

Drylining in Housebuilding Report



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Finishes and Interiors Sector (FIS)

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1. Foreword

The drylining sector is made up of two distinct markets, commercial which includes high-rise residential and housebuilding. Through the Finishes and Interiors Sector (FIS), work has focused on improving the support available for new entrants via the Fit-Out Futures programme and in so doing has established clear career paths, improved competency and support for recruitment in drylining occupations.

Housebuilding makes up approximately one third of the drylining marketplace with businesses and individuals focused on delivering exclusively for this demand. This project has investigated the requirements for a trained and qualified workforce operating solely in the housebuilding environment. The Home Builders Federation (HBF) contributed to this project.

2. Executive Summary

Housebuilding sites are less structured in their setup than commercial sites resulting in the need for CSCS cards identifying occupational training for trades to be limited to site policy, rather than the physical presence that a gate typically has on commercial sites. With an ageing workforce, expiring employer accreditation or “grandfather rights” cards and potential changes to the flow of workers across Europe, there is a growing need for more formal training routes for new entrants. Formal training routes will help to upskill the existing workforce, support transitioning into the market (from other trades) and qualify new entrants. This work will also ensure better support for employers as the current approach is informal, the training that is in place attracts little or no funding support. A formal training route supported by funding may encourage employers to continue to invest in the people and/or process thus ensuring the availability of skilled and qualified dryliners for the future.

3. Objectives

The objectives set for this project were:

- To develop standardised, formally recognised training that enables the delivery of drylining within housebuilding.
- To identify and agree the funding available that will enable the delivery of the training.
- Ensure quality of provision of training in the right locations.
- Provide clear and transparent project governance.

The following objectives materialised as the investigation progressed:

- To develop a standardised framework to support the development of greater standardisation in the drylining sector and for drylining within housebuilding
- Identify clear operations and roles and requirements for entrants and pathways to extend knowledge
- To review how training maps into to existing National Vocational Qualifications and Scottish Vocational Qualifications
- To identify and agree the optimum funding options to support the delivery of the training and assessment (i.e. CITB, English Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) etc.).
- Ensure quality of provision of training and support for trainers across the four home Nations.

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- To support the accreditation of in-house training options, where applicable.
 - Provide clear and transparent project governance.

4. Scope

FIS worked with employers to define the skills required across the occupations and agreed the level of qualification and training needed to achieve. Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) standards team and National Open College Networks (NOCN) were involved in the conceptual agreement across industry. All parties, FIS employers, HBF employers, colleges and training providers formed the working group to define aspects and enable delivery.

The scope of the project is to:

- Define the requirements, the size of the market and provide a solution, led by employers in conjunction with training providers, awarding organisations and CITB

This scope statement has been (identified) dissected as follows:

4.1 Why may this be needed?

The new English trailblazer apprenticeship is for the commercial world and doesn't provide flexibility for operatives employed in house building, there is no specific trained outcome for drylining in housing and as such no funding is available. The vocational qualifications also focus on the needs of commercial drylining and those working on housebuilding struggle to obtain the workplace evidence required to complete the current qualification.

4.2 What will it look like?

The task of this project was to assess the need, scope out what training might look like and draw up a first version. An NVQ qualification exists as a route in, NOCN_Cskills Awards Level 2 NVQ Certificate in Interior Systems (Construction) – drylining boarder, this consists of boarding, dot and dab.

www.nocn.org.uk/what-we-do/qualifications/18168-603-0788-2-nocn_cskills-awards-level-2-nvq-certificate-in-interior-systems-construction-dry-lining-boarder/

This vocational qualification is also available in Scotland: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/82953.html

4.3 How will it be delivered?

The project considered methods of delivery and housebuilding employers agreed the training could be delivered at a training providers premises or on-site in the workplace. The main argument for on-site training delivery is that, in some cases one of the issues is getting learners to and from the training providers premises. The use of site meeting rooms has been explored and generally the answer has been yes thus allowing a trainer to visit site for theory work as well as practical instruction. This will ensure candidates can quickly put in to practice and continue practicing the skills taught.

4.4 What next?

Further work is necessary to explore options for funding. Training providers and contractors need to be engaged to set up pilot(s) of the proposed training qualification and its delivery methods. Preparation for this phase have be started as part of this project.

4.5 Key questions

- Is the training and qualification needed by both sectors?
- Is it practical to train on-site?
- If so, do employers need to train supervisors and operatives as instructors?

5. Background and Approach

Currently the Interior Systems English Apprenticeship has a Drylining Pathway written into the standard based on the occupational areas covered in the National Occupational Standards (NOS). The working group took the view that, due to the differences in the marketplace, it would not be possible to consider the specific housebuilding requirements within the apprenticeship and that housebuilding must be considered separately.

This has left the housebuilding dryliners without any form of training that clearly defines and recognises their competence. Where competency is currently measured, workers are assessed against the National Vocational Qualifications and/or Scottish Vocational Qualifications. It is considered there are inconsistencies across the quality, scope, alignment and language within the delivery of these qualifications. Using the vocational qualification means over training and therefore over qualifying housebuilding dryliners. Inconsistency in vocational qualification delivery does not support or encourage best practice in the occupation.

Several of the larger companies have in-house training programs, but many are informally managed and inconsistent nationally. It was identified training needs to be better supported both in terms of funding, provision, recognition and standardisation of delivery and training materials.

There are estimated to be approximately 10,000 dryliners currently employed in the housebuilding sector. As the housebuilding sector moves more towards carded and competent sites, and as the sector looks to develop recruitment, training programs and drive up quality there is a growing requirement to formalise training.

The commercial world has the new English Apprenticeship standard in drylining, but the housing sector has nothing. The need for a new qualification and training program is clear and drylining contractors who specifically do housing work are supportive of this. A letter of support from KJW Drylining who are based in Maulden, Bedford said:

“A subsequent shortfall in labour availability also leads to the current labour of average ability demanding higher rates and inflating the market rates at the cost of the subcontractor” (KJW Drylining, Bedford)

Other companies that have sent messages and letters include BDL Drylining and 4M, copies of all messages and letter are shown at annex A – page 11. Training providers that are willing to deliver the course include The NPTC Group of Colleges, Silver Trowel, New City College Group Havering College, The NVQ Training Centre, and Plymouth College who have a training facility at the new Sherford town site.

Meetings with the HBF and their members have been positive and they are supportive of the project and have said that the training can be delivered on site using their meeting rooms as classrooms and some stating they could potentially put a plot aside to use for the delivery of training. All of this will need coordinating.

The Awarding Organisation, NOCN has developed a new qualification from existing units entitled: NOCN Cskills Awards Level 2 Diploma in Housing Dry Lining. It has been confirmed this qualification can be delivered on site. The qualification was approved for delivery on the Wednesday 1 April 2020, please see the web link above.

During the consultations many companies asked if the same process could be used for taping and jointing (drylining finishing) once again there is no existing standalone training or qualifications for this activity. After consultation NOCN reworked the qualification, it now has core units with the option to complete a tape and jointing unit or metal frame suspended ceiling.

6. Existing Qualifications

Drylining in the housing sector is not as in depth as the commercial world, it is made up of dot and dab, boarding, stud partitions and occasionally metal frame ceilings. The drylining pathway in the new Interior Systems Apprenticeship Standard and the vocational qualification for drylining fixing are aimed specifically at the commercial world and include things like shaft wall, deflection heads and builders works holes.

With that in mind and after consultation with industry it was decided that a standalone standard (apprenticeship) was not the way forward for drylining in housing. Instead a package with a trained outcome providing skills and knowledge that may lead to the achievement of the existing vocational qualification was agreed.

The newly formed qualification, NOCN_Cskills Awards Level 2 Diploma in Housing Dry Lining is structured from existing qualification units and contains five mandatory units and two optional units from which the candidate must pick one making a total of six units to complete. This enables the qualification to be tailored to suite individual and organisational needs.



6.1 Mandatory units

- Knowledge of Construction Technology
- Information, Quantities and Communication with Others
- Health, Safety and Welfare in Construction and Associated Industries
- Move, Handle and Store Resources
- Install drylining and Encasements

6.2 Optional units, must select one

- Finish drylining joints
- Install drylining partition and metal furring ceiling systems

Details of the qualification can be viewed at:

www.nocn.org.uk/what-we-do/qualifications/25321-603-5551-7-nocn_cskills-awards-level-2-diploma-in-dry-lining-housing/

7. Progression

Upon completion the following vocational qualifications can be undertaken, providing the candidate has access to the required workplace evidence.

www.nocn.org.uk/what-we-do/qualifications/18168-603-0788-2-nocn_cskills-awards-level-2-nvq-certificate-in-interior-systems-construction-dry-lining-boarder/

or

www.nocn.org.uk/what-we-do/qualifications/18152-603-0788-2-nocn_cskills-awards-level-2-nvq-certificate-in-interior-systems-construction-dry-lining-finishing/

or

In Scotland: www.sqa.org.uk/sqa/82953.html

8. Training the Future Workforce

As outlined above colleges and training providers have shown interest in offering the training qualification. Included are Silver Trowel, New City College Group Havering College, NPTC Group of Colleges, The NVQ Training Centre and Plymouth/South Devon Colleges. According to the report on the impact of modern methods of construction on the skills required for housing, May 2019, with the ambitious requirements of the devolved governments for more homes in each of the four home nations it is predicted the workforce will increase even if the industry moves to off-site methods of construction.

The full report can be found at: www.citb.co.uk/about-citb/construction-industry-research-reports/search-our-construction-industry-research-reports/innovation-technology/the-impact-of-modern-methods-of-construction-on-the-skills-requirements-for-housing/

9. Challenges and Considerations

The lack of qualified trainers and assessors in this sector could be a problem. Companies could look at training staff to deliver the qualification in house. It may also be difficult to get training provider buy in as the level of funding for the trained outcome is quite low, £2,583 funded for 16-19 only. The likelihood is that the learners would come from the existing workforce and generally be 19 plus. These points will require further investigation to determine the level of support funding necessary.

10. Conclusions and Recommendations

This project has revealed an appetite for training dryliners for the construction of homes. The consultations undertaken have provided an agreed formal trained outcome, an 'off the shelf solution' which aligns to the current drylining practices in housebuilding. The Awarding Organisations and Training Providers agree there is viability for their businesses in the delivery of a training qualification on-site. Housebuilding employers and the HBF are enthusiastic to see delivery and feel assured completion of the qualification will improve the quality of workmanship.

It is strongly recommended:

1. Identifying and qualifying trainers off the shelf qualifications exist for training delivery. However, trainers must have experience of drylining.
2. Developing and introducing chronological Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for all involved in training, qualification delivery and vocational assessment.
3. Running four or five pilots to deliver the new qualification across different sites, providers and locations. This will ensure the chosen approach is fit for purpose before providing it as a solution to the housing sector.
4. Cohorts be a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 20 trainees. Close management and a high level of record keeping will be required throughout the pilot. This will support any changes needed.
5. All cohorts should be closely monitored to ensure training provision and achievement aligns with the Awarding organisations quality requirements.

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6. Organisations should provide case studies to assist in publishing the availability of the qualification.
 7. Further housebuilding occupations should be considered for this process.

The scope of future activity is critical, the aim must be to encompass as wider part of the housebuilding sector, down to smaller sites if possible. For any occupation identified for this process it is crucial from the outset to define the requirements, the size of the market and provide a solution, led by employers in conjunction with training providers, awarding organisations and involving CITB.

This project has clearly highlighted the gap in drylining training and the need for the new qualification for dry liners in the housing sector. This is now complete and is ready to deliver since the 01 of April 2020. With training providers and colleges working alongside contractors and individuals along with the support of the FIS, CITB and main contractors it is unanimously agreed the qualification will be the solution that industry needs.

11. Acknowledgements:

Matt Mcadams – Managing Director – 4M

Sara Cartin – Homebuilding Skills Partnership Manager – Home Builders Federation (HBF)

Phil Evans – Grants and Funding Manager - Barrat Homes

Michael Lennox – Partnership Manager, Scotland – Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)

Daren Walker – Commercial Director - KJW Drylining

Vinny Walker – Construction Director - BDL Group

Mark Evers – Managing Director - Skill Fix Interiors

Colin Teagle – Director - Silver Trowel

Wyn Prichard - Director of Construction Skills and Business Strategy at NPTC Group of Colleges

Colin Seabrook – Group Curriculum Director: Construction & Technical Services – New City College Group
Havering College

Bob Nosedá – Skills Sector Advisor – New City College Group Havering College

Steve Sugden – Senior Product Developer - National Open College Networks (NOCN)

Steve Ricketts – Sherford Skills Training Scheme Coordinator - Plymouth College

12. Annex A: Messages and Letters Received

Annex A

To Project Report
Dated March 2020

Messages and Letters Received:

Monday 30 March 2020 from NPTC Group of Colleges:

I think the concept looks fine and the idea of training on site is definitely a good way forward. The scheme lends itself to an On-Site Assessment and Training approach and the idea of regional pilots is welcome. On-line learning would also help reduce the operatives time away from the site and ensure they remain productive.

Engagement with Qualifications Wales and Wales Government is advised, in terms of meeting their Devolved skills delivery and policy requirements. Approach City&Guilds to adopt the qualification in Wales if NOCN is unable to operate here.

The content appears to be suitable and with the FIS and HBF leading, but the employers and/or members will be critical to its success in providing the work and on-site experience.

Happy to support and be actively involved- let me know if you need anything more

Monday 30 March 2020 from Persimmon Homes West Wales:

I have read the document which majors on the need for training and the considerations to deliver training in house building. I understand and agree with the content and the "conclusions and recommendations". I have no further comment as clearly the document has had a lot of input to get it to its current draft stage.

Monday 30 March 2020 from unknown Training Provider

We fully endorse, the application for the new proposed Drylining in House Building Qualification programme, which has already received a great deal of interest from local house builders, including Persimmon. The training highlighted, will in our opinion meet the needs of the current skills shortages as well as the demands for modern methods of construction.

We are pleased to fully endorse the current proposal and look forward to supporting the programme, when agreed.

Tuesday 17 March 2020 from Skill Fix Interiors Ltd

It was good to meet you the other week and good to hear of the training programme that you are putting together for the drylining trainees.

It has already been established there is a definite shortage of skills within the construction industry and within the drylining sector, so it's good to see FIS getting involved and looking at alternative training programmes.

As a training provider and contractor, I'm seeing the skills shortage problem first hand and know how difficult it is to bring new people into and through the system, especially when some of the main contractors are reluctant to have 16 year old trainees or apprentices on their sites.

As you know I am currently delivering a dry lining apprenticeship programme in South Wales with my colleague, so hopefully there is some way we can assist each other with the up and coming trainees within the drylining sector for house building going forward.

Please keep us informed of your progress with your new project.



For further information, please contact:

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