

SummitSkills update for
LLN National Sector Forum
Construction & Built Environment

September 2008

Catherine Elliott
catherine.elliott@summitskills.org.uk

Sector Background

SummitSkills is the sector skills council for building services engineering.

The sector employs contractors and consultants covering:

- Air conditioning and refrigeration
- Heating and ventilation
- Plumbing
- Electrotechnical

Higher level skills are being increasingly prioritised by SummitSkills

Key relevant activities

Sector Skills Agreement

Professional Bodies Forum

Foundation degree Framework Specification

Sector Skills Agreement

SummitSkills completed its Sector Skills Agreement (SSA) in March 2008.

Bottom up approach involving research and stakeholder consultation in each region to establish:

- skills needs
- education and training provision
- gap identification and solutions
- action plans

Sector Skills Agreement Stakeholder Implementation Groups are currently working on regional priorities from the action plans.

Sector Skills Agreement – key findings

More than 100,000 people in the sector work at managerial, professional, associate professional or technical level.

Many people working in supervisory or managerial roles have not taking part in any formal management training.

There are very few High Education Institutions offering provision for our sector.

SSA – key findings (continued)

Employers want HE provision that is accessible for members of the existing workforce.

Some employers recruit graduates with non-cognate degrees then retrain.

There is limited data about how many people achieve HE qualifications related to our sector.

SummitSkills Professional Bodies Forum

SummitSkills staff regularly meet with a group of representatives from key Professional Bodies and the Engineering Council.

We are working with Professional Bodies to develop an action plan to address Sector Skills Agreement key priorities related to higher level skills.

Professional Bodies are already working on many activities related to higher level skills. We are keen to avoid duplication of activities and to work together wherever appropriate to maximise impact.

Foundation degree Framework Specification

Following extensive consultation with employers, FE colleges, universities and other stakeholders we will soon be publishing a Foundation degree Framework Specification.

This sets out what employers want Foundation degrees for our sector to look like.

Foundation degree Framework Specification (cont)

Employers want Foundation degrees:

- with a building services engineering focus
- with a common core content
- that allow specialisation through options
- to develop members of the existing workforce
- to support progression within the industry
- that are accessible in location and delivery mode
- with value as qualifications in their own right
- that can contribute towards an honours degrees
- that support progression towards registered engineering status

Foundation degree Framework Specification (cont)

Employers:

- have limited knowledge of Foundation Degrees
- confirm they would use Foundation degrees as articulated in the Framework Specification.

Providers have confirmed the Framework Specification will help them develop or review Foundation degrees.

The Framework Specification will be published online at www.summitskills.org.uk/fds

Next steps

SummitSkills is keen to build relationships with Higher Education Institutions to:

- support the activities outlined above
- improve access to HE for the sector

If you are interested in working with us to support development and delivery of HE for building services engineering please contact me

catherine.elliott@summitskills.org.uk