

Shaping tomorrow

OUR VISION FOR SKILLS AND TRAINING FOR THE UK CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY



Building UK skills

We believe that developing the skills of workers in the construction industry is vital to the health of the UK economy.

We need to encourage more young people to join the industry. We want people from all ethnic backgrounds to look to construction as a great career choice. We want to ensure that everyone, right across the sector, from architect to steeplejack, has the best, most up-to-date skills to do their job.

We also need to target our efforts. We've pledged to deliver the right skills, in the right place, at the right time for the industry. That's why we set such store in our ConstructionSkills Network Report, and it's why we work with local communities to support the development of skills where they are needed.

This document sets out what we need from you, in Parliament and in Whitehall, to deliver these aims.

Who are we?

We are the Sector Skills Council and Industry Training Board for the construction industry, working to deliver a safe, professional and fully qualified UK construction workforce. We work with construction companies to help them improve skills to increase their competitive edge.

2009 has been a tough time for the industry. In response we are focused on developing the skills that will underpin the industry's future success. Take our Apprenticeship Matching Service which is active in your area. This service has already helped over 1,000 displaced apprentices stay in their jobs and keep up their training.

We are working to attract a diverse pool of new recruits into our industry – from apprentices through to undergraduates and young professionals. This will help employers to future proof their business, improve sustainability and increase their productivity and bottom line.



£170 million

Last year, 22,637 employers received more than £170 million of CITB-ConstructionSkills grants to help them improve their businesses through investing in skills development.

How you can help

To build the home grown skills our industry needs, ConstructionSkills calls for Government to:

- Use our sector knowledge to make sure that training is aligned to the needs of our sector, so that we have the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.
- Work with us to attract new blood into the construction industry and ensure new entrants are supported throughout their training.
- Back our drive to develop a competent, healthy and safety conscious workforce.
- Help the industry innovate by building a new green skills base.

As the economy recovers there will be new challenges to meet, especially around the low carbon economy and the role the construction industry must play in that.

ConstructionSkills acts as the focal point for skills training in the construction industry, and is ready to deliver against these challenges.



The right skills in the right place

Is the recession over for construction? Forecasts from our ConstructionSkills Network (CSN) – a collection of 13 local observatories from across the UK – show that whilst there have been some signs of recovery in the economy, the forecast for the construction industry in the short term remains severe.

Our report goes on to predict industry requirements in terms of the skill sets needed in each region. In this way we can establish where steeplejack skills are required, or where bricklayers are needed, and advise about local demand.

The most recent CSN discovered that:

- Construction output contracted by around 13% and a further 1% fall in construction output is predicted in 2010.
- In real terms there have been 375,000 job losses between 2008 and 2010, which are likely to be recouped by less than 100,000 by 2014.
- Public non-housing work, such as the Olympics and Building Schools for the Future programme, is likely to provide a significant stream of work through to 2011.
- The threat of a second industry slump after the Olympics is a real possibility.

“The CSN forecasts are unique because they offer a clear, accurate and detailed picture of the skills needs for each UK region. They have helped us plan in the short and long term for recruitment and training opportunities, and enhance our comprehension of what is happening to the sector.

Alan Rogers, Director of
Regeneration from Liverpool
Housing Trust



£15 billion

There are 39 National Skills Academy for Construction projects collectively worth over £15 billion running in England.

How you can help

To get the right skills in the right place, ConstructionSkills calls for both local and national government to:

- **Endorse the ConstructionSkills Network as the most authoritative skills data for the sector** – put its outputs to strategic use to predict future skills requirements and plan capacity.
- **Support and maintain public sector investment until the private sector recovers** – so that we can continue to provide employment for the 3 million* people who work in the construction supply chain.
- **Consider capacity and skills demand** – Government can set the standard at the earliest stages of procurement when it is the construction client.
- **Invest Higher Education and Further Education funding in the right Construction and the Built Environment courses and the best providers** – ‘demand led’ means what the industry needs not what individual learners want or what’s easy for providers to deliver.

*UKCES report, ‘Ambition 2020’.

More information, and the full ConstructionSkills Network report, including regional breakdowns, can be found at www.cskills.org/csn.



Support construction apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are the lifeblood of the construction industry. They remain the preferred route into the industry for most young new entrants, their parents and employers.

But the construction industry is facing the challenge of maintaining employer and apprentice engagement during the most severe downturn to affect the industry for several decades. We are seeing the emergence of a demographic time bomb in our industry: an ageing workforce coupled with a shortage of young people in training. If we cannot continue to support investment now we will see severe skills shortages in the future.

Apprenticeships are good news for employers because they combine college learning with on-site experience. This delivers apprentices with the right balance of technical skills and practical experience.

Younger apprentices are currently fully funded, but those apprentices above the age of 19 are only part funded. This is creating a major barrier to 19+ learners entering the construction industry – and demand for older apprentices currently outstrips supply.

Finally, the public sector is the construction industry's biggest client. By using its influence as a major client, the Government can set a great example to the rest of the industry and increase the number of apprentices recruited, by writing it into the procurement process.

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I'd like to see more funding available for 19+ apprentices – the older students have a lot to bring and extending the funding structure would help us support them.

Richard Easton, Managing Director of Hadley Shopfitters

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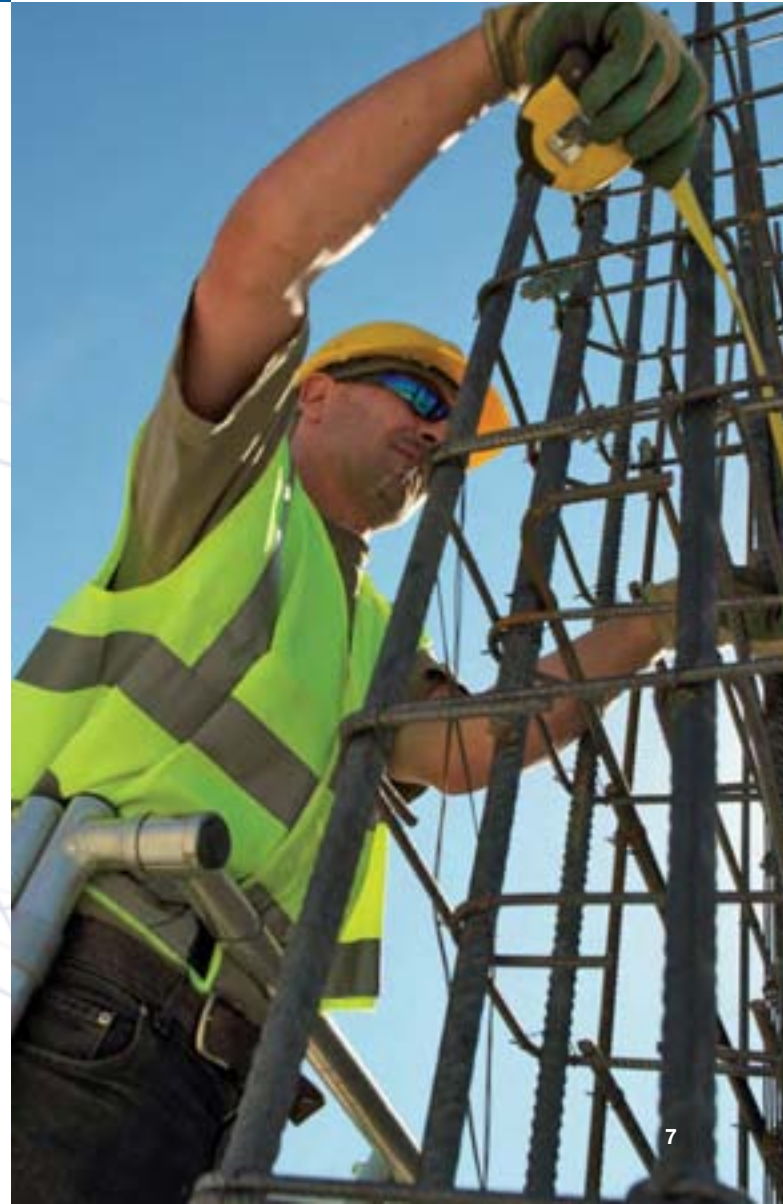
80% completion

In 2009, we helped 80% of CITB-ConstructionSkills apprentices complete their qualification – 9% higher than the national average.

How you can help

To ensure we can attract more apprentices into the construction industry, ConstructionSkills calls for Government to:

- **Shift the focus of careers information, advice and guidance** – this should concentrate on promoting opportunities for real jobs and careers, rather than opportunities for learning, and should be aimed at all ages.
- **Support skills competitions** – as an effective way of showcasing apprenticeships to learners and employees.
- **Champion apprenticeships as the best vocational route available** – keeping this entry route front of mind for employers, local authorities and students themselves.
- **Provide a level playing field for apprenticeship funding** – streamlining the funding system so that individuals at different career stages can benefit.
- **Demand more apprentices on public sector programmes** – requiring key departments to build this into the procurement process.



Support for the existing workforce

The current workforce must be competent and they must be healthy and safe.

Historically, many construction companies have grown from family firms. Industry recruitment tended to be ad hoc and facilitated through family connections, which led to high proportions of unqualified workers. There has been tremendous progress since then, but we still have a job to do to professionalise the industry.

Our approach is to bring competent graduates into the industry, adding value where we can through our Constructionarium programme. We also work to ensure that there are adequate progression routes through the industry. We maintain and build understanding of practical health and safety in the workplace, assist with management and leadership programmes, and work to allow specialist skills to develop and flourish.

To support the industry in developing within the low carbon economy we have established the Future Skills Unit. The sole purpose of this unit is to inform and assist the construction industry to respond to the changing demands being placed on it to achieve social, environmental and commercial sustainability.

Almost half of all CO₂ emissions are connected to the built environment, caused by housing, offices, power stations and the transport infrastructure.



Improving safety plays a key role in UCATT's work, and we have partnered with ConstructionSkills on initiatives such as the Worker Engagement Toolkit which aims to improve communication between employers and workers – and drastically increase health and safety awareness, and therefore reduce accidents and deaths.

Jeff Hopewell, National Education and Training Co-ordinator, UCATT



500,000 people were supported through their Health and Safety Test and 80,000 through a vocational qualification by ConstructionSkills in 2009 – as well as being funded by the CITB-ConstructionSkills Grants Scheme.

How you can help

To back our drive to develop a competent, healthy and safety conscious workforce with the right skills to deliver the low carbon economy, ConstructionSkills calls for Government to:

- **Adequately fund adult skills** – ensuring that the existing workforce can develop and thrive in a changing world.
- **Promote the health and safety agenda** – through government funded building projects.
- **Pledge support for the ‘Cut the Carbon’ construction campaign** – to ensure the whole supply chain is aware that the carbon clock is ticking.

Recognising and dealing with these issues has to be at the core of skills and training in the sector. A large part of ‘new build’ output is demanding more innovative skill sets and companies now recognise that their training needs to reflect changing demand. The use of modern methods of construction is a good example of this.



We're building the UK – here's how you can help

Our work has made a real difference to the construction industry. We have taken great steps forward in shaping qualifications, changing perceptions of the industry, encouraging a training culture and improving standards. Our employer-led approach to leading change has helped our industry to flourish, but there is still more to do.

This is a time of change and construction firms of all sizes will need to adapt to survive. Whilst we have a crucial role to play in supporting our industry, we recognise that we need the support of Government to continue to make a positive impact.



Therefore, we ask Government for support in:

Building home grown skills

- Use our sector knowledge to make sure that training is aligned to the needs of our sector, so that we have the right skills, in the right place, at the right time.
- Work with us to attract new blood into the construction industry and ensure that new entrants are supported through their training.
- Back our drive to develop a competent, healthy and safety conscious workforce.
- Help our industry to innovate by building a new green skills base.

Delivering the right skills, in the right place, at the right time

- Endorse the ConstructionSkills Network as the most authoritative skills data for the sector and use its outputs to predict future skills requirements and plan capacity.
- Support and maintain public sector investment until the private sector recovers – so that we can continue to provide employment for the 3 million* people who work in the construction supply chain.
- Consider capacity and skills demand to set the standard at the earliest stages of procurement when it's a construction client.
- Invest Higher Education and Further Education funding in the right Construction and the Built Environment courses and the best providers, ensuring 'demand led' means what the industry needs not what individual learners want or what's easy for providers to deliver.

*UKCES report, 'Ambition 2020'

Attracting construction apprentices into the industry

- Shift the focus of careers information, advice and guidance – this should concentrate on promoting opportunities for real jobs and careers, rather than opportunities for learning, and should be aimed at all ages.
- Champion apprentices as the best vocational route available – keeping this entry route front of mind for employers, local authorities and students.
- Support skills competitions – as an effective way of showcasing apprenticeships to learners and employees.
- Provide a level playing field for apprenticeship funding – streamlining the funding system so that individuals at different career stages can benefit.
- Demand more apprentices on public sector programmes – requiring key departments to build this into the procurement process.

Backing our drive to develop a competent, healthy and safety conscious workforce with the skills to deliver a low carbon economy

- Adequately fund skills and ensure that the existing workforce can develop and thrive in a changing world.
- Promote the health and safety agenda through government funded building projects.
- Pledge support for the ‘Cut the Carbon’ construction campaign to ensure the whole supply chain is aware that the carbon clock is ticking.

Contributes **8%** to GDP

Construction is one of the UK's most important industries. 3 million people work in the construction supply chain and it contributes 8% to the British GDP.

Support us

If you would like to find out more about the work we're doing to build Britain and make a real difference to the construction industry, you can visit our website www.cskills.org, email our External Relations Manager, Michelle Cowley at michelle.cowley@cskills.org or contact a member of our External Relations team on 0300 456 5405.



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CITB-ConstructionSkills, CIC and CITB Northern Ireland are working as ConstructionSkills, the Sector Skills Council for Construction. (CITB-ConstructionSkills Registered Charity Number 264289)