employers and providers should work together to develop provision but providers need to be sure that funding is available and that the numbers of students are there.
- Clearly identify and publish what is on offer at HE institutions
- Online resource and facilities to tackle geographic issues e.g. lectures, demos, etc
- Lifelong Learning Networks – involve SummitSkills
- Provide demand to HE providers
- Provision must be linked to jobs and employer requirements

Expenditure on provision

Based on an analysis of current funding for non-economically valuable skills, there is potentially around £22 million across England that could be redistributed to much needed training provision elsewhere in the sector such as environmental technologies (solar panels, photovoltaic panels for example), business management, benchmarking, supply chain management and apprenticeships for adults.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

Seek a more effective use of funding to improve sector productivity performance and skills levels

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- Better awareness by industry leaders of provision (awareness and involvement)
- Labour market information to be collated to inform future provision requires
- Provide funding for information, advice and guidance prior to entry into the industry

Provider quality marks and awards

Whilst there is some take-up of quality marks and CoVE status in the region, there is still scope for more providers to achieve quality marks. Essentially if more providers achieve these standards then it should raise the overall quality baseline of the sector's provision.

RECOMMENDATION 11:

Work with provider to increase the achievement of quality marks. Agree criteria of the 'New Standard' in the sector to ensure quality provision is recognised and endorsed.

VIEWS FROM THE GROUP:

- A quality mark that is recognisable to employers
- Recognise the new CoVE standard
- Not a new quality mark – use a current quality mark

Hurdles and Bridges

These 'hurdles' and 'bridges' to achieving great future provision were suggested by delegates at the meeting.

Hurdles	Bridges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engaging employers ● Keeping up with technological advances ● Information, advice and guidance not as good as it should be – inconsistent? ● No recognised quality standard that the employer knows about ● So many certificates: what makes up the qualification ● Not enough contact between real industry and student early enough ● Are we in danger of training more people than the market demands ● £18m funding not directed at recognised qualifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bacon sandwiches to encourage attendance! ● Twilight sessions. ● Good news stories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How businesses profit from training – Benchmarking businesses – compare businesses with more vs less trained staff (DTI?) – Passed on via employers (peer groups) ● Involve manufacturers when developing qualification on “what’s new” ● Provide labour market information on future skills demands <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Start point for training provision – Regional variation expected ● Union learning reps ● Partnership sharing with trade unions when appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proxy for identifying employer demands

Great Future Provision...

Delegates were asked at the start of the meeting what three words they would use to sum up great future provision. The highlighted words represent those which resonated with delegates following discussions.

Affordable	Accessible	QUALITY
FLEXIBLE	Relevant	Quality
FIT	Flexible	Fun
Demand	Led	Approach
Demand-led	DIVERSITY	
Flexible	Affordable	Quality
Relevant	Funded	GREEN
Quality	Progression	Relevant
Standard	Quality	Employment-led
FIT FOR PURPOSE	LISTEN	Clarity
EUROPEAN-EXCHANGE	COLLABORATION	CLARITY

These 'practical' and 'challenging' ideas are also the views and suggestions of the meeting delegates.

The most PRACTICAL idea worth doing

- Employers presenting their profession to children 9–11? To explain how their trade would present them with a career opportunity?
- Accreditation of manufacturers' training courses
- Link into employer networks for two-way discussions
 - Benefits of training and planning
 - What employers want
- Unit development – creates bite sized courses but all link to a recognised NVQ (credit accumulation). Would also allow units to be created more readily e.g. green issues for the immediate and future
- Gain employers advice and opinions on the needs of their industries. Ensuring a consultation process takes place rather than assuming their requirements.
- Involve employers, manufacturers and training providers when developing new qualifications so that they are fit for purpose
- Attend employer forum network evening to discuss benefits of training/union learner representatives as mentors etc.
- Bacon sandwiches to encourage attendance at dissemination events
- Mapping and rationalising provision
- Further involvement of manufacturers in funded/FE provision

The most CHALLENGING idea worth doing

- Having success convincing training providers to go down the renewable energy training road
- Engaging employers with design of qualification and determining quality standards for provision
- Providing work for 2000 young people with LI – would they benefit from careers advice and possible move to other sectors in building industry
- Wider HE provision and identifying the demand from employers – so this can be articulated to HE! Message! Opportunities for graduates...
- Aim to make the sector more diverse, working in partnership to develop employment routes which create opportunities for minority customers
- Ensure FE courses match employment demands
- Defining the curriculum for the sector
- Engaging providers and employers to ensure that both sides understand what each other need/want and can/cannot etc.
- Working in partnership with trade unions to build trust and share resources and intelligence
- Get real, statistically robust data from employers articulating their needs on a regular basis

SummitSkills

Vega House, Opal Drive,
Fox Milne, Milton Keynes MK15 0DF

T: 01908 303960

F: 01908 303989

www.horizon-ssa.org.uk

email.enquiries@summitskills.org.uk

To contact your regional operations manager
go to www.summitskills.org.uk/aboutus/74



EUROPEAN UNION
European Social Fund

skills
FOR BUSINESS