

**Minutes Of the Skills Board Meeting Held By
Virtual Meeting At 10:00 to 12:00 on Thursday 17 June 2021**

For a recording the recording of this meeting please go to: [FIS Skills Board 17 June 2021](#)

Present:

Paul Leach Chair	Stortford Interiors	Paul
Helen Syson Vice Chair	Measom	Helen
Iain McIlwee	FIS	Iain
Catherine Bullough	FIS	Catherine
Marie Flinter	FIS	Marie
George Swann	FIS	George
David MacLeod	CITB	David
Dawn Horton	Taylor Hart	Dawn
Ciara King	Errigal	Ciara
Steve Anderson	Construction Skills People	Steve
Vinny Walker	BDL	Vinny
Vacancy		
Vacancy		
Vacancy		
Vacancy (College representative)		

Apologies:

James Boulton	SCS North	James
Abi Jones	C G Reynolds	Abi
Dave Hall	British Gypsum	Dave
Mark Buckton, Cliff Poole, Chris Carter-Rowlands, Sharon Street	NOCN	Mark, Cliff, Chris, Sharon

Nil responses (resigned by default):

Simon Harvey	Grays Group
Alyn Carr	Tyne Met College

Guest Attendees:

Rebecca Fox	The Skills Centre London	Rebecca
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1 Welcome, Competition Act, apologies for absence and resignations.

1.1. George thanked those present for attending and welcomed guest attendees, the meeting started at 10:03. 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. Nil responses: as listed above.

1.4. Resignations: Since the last meeting resignations by default through nonattendance apply to:

- Simon Harvey
- Alyn Carr

Chairs opening statement:

1.5. Paul welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked all those in attendance and provided apologies as above. He welcomed Ciara of Errigal Contracts Ltd explaining Errigal are heavily involved in delivering apprentices and have had great success in UK Skills Build. He asked Ciara to introduce herself to the Board members and guests. Ciara provided a short introduction.

Paul expressed appreciation for the work on the Interior Systems Installer apprenticeship End Point Assessment test materials, the first video, the pilot of the Dry Lining option, is now available on the FIS website and he asked George to ensure the link is in the minutes. Paul stated he had been assured the video of the second option, Ceilings and Partitions will be available soon. For the video please see: [EPA Pilot video option 1](#).

1. George

Paul stated we are all aware that the arena of training and qualifications is constantly changing and as an employer it can be difficult to keep up with everything that is going on relating to our own organisational needs in order to provide competence to our respective workforces. These meetings are our 'heads up', to give us the information that will ensure we direct and guide FIS to ensure the work they do supports the finishes and interiors sector.

With the recently reported labour shortages this is of particular importance, all of the sector's organisations need to recruit, train and qualify people in order to ensure an available pool of labour, support succession and keep the order books full. Thanks to all present for their continued engagement with the FIS Skills Board.

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 March 2020 as a true record.

(a) Actions from previous meeting

2.2. George reported on the progress of actions from the last meeting: four 'ongoing' actions, one 'complete' and seven to be discussed during this meeting. He verified all ongoing actions would be carried forward to the next meeting.

Actions – 17 March 2020	Assigned	Report
CF = Carried Forward from previous meetings		
CF3. Continue work on Career and Qualification Paths	George	As agenda brief
CF5. Make a direct request to change the Plasterer apprenticeship standard, remove Dry Lining by emailing or online web form	All	Ongoing
1. Contact nil responders	George	Report at meeting
Actions – 17 March 2020	Assigned	Report
CF = Carried Forward from previous meetings		
2. Consider the Building Safety Charter	All	CEO Up-Date
3. Feedback to Iain on the CLC Skills Plan	All	CEO Up-Date
4. Encourage people to train and qualify as Vocational and End Point Assessors: NOCN become an end point assessor	All	Ongoing through FIS News
5. (Double entry see above CF5)	As above	As above CF5
6. Contact CITB to support changes to NOS, shareena.burton@citb.co.uk for full details contact George	All	See agenda brief
7. Encourage, offer and register the availability of work placements	All	Ongoing through FIS News
8. Respond to the CITB Levy Proposals and list of 10 areas targeted for support	All	See agenda brief
9. Draft Terms of Reference for the FIS Skills Board	George	Proposal, see agenda brief
10. Discuss future Skills Board meeting format with Chair, Paul Leach and Vice Chair Helen Syson	George	Complete
11. Thursday 17 June 2021 10:00 to 12:00, virtual with open invitation Thursday 16 September 2021 10:00 to 12:00 virtual with open invitation Thursday 16 December 2021 10:00 to late face to face permanent members only (Christmas party if allowed)	George	Ongoing

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

- (b) Competency Frameworks
- (c) Apprenticeships, EPA and training resources
- (d) Qualifications and ATP Network
- (e) FIS Training Group and Skills and Funding Clinics
- (f) BuildBack and KickStart
- (g) CITB Consensus

2.4. George listed individuals who had not attended consecutive Board meetings. He stated efforts had been made to contact these people and these will continue in order to get a clear picture on the situation. However, it will be prudent to note these positions as vacant and there is an opportunity to discuss this further in this meeting. All agreed.

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

3. FIS CEO Update

3.1. Iain explained shortages are the greatest concern to the sector at this time and there are details on the FIS web site: [Shortages-in-the-finishes-and-interiors-sector](#). He stated FIS were featured in the Financial Times this week with a statement regarding labour shortages. The current focus is on the labour shortages related to the new immigration system which has little flexibility.

3.2. On matters of insurance, which include escalating costs that will create greater risk in construction there are growing concerns. This includes restrictions in cover, and Iain explained he has spoken to companies who are renegotiating with their supply chain in order not to provide indemnity insurance. Linked to the skills agenda with demonstration of competence intrinsic to trust.

3.3. FIS are currently recruiting, firstly a Net Zero Champion to join the team and help meet some of the work necessary in this area and drive transformation. The second vacancy is for a Technical Manager to support Joe in particular projects such as through wall and heritage ceilings. Details of these vacancies are available on the FIS web site at: [Jobspot](#).

3.4. Regarding Action 2, The Building a Safer Future Charter, there has not been a lot of progress to update since last meeting they are currently recruiting assessors. The assessment standard has been made public, for more details please see: <https://buildingasaferfuture.org.uk/>.

3.5. Regarding Action 3 Iain explained FIS are pushing for more academic rigor to the CLC Skills Plan. To say employment is the answer to all of our problems in construction isn't appropriate for all, he stated he is really keen to resist, there's all sorts of reasons this sector do not employ more people within the supply chain. The CLC Skills Plan 2021 – 2025 is available [here](#)

3.6. Iain offered to respond to any questions offline saying he understood how busy everybody currently is.

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. Further consultation is required to finalise the process 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 in September 2021. For more details please see: [Interior Systems Reviews](#)

4.2. CITB have classified Dry Lining as a priority occupation and work has now started to interrogate actions that will support this occupation, on the table are:

- Enhanced grant payments for apprenticeships

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- Development of a Traineeship
- Development of a Trainer Resource Package to include training and CPD for trainers
- Enhanced grant for vocational outcomes
- Extension to, and development of the BuildBack programme

4.3. George reported a quick analysis of the latest CSN data shows this sector now needs to recruit approximately 7000 people across all occupations from Labourers to Senior Managers and everything in-between per year. For details please see: [CSN Industry Outlook 2021 to 2025](#)

4.4. The Dry Lining Apprenticeship working Group met on 19 May 2021 and assisted in identifying the 'ask' of CITB, listed above. The Action Plan for Dry Liner Apprenticeships was circulated with the agenda, this includes the FIS Apprenticeship Pledge. He thanked all who had returned signed Pledges. If your organisation is committed to utilising apprenticeships, it will be great to receive your signed Pledge.

2. All

4.5. George explained FIS has initially engaged with e-Aptitude for the development of an eLearning package covering the knowledge criteria for the Dry Lining option of the Interior Systems Installer, K1 to K9. As soon as something is available the intention is to present this to potential users and stakeholders, probably in early July 2021. This organisation e-Aptitude are a member of FIS as an Approved Training Provider, further details are available from: [Training Directory](#). This work is dependent upon support requested from CITB.

4.6. Mark Buckton of NOCN sent apologies and provided an update in an email message that was sent to all Skills Board members after this meeting. In brief:

NOCN are launching a new 'virtual learning environment' which has training materials including videos in plastering. This includes an improved portfolio functionality to assist learners in putting evidence together for an NVQ with examples. The SiteRight Fire Door Awareness course has been mandated for the Carpentry and Joiner Trailblazer Apprenticeship giving a Government seal of approval for how good it is. For full details see: [NOCN Products](#)

4.7. George reported current apprentice numbers in training, supplied by CITB as:

- England – 213 apprentices
- Scotland – 104 apprentices
- Wales – 41 apprentices

Total – 358 apprentices. It must be noted these individuals are probably on the old framework leading to a vocational outcome in Interior Systems, registered before August 2020. Interior Systems Installer ST0388 as of 01 April 2021 there are 160 starts, for Plasterer there are 330 starts.

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

(a) Skills Board structure and engagement

5.1. George asked if an automatic resignation process should be adopted and included in the terms of reference e.g., miss three consecutive meeting is deemed as resignation by default. All present agreed, George will amend the Terms of Reference.

3. George

5.2. George asked for consideration on how to fill FIS Skills Board vacancies, 3 employers and one college representative, he suggested the following options and asked for feedback via email george.swann@thefis.org

- Board members nominate organisations to be approached by FIS
- FIS determine organisations with clear interest in training and qualifications and present individuals to the board for consideration
- Ask for volunteers via a recruitment campaign. Chair and Vice Chair, advised by FIS to sift applications.

4. All

(b) Activities Report from Members

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

Paul – Stortfords are recruiting four apprentices, three Carpenter and Joiners and one Dry Liner, one KickStarter taken on as a Dry Liner. Vocational Qualification (VQ) achievements in three Carpenter

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Joiners and two Dry Liners and our FIS Apprentice of the year 2019 is now being trained as a Supervisor and we will be recruiting a Quantity Surveyor to start in September 2021.

Ciara – Errigal have recruited 15 new apprentices since April next intake due in August a further 12 apprentices. Approximately 100 site operatives have completed VQ's, and we are working to qualify all our site operatives by August 2021. We had 11 apprentices competing in Skills Build this year and are awaiting results. Brandon Duddy our candidate competing in World Skills completed his first pressure test against a Brazilian candidate and we are awaiting the results of that.

Helen – Measom have eight apprentices registered and we are recruiting a second cohort for a project in Leicester starting in September or October. We have 70 people working through the Dry Lining VQ's. We are actively recruiting graduates, Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers and are looking to fill positions in Human Resources, Information Technology and Marketing. We are working on a training App to be used on site which will include toolbox talks.

Dawn – Taylor Hart since April have completed 10 VQ level 2 and 3 more candidates are approaching completion. Completed a total of 56 training days on asbestos, work at heights and MEWP. Now accredited for FIRAS Installer Certification Scheme and now have 8 Assessors being trained by FIRAS and this will produce at least 20 on site assessments. We do not have any apprentices we are working with British Gypsum and have taken on two candidates from their site ready plastering course, and we will mentor them to the point they become self-employed. These individuals will be paired with an experienced plaster each time they are on site over three to six months work placement. We are looking to take on more individuals via this route. It seems more difficult to keep plasterer apprentices, although all apprentices who have stayed with us have been plasterers. We feel more time is needed with plasterers. We have one mentor who has coached five apprentices so far and enjoys training people. In Dry Lining it seems there are certain gangs that are good with apprentices and others that are not so good. Iain asked if plasterers were being lost to the domestic market, Dawn responded yes.

Vinny – BDL had 33 people complete VQ at levels 2, 3 and 6 and currently have seven apprentices. BDL are working with Bath University to develop training for muscular skeletal disorders through long term wear and tear in manual handling. We are working with our parent company Carey's to establish a Dry Lining Academy in Milton Keynes. Plus, normal IPAF and other mandatory training. Paul asked Vinny if they had been trailing the muscular skeletal aids, Vinny stated there was challenges when two people were working with these aids. It was identified that it's better for one person in a suit when carrying boards. Helen asked if it would be possible to share the results of the work with Bath, Vinny replied he will share the course details when they become available.

5.4. Paul thanked everyone for their reports and stated this is really encouraging for the sector.

(c) FIS Training Group Report

5.5. George introduced Marie Flinter as the designated FIS Training Group Officer (GTO). Marie explained the administrative support grant for this year going to April 2022 has been secured. She explained member engagement with Skills and Training has increased providing the following figures:

- 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 currently 13%

5.6. Marie explained that although a number of offers are currently available, please see: [Training Offers](#) she is constantly looking for training and qualification offers and discounts for FIS members. She stated there are 26 FIS Approved Training Providers who are all subscribing members and if anyone finds difficulty in engaging with a provider or requires more information, please contact marieflinter@thefis.org or telephone 07799 903103.

5.7. Marie presented the figures for the sums recovered for FIS members since July 2020 in her role looking after skills and training funding recovery or FIS Skills and Funding Clinics:

- GET Code Supplementary fund: £24,973.10 provided to 24 employers leaving £26.90 to be reconciled and returned to CITB by 18 June 2021.
- Recovered CITB grant for members: £80,180.
- Apprentice Fund: £3,500 distributed (balance £5,000).
- Total benefits to members: £106,653.10.

(d) BuildBack and KickStart Report

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

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5.9. **BuildBack.** She presented the total outcomes agreed with CITB up to 31 December 2021, 350 assess, 250 trained and 160 into employment and emphasised the determination to focus more on quality than quantity. Catherine provided information on existing and scheduled 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. Starting next week Sandwell College and in planning West London College scheduled to start in September 2021 and Construction Skills Manchester.

Scheduled. Vistry Partnerships Devon, Youth Build SE London, Construction Skills Kirkham (Open prison), Leicestershire OnSite Hub (working with CITB and Leicester Council) and Perry Bar the commonwealth games site in partnership with Willmot Dixon, Lendlease and Kier.

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

5.10. **KickStart.** FIS are an authorised Gateway organisation for KickStart working with DWP, there is an increasing pool of candidates due to the employment situation caused by Covid-19. 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. Catherine reported the current figures for FIS as of 17 June 2021 as:

- FIS Contract 83
- Total No of Employers 27
- Starts 16

(e) Work Placements

5.11. George emphasised the need for employer engage to offer work placements for both of the initiatives presented by Catherine. 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:

[Traineeship information for employers](#)

And

[T-Levels](#)

(f) CITB Update

5.12. George introduced Davy Macleod who is now the CITB liaison for FIS. Davy provided an overview highlighting the work being undertaken with FIS and the focus on Dry Lining. He thanked those present for their organisational update.

5.13. Davy presented the Levy Proposals for 2022 to 2025 and provided details. CITB have spoken with industry and the survey should be available for employers to cast their vote. George confirmed the FIS Consensus Survey is now available: [FIS CITB-LEVY-CONSENSUS-2022-to-2025](#) this survey will close on 06 August 2021. The results of consensus will be published by CITB in Autumn 2021. Davy encourage all to complete the survey.

5.14. Davy explained the intention to expand the FIS BuildBack programme across other finishes and interiors occupations. He stated NCC Inchinnan (Scotland) and Bircham Newton (Norfolk) are both offering Interior Systems Installer apprenticeship training. Inchinnan has introduced a Taper Finisher Jointer course to address the shortages of Ames Tapers in Scotland.

5.15. CITB has been through a restructure which has streamlined the way CITB works. Davy will supply a list of advisors available in your respective areas and he is happy for FIS to provide his direct contact details: david.macleod@citb.co.uk telephone 07795 224553.

5.16. George explained CITB have asked FIS to review the CITB training standards used to provide grants, Grant Eligible Training, GET Codes. There are approximately 50 standards on the list, and it is intended to

5. All

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call upon the expertise of FIS members in order to revise and populate the content of these CITB Training Standards. He will provide information as this work progresses.

5.17. George explained CITB were helping to unravel the problems employers are encountering when trying to register as an Employer Provider on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers.

6 Open Discussion

6.1. Iain explained he had just received a note from the Home Office who want to chat on 28 June 2021. So, he will be asking for data on labour shortages in order to prepare for this. Helen stated she had checked and has received responses from 75% of those asked about settled status and identified all but one of these people have applied. Iain stated the concern will be regarding the 25% who have not responded.

Helen said she was still awaiting details on the right to work process, Iain explained FIS are advising everyone to complete the necessary checks when the process starts on 01 July 2021. Iain responded it's a really weird system because you're not legally obliged to do right to work checks, but you're legally culpable if somebody's found working for you that has no right to work.

6.2. George invited Steve Anderson to contribute to the meeting, Steve stated Construction Skills People are working with approximately 250 vocational candidates per month and about 25% to 40% are in finishes and interiors occupations. Construction Skills People also have skills centres in Sheffield, Rotherham and Nottingham where we deliver introductory courses to construction. George asked if Construction Skills People would be willing to run a BuildBack cohort, Steve responded yes. For more details please see: [Construction Skills People](#)

6.3. George invited Rebecca from The Skills Centre London to provide an introduction. Rebecca explained the Skills Centre are predominately based in London with five centres and contractual partners across the UK and have funding available for level 2 VQ's for occupations in the finishes and interiors sector. She explained they also deliver the level 3 Occupational Work Supervision and Technical, Supervisory and Management qualifications up to level 7. The Skills Centre London have access to funding to support the training requirements of employers. They have a dedicated apprenticeship team ran by Sam King. For more details please see: [The Skills Centre London](#)

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:

Thursday 16 September 2021 10:00 to 12:00 (if face to face to 15:00)

Thursday 16 December 2021 10:00 to late (Christmas party if allowed)

Thursday 17 March 2022 10:00 to 12:30 Virtual open invitation.

6. All

9 Meeting Close

9.1. The meeting closed at 11:34. Paul expressed his gratitude for all the hard work being undertaken. He stated Stortfords are arranging a meeting with Measom to discuss their experience, best practice and lessons learnt to help each other. He thanked everyone for their contributions.

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
1.5	1. Embed link to EPA Pilot video	George	Complete

Ref:	Actions from this meeting	Assignee	To be Completed by
4.4	2. Sign and return the FIS Apprentices Pledge	All	Report next meeting
5.1	3. Amend Terms of Reference missing three consecutive meeting is resignation by default	George	Complete copy attached to the message carrying these minutes
5.2	4. Response on how to fill FIS Skills Board vacancies	All	As soon as possible
5.15	5. Complete FIS CITB consensus survey	All	Before 06 August 2021
8	6. Note dates of next meeting, George to arrange.	All	Before next meeting