

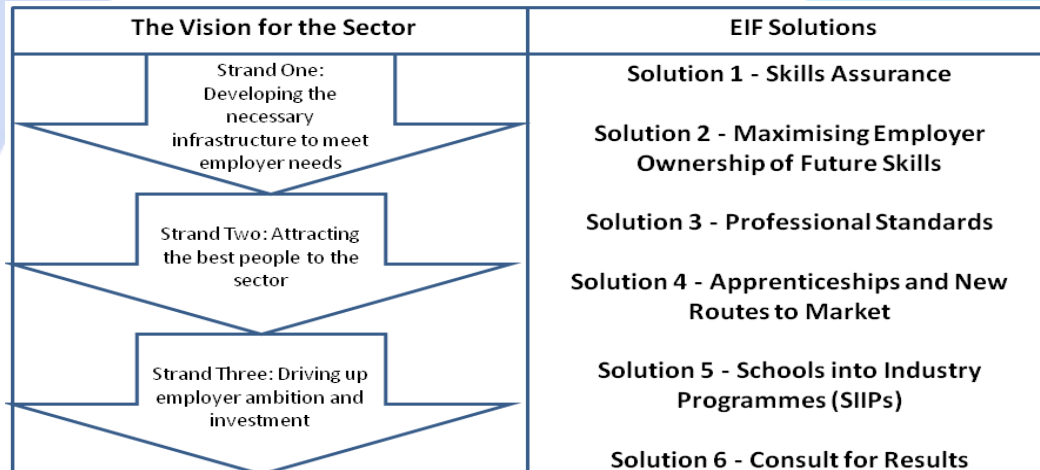
PROSKILLS QUARTERLY INDUSTRY REPORT – Q3 2011

Sector Developments Summary:

The trading environment remains tough, and investment in skills and training is still some way down the priority list for the majority of employers who are still focussed on survival. Raw material price increases are being felt strongly in the Coatings, Print and Paper industries, and significant energy cost increases are putting pressure on the energy intensive industries such as Ceramics, Glass and Building Products (bricks and cement). There are large variances in performance of companies within each industry; while some are growing they are in a small minority. The furniture and print industries continue to report high levels of closures and redundancies. Government contracts for construction are causing slow down in much of the sector, but London continues to be a buoyant market in the private and public sector, and projects such as the new wind farms, nuclear decommissioning and new-build, will be good for the concrete sector. All industries still feel two or three years from getting back to “normality” which means, despite there being an increased ground swell of interest and leadership from the “movers and shakers” in the sector we cannot forecast large scale increases in investment in skills and training, for the greater good of the sector for some time yet.

Proskills Performance Overview:

Proskills has submitted an EIF 2 bid where employers agreed a Vision and 6 Solutions designed to deliver the Vision, each of which is led by one or more employers.



Additionally, Proskills is a partner in two other EIF 2 bids: “Making and winning the economic argument for skills: collaborative work with LEPS” – led by Skills for Logistics; and “Sustainable Business Practice” led by Cogent.

Following consultation with employers, Proskills is looking to review the market and establish models for higher level apprenticeships. As part of this approach, we are partners in two projects: i) to develop exemplary higher level apprenticeships in Advanced Manufacturing, led by UKCES and funded by NAS, involving leading employers from the extractives, glass and ceramics industries; and ii) in a potential project funded by NAS, to develop a model for a STEM higher level apprenticeship framework, led by COGENT.

Our employers continue to emphasise the importance of materials and the role they play in construction, especially within the “Green Deal” and the need to improve environmental performance. As part of a process to address this issue, Proskills has i) tendered for work with CoRE (“Centre of Construction Excellence” – a new venture set up by Stoke City Council, BRE and

Stoke College) to research the market for and scope of training in new materials for retrofitting and refurbishment of buildings; and ii) is a partner in a project led by Cardiff university who are bidding for EU funding to design and deliver training in sustainable building practice. We have also developed closer relationships with the Construction Products Association (CPA) who are a well regarded confederation of companies interested in the construction supply chain in the UK, and have we have been invited by BIS onto the “Build Offsite” steering group to help bring an added skills dimension to the future of construction in the UK.

Proskills has been successful in winning two contracts:

- A project funded through the Welsh Assembly Government to accredit in-house training in a major paper manufacturer Wales, which includes an international dimension by working with a German University.
- A UKCES-funded project to pilot a sector-based approach to liP in the North West of England, working with a partner organisation who will deliver the liP advice and accreditation.

Proskills has been part of a delegation of UK SSCs to visit India, which was part-funded by the British Council, to identify opportunities for collaborative working for forming new SSCs in India. We have identified opportunities, particularly in the mining industry and the drive for vocational education in schools. We are also planning further work in other parts of the world in partnership with the British Council and other agencies.

Changes to Organisational Structure:

Sadly Irene Stevenson was made redundant due to the Health and Safety project she was working on coming to an end. No other significant changes to staffing.

Report on work in the Nations:

<p>Scotland</p>	<p>Proskills continues to meet with the Scottish Government to monitor the Scottish Nations Action Plan. The Scottish MA Furniture frameworks at Levels 2 and Level 3 were approved by the Modern Apprenticeship Approvals Group in August 2011.</p> <p>Proskills is working with new training providers for the Furniture and Print sectors and has met with Skills Development Scotland to discuss future funding for Apprenticeships in our sectors. The Scottish Manager attended the Wood and Extractives Industry UK Boards and presented on the current issues for skills in Scotland.</p> <p>Proskills is working with Investors in People Scotland to develop a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations, facilitating access for IIP Scotland to employers thus generating referral income for Proskills.</p> <p>Proskills attended meetings with trade associations, employers and stakeholders during this period including SQA, SDS, SCQF, Matrix, Furniture Medic, Bam Nuttall, Gavin Watson Printers and Breedon Aggregates</p>
<p>Wales</p>	<p>Although approval was granted in the spring by Welsh Government for the CQfW project (linked to UPM Kymmene), work has been delayed due to the lengthy wait for the contract, which was finally issued mid September. An</p>

	<p>internal project steering group has subsequently been established and a meeting scheduled with the WG contract manager for early October.</p> <p>Work on the Tailor Made (SPFP) project with SEMTA has progressed with a final push to encourage employer submissions before the cut off date at the end of September.</p> <p>Work is progressing with the Cardiff School of architecture relating to their WEFO funded project linked to sustainability. Approval has finally been received from WEFO and steering group dates issued. Rockwool, a major building products employer, have agreed to work with us on this project. Sub contractual arrangements with Cardiff University will be finalised mid October.</p> <p>The first quarter feedback submitted to Welsh Government relating to the 2010/11 action plan. No issues identified with progress to date.</p> <p>Positive meeting held with CBI Wales where agreement reached to collaborative on research, policy development, employer engagement and schools into industry programmes. Invitation received from CBI for Proskills Manager for Wales to sit on their employer board.</p> <p>Positive meetings held with both Network Training and Training Services Wales. Both providers keen to act as lead providers for the process manufacturing sector within Wales.</p> <p>Meeting held between our Glass Industry Lead and Swansea Metropolitan University who have agreed to run workshop activity from the Proskills stand at Worldskills in London during October 2011. Activity will build on the success of similar partnership sessions offered during Sgiliau Cymru September 2010 which assisted Proskills in raising awareness of the sector with over 250 young people and achieved an additional 5 course enrolments for Swansea Met University.</p>
<p>Northern Ireland</p>	<p>The Northern Ireland Executive Committee met in July with the theme of Business Critical Skills. Engagement designed to drive up employer investment in skills was around Sales Skills and Business Improvement Techniques.</p> <p>A new employer relationship with Decora Blinds was developed which lead to review of their in-house training programme and their interest in accrediting and/or quality assuring this training in the future.</p> <p>Engagement with Northern Ireland stakeholders was increased over this quarter with meetings between Proskills NI Manager and the Careers Service NI, Northern Ireland Advisor on Employment & Skills office, local CIPD branch, Colleges NI, ApprenticeshipsNI branch as well as continuing to work with the Department for Employment and Learning Sectoral Development Branch.</p> <p>To promote the Schools into Industry programmes within Northern Ireland the NI Manager has been holding meeting with Careers and CASS officers from local Education and Library Boards. These meetings have lead to the opportunity to present at several local Business Enterprise Partnership meetings. The NI Manager has worked with CCEA on the production of a short film regarding the promotion of QCF qualifications focusing on sustainability within the Extractives industry and also on the development of new qualifications focusing on Contemporary Craft skills.</p> <p>The NI Manager has also been involved in the newly formed Renewable Energy Cluster group for the Extractives Industry in Northern Ireland.</p>

<p>England</p>	<p>North</p> <p>Proskills has recently been successful in its bid to secure funding to support the development of IIP within the NW which will strengthen our offer to key employers as we continue to respond to the emerging regional agendas. Our hope is that we will be able to integrate IIP within our advisory processes which will enable us to promote both brands as a “solutions model” to business and skills issues.</p> <p>We continue to work closely with a number of the larger LEPs, City Regions (including Leeds, Greater Manchester, Sheffield, Cheshire & Warrington) and other SSCs in order to inform and influence priorities and skills statements. We are pleased that these LEPs have agreed to add their support to various EIF bids which we have recently submitted and which we believe will add significant value to our employers and the regional partnerships in meeting local priorities.</p> <p>The regional team are now focussing clearly on the creation and promotion of apprenticeships and the efficiency and Low Carbon agendas under the Joint Investment Programme and the real benefits that these can bring to employers. A significant development in this area has been to establish a Coatings “centre of excellence” with the British Coatings Federation and Hull College, which will build upon our strong links with the Coatings sector in the Y&H and the NE in order to deliver a national programme for the industry.</p> <p>Midlands Regions</p> <p>The Paper Industry has shown increased interest in the Joint Investment programme with three national employers participating in the programme. The industry is committed to the Governments Apprenticeship programme and invested £7k towards the development of a new ‘Technical Certificate. Potential ‘Pilot’ programme to commence Oct 2011.</p> <p>Proskills are supporting work on the Management & Leadership Strategy being led by BIS / UKCES. Proskills has agreed to support two strands, Making and communicating the Case and Raising Demand and Obtaining Commitment. Initial draft strategy to be available mid Oct 11.</p> <p>Proskills continue to support the Centre of Refurbishment Excellence (CoRE) in the WM and have recently submitted an application to identify the skills and knowledge sets that will underpin the different tasks involved in the Fabric First approach. National businesses have committed their support to the project with discussions taking place across the regions with stakeholders and training suppliers.</p> <p>South</p> <p>Priority has been to engage with as many employers as possible to promote Proskills and work programmes across the region.</p> <p>We continue to talk to and influence the developing LEP’s in the region. The South West LEP’s seem particularly keen to engage which has been encouraging. Proskills continues to work closely with regional stakeholders and the SSC Alliance to inform and influence regional priorities through consultation and partnership and Proskills continues to engage closely with NAS, SFA, JC+ and other key partners in the region.</p>
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Work continues in all three regions with regards to Manufacturing Alliance Group, Low Carbon Group, Nuclear Supply Chain, Built Environment Group, and Apprenticeship Groups which continue to drive the agendas forward. Our priority in the region is to increase Apprentice numbers whilst engaging with employers on the ground to push the benefits of training. Several Proskills sectors have rolled out new Apprenticeship Frameworks so we have been pushing these out to employers and providers to gain uptake

Narrative on Research activities, including Evaluation studies:

LMI and Policy

- Provided LMI/policy support to EIF bidding process
- Conducted and reported on a survey of 100 employers in the Wood industry regarding Apprenticeships
- Prepared evaluation processes for Proskills' Schools into Industry programmes for 2011/12
- Provided LMI support for the Alliance's IAG group
- Completed bid to provide LMI for the CoRE project in Stoke

Progress against Qualifications targets and update of the Qualifications database:

UK Wide: We are currently working on the Envelope Manufacturing, Hand Binding, Carton Manufacturing, Building Products, Manufacturing Ceramics, Producing Surface Coatings, Digital Print Production, Saw Milling and Wood Engineering NOS Reviews and Concrete Technicians NOS Development.

England, Wales and Northern Ireland: QCF work is progressing, with all planned qualifications transferred.

We are continuing to support the Manufacturing and Product Design, Construction and Built Environment and Creative Diplomas.

Apprenticeships, we have transferred all our frameworks to SASE/W, although NAS have rejected four of the underpinning knowledge qualifications and we are working with AOs to accredit over 20 new qualifications. Two frameworks have since been re-issued.

We are also working on a Higher Apprenticeship in Advanced Manufacturing with Cogent, Improve and Semta.

Scotland: Proskills is working in Scotland on a funded project to credit and level an employer's in-house course. The work will include a scoping study to determine the course details, and a full credit and levelling exercise carried out by a College. This is a key strategic project in Scotland, and forms part of Proskills' work to look at the accreditation of in-house training provision, which is the preferred method of training for a majority of employers.

HE: We have met with Salford University to take forward an innovation strategy with HE and we will be producing a plan over the summer. As part of the strategy we are looking to develop relationships with HEIs to promote higher level skills across our footprint. We are part of the NW STEM project looking to offer higher level courses to employers in the NW.

Progress against completion and maintenance of the SQS database for Scotland:

This database is up to date and we have regular KIT meetings with SQA Accreditation. We have agreed the qualifications development plan with SQA Accreditation for 2011-12 and are now working to implement this. We have had the Print Modern apprenticeship at level 2 and 3 and Furniture MA at level 2 approved.

