

**Minutes Of The Skills Board Meeting Held By
Virtual Meeting At 10:00 to 12:00 on Thursday 16 September 2021**

To access the recording of this meeting please go to: [GoToMeeting Transcripts](#)

Present:

Paul Leach Chair	Stortford Interiors	Paul
Helen Syson Vice Chair	Measom	Helen
Iain McIlwee	FIS	Iain
Marie Flinter	FIS	Marie
George Swann	FIS	George
David MacLeod	CITB	David
Barry Dawson	CITB	Barry
Dawn Horton	Taylor Hart	Dawn
Steve Anderson	Construction Skills People	Steve
Abi Jones	C G Reynolds	Abi
Mark Buckton	NOCN	Mark
Isobel Wallington	Linear UK	Isobel
Trinicia Evans	A T Plastering	Trini
Vacancy		
Vacancy (College representative)	<i>Tyne Met College?</i>	

Apologies:

Andrew Mansfield	A T Plastering	Andy
Vinny Walker	BDL	Vinny
Ciara King	Errigal	Ciara
Catherine Bullough	FIS	Catherine
James Boulton	SCS North	James
Dave Hall	British Gypsum	Dave
Cliff Poole, Chris Carter-Rowlands, Sharon Street	NOCN	Cliff, Chris, Sharon

Guest Speaker:

Bobby Chakravarty	MyProPlus	Bobby
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Guest Attendees:

Roy Imeson	Green Lights Safety Consultancy	Roy
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1 Welcome, Competition Act, apologies for absence and resignations

1.1. George thanked those present for attending and welcomed all to the meeting, the meeting started at 10:00. He opened with domestic arrangements for the meeting, reminding members of the competition act, mute mics when not needed and if the link deteriorates, please close down any other open software and cameras, use the chat box to ask questions or open your own mic. He checked that all had received a copy of the last meetings minutes, the agenda complete with the update briefing for this meeting and that the slides could be seen.

1.2. Apologies: As shown above

1.3. Guest speaker: George welcomed Bobby Chakravarty explaining that bobby had been invited to give a presentation on a package that records digital competence including experience.

Chairs opening statement:

1.4. Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked all those in attendance with particular thanks to Bobby as guest speaker and all other guest attendees. He provided apologies as listed above. Paul welcomed Isobel Wallington of Linear UK, Trinicia Evans and Andrew Mansfield from A T Plastering based in Kent. Isobel provided a short introduction, Trinicia had some technical problems and was unable to introduce herself. Paul stated it will be alright to cover introductions at the next meeting.

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1.5. Paul expressed appreciation for the work of FIS and reminded everyone this is FIS Conference month, and this week has been focused on people, 'Confidence and Competence'. Please see the FIS web site for further scheduled events: <https://www.thefis.org/events/> He stated the focus of virtually every conversation was around labour shortages, he expressed concern for the costs involved and explained the situation seems to have been exasperated by the holiday season. He emphasised the importance of encouraging new entrants, training and qualifying them and the existing workforce and that this must be a high priority for everyone in the finishes and interiors sector.

1.6. George reminded all present of the FIS strategy regarding skills. He explained the sector now needs to attract approximately 7000 new entrants per year up to 2025 (taken from Construction Skills Network data published in March 2021) across the 37 occupations contained in the sectors footprint.

2 Skills and Training Lead Report

2.1. Helen Syson Accepted and Dawn Horton seconded the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 17 June 2021 as a true record.

(a) Actions from previous meeting

2.2. George reported on the progress of actions from the last meeting: five 'ongoing' actions, two 'complete' and three to be discussed during this meeting. He verified all ongoing actions would be carried forward to the next meeting as necessary.

Actions – 17 June 2020	Assigned	Report
CF = Carried Forward from previous meetings		
CF1. Continue work on Career and Qualification Paths	George	Ongoing See below
CF2. Make a direct request to change the Plasterer apprenticeship standard, remove Dry Lining by emailing trailblazer.revisions@education.gov.uk , Jill.NICHOLLS@education.gov.uk , Steve.POTTER@education.gov.uk and Neil.JONES@education.gov.uk Or follow the information at: https://www.instituteofapprenticeships.org/developing-new-apprenticeships/revisions-adjustments-and-dispensations/	All	Advertised to all members via news feeds. Ongoing
CF3. Encourage people to train and qualify as Vocational and End Point Assessors: NOCN Become an End Point Assessor	George	Ongoing. Advertised in News Feeds
CF4. Encourage, offer and register the availability of work placements	All	Ongoing
1. Embed link to EPA pilot video option 1	George	Complete
2. Sign and return the FIS Apprentices Pledge	All	Ongoing, reported at meeting
3. Amend Terms of Reference missing three consecutive meeting is resignation by default	As above	Complete
4. Response on how to fill FIS Skills Board vacancies	All	Reported at meeting
5. Complete FIS CITB consensus survey	All	Reported at meeting
6. Note dates of next meeting, George to arrange.	All	See below

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2.3. Details on the following were listed in the Agenda Brief:

- (a) Actions from previous meeting(s) - As covered above.
- (b) Competency Frameworks - George explained work on these spreadsheets continues
- (c) Apprenticeships, EPA and training resources - Should be ready for use by early October 2021
- (d) Qualifications and ATP Network - Continue work with CITB for Service, maintenance and repair of operable walls, employer support is still required, contact George. FIS ATP members continue to grow.
- (e) FIS Training Group and Skills and Funding Clinics - Report will be given at item 5d
- (f) BuildBack and KickStart - Report will be given at item 5e

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(g) CITB Consensus - Report will be given at item 5c

2.4. George stated efforts had been made to contact people who had not been attending meetings and some formal resignations had been received creating a further two vacancies, one for an employer and one for a college representative. However, Tyne Met College, who have become a member of FIS, have indicated they wish to continue being represented on the FIS Skills Board and the newly appointed Head of Construction will be in contact once they have settled in.

2.5. George asked members of the Skills Board who are active in apprenticeships to sign the FIS Apprenticeship pledge.

2.6. George asked if there were any questions, comments or observations on the content of the Agenda Brief. No comments were made.

3. FIS CEO Update

3.1. Iain reinforced Pauls point on shortages saying this also includes materials and stated there is a lot of information available in the FIS News: <https://www.thefis.org/news/>. He explained the recruitment targets and emphasised the current focus must be on attracting new entrants, training and qualifying them and the existing workforce. He emphasised recruitment targets are 3 to 4 hundred percent higher than they have been in previous years.

3.2 In the space of design liability there are escalating costs and difficulties in securing insurance. The contracts are definitely changing, and FIS are about to launch a contracts and procurement audit which will be shared next week.

3.3. Iain outline the programme for FIS Conference which is taking place across the month of September with a debate every Wednesday. For full details please see <https://www.thefis.org/events/>

3.4. Iain stated three new partnerships had been established, the first with the Supply Chain Sustainability School to produce a new eLearning hub to support improved knowledge in the supply chain. The second with Barbour ABI for customer and specification and the third with the Construct Zero hub in order to feed into a wider construction piece. FIS has recruited [Flavie Lowres](#) as FIS Sustainability Champion. Flavie was recently a director of BRE.

3.5. FIS have adopted a 'I, We and They' approach what can I do now, what can we do together and what can they do to help us. This ensures consistency and has produced some clear asks.

3.6. FIS are looking at setting up a cooperative insurance broker which means members will share the risks. This work may lead to FIS setting up as a Mutual Insurance business owned by members.

3.7. Aligned to the Building Safety Bill FIS are involved in developing a competence framework for the sector and the wider construction industry to define competence. This is a good opportunity to present the FIS community in a positive way.

3.8. He stated the sector and FIS members are showing resilience in these difficult times and it is a pleasure to work with and assist all members.

4 FIS Activities in Skills. Activities not reported above

4.1. George explained all of the change requests submitted via CITB last year have now been accepted in principle. The final steps are for the new National Occupational Standard for Service, maintain and repair of operable partition wall systems. FIS are working with CITB and the devolved governments regulators on this. The changes should start appearing in qualifications during September 2021. For more details please see: [Interior Systems Reviews](#)

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4.2. CITB have classified Dry Lining and the finishes and interiors sector as a priority occupation now in their top 4. Work has now started to interrogate actions that will support the sector. A further meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 22 September to discuss the development of a Traineeship for Dry Lining, Fixer Boarder Finisher, look at the National Construction College (NCC) becoming an FIS member and ask NCC to deliver FIS BuildBack.

4.3. George reported the Dry Lining Apprenticeship Working Group received a presentation from e-Aptitude on the development of an eLearning package for the knowledge criteria (Option 1 K1 to K9) of the Interior Systems Installer Apprenticeship. One employer expressed a desire to check the content of the package in order to ensure the quality and that the learning only covered the level 2 requirements.

4.4. He stated the Dry Lining Apprenticeship Working Group had expressed a need for a level 3 qualification outcome for Dry Lining. A small working group will be established to consider the eLearning package and discuss employer appetite for a level 3 qualification outcome. If you would like to be involved in this work please contact George.

Action 1 All

4.5. FIS are applying to join the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) directory of professional and employer-led bodies. This will ensure employer involvement in External Quality Assurance (EQA) activities for the English Apprenticeships for Plasterer and Interior Systems Installer. Through expertise in the FIS membership the sectors employers will then be involved in:

- Scrutiny of the end-point assessment and support materials produced by the end-point assessment organisations (EPAO)
- Insight and intelligence to support prioritisation and targeting of EQA activities
- Operational activity, to confirm that quality end-point assessment continues to deliver occupational competence
- Support to EPAO's where specific improvement actions are identified
- Addressing general trends in end-point assessment delivery that affect all organisations operating across an apprenticeship standard or group of apprenticeship standards
- Provision of high-level advice to the Institute
- Evaluation and dissemination of information on apprenticeship EPA activities
- Confirmation of alignment or mapping to existing professional standards.

For more information please see: <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/quality/employer-directory/> the Annex provides an explanation of expectations. George will continue work on the application.

Action 2 George

4.6. George reported current apprentice numbers in training:

- England (Interior Systems Installer ST0388) = 180
- England (Plasterer ST0096) = 440
- England old framework (VQ outcome) = 213 first Q 2021
- Scotland = 104
- Wales = 41

Completed vocational qualifications in Interior Systems Q1 2021 = 540 the actual occupational outcome is not known as the qualification has ten options: Ceiling Fixer, Modular Demountable Partitions, Operable Partitions, Glass Partition/Internal Screen, Dry Lining – Fixing, Dry Lining – Boarder, Dry Lining Finishing, Access Flooring, Cavity Barrier Installation and Acoustic Floor Installation.

5 Skills Board and Supporting Activities to the Sector. Activities not reported in the Brief

(a) Presentation by MyProPass

5.1. Bobby presented an electronic system for recording competence and experience of individuals. He introduced the team at My Pro Pass.

5.2. He explained as a large proportion of the construction industry is not digitised when employers come to recruit people identifying and validating achieved qualifications and experience can be difficult. There is also no single repository for individuals to keep and add to their own work records. The My Pro Pass (MPP) platform has been designed to provide these options and much more.

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5.3 The platform is free to individuals, so they are responsible for uploading their own achievement information. Bobby listed the benefits to employers as shown below emphasising this takes place in the background and any HR software run by organisations can be plugged in:

- An industry leading platform specifically designed to simplify work and professional career management
- Uniquely suited to any organisation to optimise business operations and save money
- Dedicated to empowering membership bodies to create a greater online experience that improves customer engagement
- Committed to support organisations with validating training and work experience to promote skills and development
- A free service for professionals to receive certificates, upload qualifications and search for learning, training and events
- Seamlessly compliments and supports existing business management software
- Entirely secured Cloud based to ensure automatic updates and increased reliability
- New mobile app launching soon, guaranteeing easy access on the go

5.4. The system can support customised certificates, notify individuals to complete CPD and advertise events. MPP are working with CSCS card to support the digitised version of registration. Individuals can search and sign up for courses access online and offline courses, events and webinars. Organisations can ensure individuals complete and record all training requirements for site inductions and toolbox talks to mandatory training and formal requirements.

5.5. For more information, please contact Bobby via email bobby@mypropass.co.uk or telephone 0787 555 8708, the web site address is www.mypropass.co.uk

(b) Training and Qualification Activities of Board Member Organisations

5.6. George asked each member to provide information on achievements since 01 April 2021, current activities and plans up to December 2021.

Helen – Measom had recruited apprentices and have cohorts in the north and south with a total of 18 trainees. Will be looking to recruit more in the next couple of months. Measom have a major project coming up in the Midlands and will be recruiting new starters specifically for this work.

Isobel – Linear is starting an apprenticeship academy working with New Lanarkshire College we will take on 14 individuals after their first year at college. Linear are doing this because our in-house programme has not been working. Approximately 15% of the Linear workforce are apprentices. We are running an in-house middle management leadership programme and delivering training in IT and other mandatory requirements. Isobel stated she is very interested in the MPP programme.

Mark Buckton (NOCN) – Been busy with developing End Point Assessment materials for construction apprenticeships. We have identified take up this year has been slower in qualification than the last academic year. We are supporting CITB with Traineeships and will be happy to assist FIS in the development of a Dry Liner Traineeship. Our online courses have been popular particularly all things low carbon and there could be some good local funding available for routes into low carbon jobs. Site Right, the NOCN short course offer, that are not regulated is also proving popular. We are working with the manufacturers of internal wall and ceiling heating systems to develop training.

Paul – Stortfords second cohort of Carpenter and Joiners are just finishing their level 2 and will move on to level 3. We are recruiting another two carpenters in London and Steve Coley has recruited a Plasterer in the Midlands via FIS BuildBack. We have employed three trainee Quantity Surveyors and a Buyer. We are looking closely at upskilling in order to retain existing employees.

Roy Imeson (Guest Attendee Green Light) – Been going just over a year and now have 213 people in training across 13 different trades, in Plastering and Interior Systems there are 30. Been working with Devon District Council to support employers taking on new entrant with training for mentors. It seems the industry can attract talent but struggles to retain individuals.

Steve Anderson – Got the Training Academies open across the North and providing skills support for the unemployed and now have access to the Adult Education Budget available for level 3 outcomes that can be used for the Occupational Work Supervision vocational qualification. In reflection of the labour shortages there are also low numbers moving through training, so it's likely employers are reluctant to release people from site for training. Construction Skills People still have approximately 200 to 250 vocational qualification starts per month. To meet funding requirements, we have added a low carbon unit into the qualifications being delivered.

Dawn – Taylor Hart will not be taking on any apprentices prior to Christmas. We have been working with British Gypsum and have taken on two females for plastering. They have completed the six week

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skimmer course and we have thrown every bit of training available at them and they are doing very well for this organisation. They are both enrolled on the Plastering vocational qualification. We have had a number of vocational qualifications completed and are keeping everyone employed by Taylor Hart up to date with mandatory training.

(c) CITB Update

5.7. George introduced Davy Macleod the CITB Customer Engagement Manager and liaison for FIS. Davy stated it's refreshing to hear FIS members are continuing to train in these difficult times. He stated he can relate to some of the comments regarding training taking a back seat, he promised to get an update of the apprentice take up figures for the next meeting. Davy said he was looking forward to seeing FIS BuildBack start up in Scotland.

5.8. Davy thanked all those that engaged in consensus. The outcome showed support from two out of three construction employers in scope to pay the construction industry levy. The result clearly shows discussions are needed to implement activities that provide direct support to the finishes and interiors sector and its employers. CITB will be looking at how they can better work with and support the sector, the sector is now one of the four key priorities for CITB. Iain added the vote was very close this time underpinning the sectors employers desire to invest in training and qualifying the workforce.

5.9. Davy stated he had been discussing with George about running joint FIS and CITB local events in 2022 in order to collect information that will improve CITB employer engagement. It is intended to investigate this opportunity further prior to the Christmas break.

Action 3 David,
Barry and
George

5.10. The consensus outcome has been sent to the Department for Education and once cleared CITB will work on the introduction of the new levy order starting in April 2022.

5.11. Davy explained Barry Dawson will be supporting him through to the end of the year, so at this time the sector has two CITB staff to provide support. He expressed an interest in discussing activities presented by Bobby and Isobel further, with a view to adding CITB support. Contact details for Davy and Barry are:

- Email: David.Macleod@citb.co.uk Telephone: 07795 224 553
- Email: barry.dawson@citb.co.uk Telephone: 07880 784088

(d) FIS Training Group Report

5.12. George introduced Marie Flinter as the designated FIS Training Group Officer (GTO). She explained the defined CITB strategic outcomes for the FIS National Training Group as:

- Increase the recruitment of new entrants to the sector
- Upskilling the current sector workforce
- Improve the training provision infrastructure
- Improve the standards and/or quality of training content
- Increase the supply and availability of trainers
- Influence and/or broker services

5.13 Marie reported member engagement with skills and training continues to increase the current figures are:

- 01 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 was at 22%
- 01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 was at 43%
- 01 April 2021 to date – the data shows a clear spike due to Consensus

She explained this data and information on training and qualification activities will, in future, be captured by the use of a short survey each quarter, please expect the first survey in October 2021. However, suggestions from members of the Skills Board on data collection will be most welcome.

5.14. Marie promoted the need for more Construction STEM Ambassadors for the sector, please contact marieflinter@thefis.org or telephone 07799 903103 for more information. This is of great importance to promote the sectors jobs to the next generation. Isobel stated Linear are involved with a local High School and asked if Marie could provide more information on the Construction STEM Ambassador programme.

Action 4 All

5.15. She stated since the 01 April 2021 funding, that employers were not aware they were eligible for, recovered via FIS Skills and Funding Clinics totalled £61,435.00. Marie is working with CITB to create a

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webinar to provide information on claiming grant funding. She asked members to pass information on the availability of FIS Skills and Funding Clinic to colleagues and associates.

Action 5 All

(e) BuildBack and KickStart Report

5.16. George updated members on the two added value projects being run by FIS as pre-employment pathway programmes.

FIS BuildBack. He presented the total outcomes agreed with CITB up to August 2022, 450 assess, 312 trained and 200 into employment and emphasised the determination to focus more on quality than quantity. The focus is now on employment in the finishes and interiors sector and not the wider construction industry. He provided information on existing and scheduled FIS BuildBack cohorts: In progress now. Building Heroes, Youth Build SE London, Working with Gypcraft Drylining Contractors Ltd and Stanmore Contractors Ltd who have committed to provide work placements, Sandwell College, West London College and Construction Skills Manchester.

Scheduled. In planning to start in October 2021 are cohorts supported by Vistry Partnerships Devon, Construction Skills Kirkham, Leicester On-Site Hub, Lendlease Perry Bar, British Gypsum and West of Scotland.

5.17. He stated employer involvement at the start is the best approach and if anyone would like to discuss how this can help your organisation please get in contact. FIS BuildBack is flexible enough to be developed so it matches individual organisational needs and Catherine will be happy to discuss bespoke cohorts in specific locations. FIS are working with CITB to extend this programme beyond 2022 and include other occupations. For more details, please contact Catherine, catherinebullough@thefis.org 07900 083325.

5.18. KickStart. FIS are an authorised Gateway organisation for KickStart working with DWP, there is an increasing pool of candidates due to the employment situation. KickStart is a six month work placement with no obligation on employers to take on these individuals at the end, just a requirement to provide job search skills. Individuals continue to be supported by DWP with 25 hours wages at the national minimum, it is up to the sponsoring employer if they wish to increase the hours worked and pay individuals. Employers receive £1500 per KickStarter to cover administration. George reported the current figures for FIS as of 17 June 2021 as:

- FIS Contract 80
- Total No of Employers 23
- Starts 28

(f) Work Placements

5.19. George emphasised the need for employer engage to offer work placements for both of the initiatives presented. In addition, there are two routes included in the government Plan for Job which also rely on work placements, Traineeships and T-Levels. George went on to explain FIS are working with CITB to produce a Traineeship for Dry Lining Fixer Boarder Finisher. A spreadsheet showing Individuals currently available for T-Level Industrial Placement was attached to message that carried these minutes. For more details on these government initiatives please see the following links:

[Traineeship information for employers](#)

[T-Levels](#)

[Apprenticeships Recognition of Prior Learning](#)

6 Open Discussion

6.1. George went to attendee's individual. The majority express gratitude for the work of FIS and stated they were grateful for the information provided at these meetings.

6.2. Iain stated he was thankful for all the good work and emphasised FIS are here to help, if there is anything anyone needs help with please do not hesitate to contact.

7 Any Other Business

7.1. Nothing submitted.

8 Date of Next Meeting

8.1. FIS Skills Board next meeting dates, please not these dates and times in your diaries, George will send Outlook appointments:

Action 6 All

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thursday 16 December 2021 10:00 to late (Christmas party if allowed?). Cundalls, 4th Floor, 15 Colmore Row, Birmingham, B3 2BH ▪ Thursday 17 March 2022 10:00 to 12:00 Virtual open event ▪ Thursday 16 June 2022 10:00 to 15:00 Face to face venue to be confirmed ▪ Thursday 22 September 2022 10:00 to 12:00 virtual open event 	Action 7 George

9 Meeting Close

9.1. Paul thanked everyone for attending, for their individual contributions and stated it is great to see new Board members. He looks forward to seeing everyone in Birmingham. The meeting closed at 11:45.

Actions

Ref:	Actions from this meeting	Assignee	To be Completed by
2.2	CF1. Continue work on Career and Qualification Paths	George	Report next Meeting
2.2	CF2. Make a direct request to change the Plasterer apprenticeship standard, remove Dry Lining by emailing or online web form	All	Report next Meeting
2.2	CF3. Encourage people to train and qualify as Vocational and End Point Assessors: NOCN become an end point assessor	All	Report next Meeting
2.2	CF4. Encourage, offer and register the availability of work placements	All	Report next meeting
2.2	CR5. Sign and return the FIS Apprentices Pledge	All	Report next meeting
4.4	1. Join the Dry Lining eLearning evaluation and level 3 qualification development group	All	Contact George, report at next meeting
4.5	2. Complete Directory of Professional and Employer-Led Bodies application.	George	Report at next meeting
5.9	3. Arrange employer engagement meetings in collaboration with CITB	George, David and Barry	Report at next meeting
5.14	4. Contact Marie regarding Construction STEM Ambassador Programme	All	Report at next meeting
5.15	5. Promote FIS Skills and Funding Clinics	All	Report at next meeting
5.19	6. Offer two week work placements to FIS BuildBack candidates	All	Report at next meeting
8.1	7. Arrange next meetings and send Outlook appointments	George	Report at next meeting