

# **OUTSTANDING TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL SKILLS NATIONAL PROGRAMME**

**Case study on project led by South West Association of Training Providers  
Created by: Julia Falaki, GWP**

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# OVERVIEW

## Introduction

The 'Building to outstanding TLA in construction in the South West' project aimed to bring together training providers and employers to visit the current construction curriculum and develop it further to meet the specific skills needs and gaps of local employers. The project ran 2-3 hour 'masterclasses' to facilitate discussions between the employers and training providers and initiate working relationships with a view to ensuring that local employers feed into the development of appropriate curriculum. In addition, employers and training providers were expected to work together to offer job shadowing opportunities for training provider staff and look at how they can work with schools and colleges to raise the profile of construction career opportunities.

By the end of the project, 8 masterclasses had been held. The format of the masterclasses was dependent on the local networking landscape, for example, piggy-backing onto existing construction groups, training provider-led, employer-led, joint working with local LEPs and Employment and Skills Boards (ESBs).



Masterclass in Plymouth

## Main Project Partners

The project was led by the Gloucestershire & Wiltshire Training Provider Network on behalf of the contract holder SWATPRO. Three other training provider networks: Devon and Cornwall; Dorset and Somerset and Hampshire and the Isle of Wight also took part.

By the end of the project 24 employers, 21 training providers, 2 LEPs, 6 local authorities and 6 business organisations were involved with the project. The project will impact on a minimum of 920 learners.

## Project Aims and Objectives

The aims of the masterclasses and project were to increase the knowledge of the construction sector and to support teachers and tutors to:

- Understand the challenges facing employers in the construction industry, enabling them to work together to ensure the curriculum is fit for purpose, particularly addressing the needs of major construction projects in the South West
- Identify CPD opportunities to benefit staff involved in the delivery of construction curriculum.
- Facilitate partnerships between construction industry employers and training providers, leading to improved and more effective and appropriate outcomes for learners.
- Continue to develop meaningful working relationships around construction with LEPs, to support construction as one of their main priority sectors.
- Contribute to improving teaching, learning and assessment in construction, with an impact for both teaching staff and learners.

## Learnings from the project

Employers and training providers welcomed the opportunity to meet and discuss local skills needs. It was clear from the early masterclasses that there were a number of activities which would benefit learners and which employers were keen to offer. These included:

- Work experience opportunities – either expanding current opportunities or set up new programmes
- Site visits – for careers advisers and tutors to spend time at a construction employer to find out more about the construction career opportunities available.
- Linking to local schools – to talk to schools about the range of careers in construction.
- Local courses – employers were sometimes having to send their apprentices out of area to attend courses and were keen to have local provision.
- Developing employer / training provider relationships in order to work collaboratively on curriculum development, and to contribute to outstanding teaching, learning and assessment.
- Curriculum development – working collaboratively to set up local provision.

The project has enabled training providers to learn more about the construction sector, its specific skills requirements and the range of construction careers available, and to further develop their skills and knowledge.

The project has also set in place first steps to ensuring that the curriculum meets employers' needs for the introduction of the Skills Plan and the new T routes are being delivered.

## Quotes from Training Providers on the impact of the project

'There are 400 construction students here at CCP; all will have the opportunity to benefit from this project.'

'Greater consideration of the variety of roles in Construction trades, which allows planning for future courses in higher levels'

'I have a better understanding of the industry and i will be able to share with students.'

'Links with employers and industry always support what is done in the classroom.'

'Enhancing links with employers and making learners more work ready through work experience.'

'Has enabled us to review our provision to ensure it is meeting the needs of local employers, particularly with Apprenticeships.'

'Further potential development of the curriculum area and possible work experience.'

'Looking at opportunities for referrals, work experience and developing new apprenticeship standards.'

## Project Outputs

The contract outputs and outcomes are as follows:

- 8 masterclasses were held (3 in each of Devon & Cornwall, and Gloucestershire & Wiltshire, and 2 in Hampshire & Isle of Wight and Surrey).
- A minimum of 16 training providers and 56 direct staff (FE Colleges and private providers) were to be involved in the project. A total of 21 training providers eventually took part.
- A minimum of 6 employers were to be involved in the project. A total of 24 employers eventually took part.
- The project was to have an impact on 240 students. According to training providers involved in the project, the outcomes will impact over 900 students.

## Activities agreed

It was clear from early masterclasses that employers were very keen to work with training providers on activities which would raise the profile of construction sector job opportunities and careers pathways. Although the bid had originally discussed engaging employers to offer job shadowing opportunities for trainers and tutors, a wide range of activities were proposed, including:

**Work experience opportunities.** Either an employer will be looking at offering work experience opportunities for the first time, extending the number of work experience opportunities on offer, and / or making the work experience opportunities more structured and effective for the learner.

**Site visits.** Opportunities for the provider's careers staff, external NCS careers advisers, and tutors to spend a half day or full day at an employer to find out more about the industry and the career pathways in the sector.

**Curriculum development** – Training providers and employers work together to tweak / further develop the curriculum to meet local skills needs and gaps. For example, 2 employers and one training provider are working collaboratively on setting up a groundworks local to the employers.

**Job shadowing** – Opportunities for tutors / teachers to job shadow at a construction employer.

**Setting up courses locally.** Where an employer has to send his apprentices out of area to attend training, and the employer would like to send his apprentices to a more local training provider / FE College.

**Presentations to learners.** Employers giving presentations about careers in the sector to groups of learners at a training provider / FE College premises.

**Employers visiting the training provider / FE College.** Employers being invited to look round a training provider's facilities and meet with staff to find out more about what the provider can offer and the courses available.

**Mentor training.** Employers were requesting mentor training for their staff who were mentoring apprentices.

**Work experience documentation.** Gathering documentary evidence from an employer on how they structure their work experience placements.

**Improved employer relationships** – building long-term working relationships between training providers and employers.

## TABLE

### Outputs and activities from masterclasses:

DATE OF MASTERCLASS	EMPLOYERS OFFERING WORK EXPERIENCE OPPORTUNITIES	EMPLOYERS OFFERING JOB SHADOWING OPPORTUNITIES	OTHER OPPORTUNITIES (INCLUDING STUDENT TALKS)
4 July 2017	2	2	0
20 July 2017	1	5	4
24 July 2017	6	5	6
25 July 2017	5	2	3
26 September 2017	5	3	1
2 October 2017	0	0	2
4 October 2017	0	1	6
5 October 2017	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	24	21	25

### One Takeaway Message

Although it can be a struggle to set up employer / training provider relationships to support outstanding teaching learning and assessment, the outcomes can far outweigh the hard work and perseverance.