

## ENDORSEMENT

### Why Endorse Foundation Degrees?

Employers in the building services engineering sector want to be assured that Foundation degrees (Fds) have the characteristics highlighted in the sector's Foundation degree Framework specification and address the common core content. Consistency is important if employers are to value the qualifications with confidence that a sector Foundation degree qualification, wherever completed, will provide the requisite skills and knowledge.

The building services engineering sector has a very geographically mobile workforce due to the project based nature of the work. It is, therefore, important to employers to know that if a member of their staff completes an Foundation degree (Fd) at one institution that they should be able to extend their studies to honours degree level or beyond, wherever they might be located. Universities offering level 6 programmes to enable Fd holders to achieve an honours degree also need to be assured that the applicant's Fd has covered the necessary learning at the appropriate level. Endorsement of Fd programmes that have been developed and delivered in line with key principles and common core content will assist Accreditation of Prior Learning, making it easier for universities to recruit, with confidence, students from other institutions.

Consultations indicate that Fds and higher level qualifications have the potential to serve the needs of many existing members of the building services engineering workforce; but that employers may not always appreciate or seek to realise this potential. The market for Higher Education to offer qualifications to the building services sector may be far greater than that currently explored. Employers and individuals who are not used to engaging with Higher Education may be more inclined to ask about, and ultimately make use of, Fds if it is readily clear to them how they meet the sector requirements.

Endorsement by SummitSkills and **fdf** (Foundation Degree Forward) acts as a quality mark statement indicating that sector requirements have been met. It, therefore, sends a powerful and trusted signal to the employers. When consulted during the development of the Fd Framework specification employers and education providers indicated their need for more specific information about sector Fd requirements and for a consistency of approach. Endorsement is a way of demonstrating that a Foundation degree addresses those requirements; that the provision is employer-led – developed to meet the employer's needs. As such the programme can be described as 'fit for purpose'.

## The Endorsement Service

SummitSkills and **fdf** are partners in offering a scheme for endorsing work-based learning higher education provision (primarily Foundation degrees) within the SummitSkills sector. The endorsement service is available for any higher education provider (with the validating body) providing higher education learning for the Building Services Engineering Sector to access.

Accessing the endorsement service will provide:

- information regarding the sector specifications and the criteria to be considered for Foundation degree learning
- guidance on good practice for employer involvement and work-based learning
- the opportunity for the institution to showcase how their programme addresses the endorsement requirements to external sector experts
- the opportunity to explore academic, curriculum and pedagogic issues with sector experts through the process of positive exploration
- suggestions on possible improvements to the programme
- a report that indicates how the programme has addressed the criteria specifications, highlighting examples of innovation and outstanding practice
- the endorsement partnership quality mark branding, for those programmes that have been successfully endorsed by SummitSkills and **fdf**

The respective **fdf** web-site is : <http://www.fdf.ac.uk/endorsement>

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## Endorsement Process – Overview

The endorsement process is a partnership between SummitSkills. Education providers interested in accessing the service should first obtain the Expression of Interest form from SummitSkills. This should be completed and returned to SummitSkills who will forward to **fdf** who manage the endorsement process overall. The Expression of Interest form is designed to enable institutions to self-review their provision against the detailed content requirements set out in the Foundation degree Framework, thus enabling them to consider how these specifications have been addressed.

**fdf** will nominate a client manager for the endorsement event who will liaise with the institution. A date will be set and an agreement for endorsement will be formalised. The client manager is there to help and support and will explain the process further and answer any queries. The institution will be sent all the relevant endorsement documentation

Endorsement is based upon the consideration of evidence in relation to specified criteria during a visit to the institution. The process involves a discussion of the provision with sector experts (a Building Services specialist endorsement consultant

and a higher education sector specialist endorsement consultant). The event involves all key stakeholders. The process is one of peer engagement, sharing ideas for enhancement, identifying innovative approaches and highlighting good practice.

The process will consider the employers' role and activity in the development and delivery of the provision. Successful endorsement will demonstrate employers' confidence in the professional underpinning of the programme(s). Thus students will be assured that the programme(s) meets the skills requirements outlined. Additionally endorsement will ensure that endorsed building services engineering Fds meet industry needs as articulated in the Fd Framework specification and:

- cover the common core content that sector employers have asked for
- cover suitable non-core content
- and are delivered and assessed in line with industry needs

The framework is developed such that providers may package curriculum to cover the learning outcomes in a way that meets specific local requirements. Discussion will include the manner in which learning outcomes demonstrate the Building Services Engineering framework.

The Framework specification will be reviewed annually by SummitSkills, to ensure it continues to reflect evolving needs. Any changes will be communicated with a timeline for their introduction. Institutions should seek to incorporate these modifications at the earliest opportunity.

Providers of endorsed programmes will be able to market their programmes with the endorsement partnership quality mark branding. This demonstrates that provision is fit for purpose, meeting the Framework specification. Endorsement is valid for a period of three years from the date of the formal endorsement outcome confirmation.

### **Consideration of Fitness for Purpose**

The Endorsement service uses a set of criteria – the Three Impact Factors – to assess the 'fitness for purpose' of the programme(s). The Impact Factors are explored through themed, prompt questions. These relate to the specific requirements of the building services sector and to good practice in work based and Foundation degree learning.

The Impact Factors and investigative themes:

- Employer involvement: *demand, development, impact*
- Capability and capacity: *sector specifications, expertise and resources, collaboration*
- Development and delivery: *partnership delivery, work-based learning, innovation and good practice*

Further information will be provided to applying institutions in **fdf's** document 'Guidance for Higher Education Providers on Preparing for Endorsement'.

## **Accessing the Endorsement Service**

An education provider wishing to access the endorsement service in general will find more information on <http://www.fdf.ac.uk/endorsement>.

An education provider wishing specifically to access the SummitSkills/**fdf** endorsement service is required to complete the Expression of Interest presented in Annex A and the accompanying Annexe B. If this is to move forward to endorsement then you will be referred to **fdf** and asked to complete the formal Application Form.

Please note that receipt of your Expression of Interest form leading to acceptance into the endorsement process is not a guarantee of the endorsement of your Foundation degree. The completion of the Expression of Interest form is the preliminary part of the endorsement process and does not indicate whether your Fd fulfils the criteria for endorsement at that stage.

The fee for endorsement is currently £2000 + VAT for a programme or a family of up to 3 related programmes.



## ANNEX A

### **SummitSkills/fdf Endorsement: Expression of Interest and Preparatory Self-evaluation Form**

*Ideally this should be completed by the awarding institution but may be completed by the provider **with prior agreement with SummitSkills and the awarding institution. Evidence of the approval of the awarding institution will be required.***

Please provide the information requested in the boxes on the following page and return to [fds@summitskills.org.uk](mailto:fds@summitskills.org.uk). SummitSkills will liaise with **fdf** and initiate the endorsement process.

<b>NAME of VALIDATING INSTITUTION</b>		
Name of delivering institution (if different)	<i>Please list all delivering institutions that you wish to be involved with this endorsement:</i>	
Award and programme title(s)		
Date award validated/ revalidated/formally reviewed		
Links to, or 'recognition from,' any other sector or professional bodies?	<i>Please specify:</i>	
Contact details:  Name  Postal address  Email address Telephone number	<i>Academic contact:</i>	<i>Administrative contact:</i>
Please provide a list of your institution's building services engineering provision: <b>Award, programme title and reference any Sector Skills Council and/or Professional Body involvement or accreditation</b>		

**Expression of Interest and Preparatory Self-evaluation Form**

Please explain using no more than one side of A4 why you would like to participate in the SummitSkills/*fdf* Endorsement process.

## **Expression of Interest and Preparatory Self-evaluation Form**

The following questions will help you assess whether you are ready for endorsement and to begin the process of self-reflection. You will be expected to provide evidence of how you have addressed these principles at the endorsement event. Please complete Annexes B and C **before** answering this.

<b>Meeting the Sector Specification Requirements</b>	<b>Response (evidence will be sought at the endorsement event)</b>
1. Have you aligned your proposed curriculum to the SummitSkills Foundation Degree Framework? <i>See your responses to Annexes B &amp; C below</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Are employers involved in your programme?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Have you embedded work-based learning into the Foundation degree?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> unsure <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Is the programme delivered in a fashion that meets employer and student requirements?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> unsure <input type="checkbox"/>

**If you have answered no to any of the questions above you are advised to review your Fd offer before progressing further** towards seeking SummitSkills/**fdf** endorsement of your Fd. If you are unsure of the response to any of the above questions you are advised to clarify before seeking endorsement.

A key requirement of an endorsed Fd is that it covers all aspects of the core knowledge and skills base specified in the SummitSkills Fd framework specification. (It is recognised that providers may package curriculum to cover the learning outcomes in different ways. Therefore it is not expected that the learning outcomes will be presented verbatim.) You will be expected to provide evidence that your Fd covers these requirements. It should also include a suitable range of the optional units but may include units that have been specifically devised in response to significant employer demand. Evidence of such employer requirements will be considered during the event.

Please see the Framework for key areas for additional requirements regarding non core units – these should not incorporate more than 20% of learning outcomes from other pathways, nor should they have a focus on ‘sustainability’ as this should be embedded in core content.

**ANNEX B Provision outline** (Please see the Building Services Engineering Foundation Degree Framework)

Component	Module	Can you provide evidence of mapping to the Fd Framework Specification (you will be expected to provide evidence at endorsement event)		Credit value	The Framework specifies the % requirements for provision  Does your curriculum meet this requirement?	
1. Engineering	M1 & M2 BSE maths (L4 & L5)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	M3 BSE science (L4)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
2. Built Environment	M4 Health & safety management(L4)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	M5 Construction management and procedures (L4)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>			
	M6 Project Management (L5)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>			
4. Applied Building Services Engineering	M7 Group Integrative Project (L4)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No		<input type="checkbox"/>	
	M8 Individual Integrative Project (L5)	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>		Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unsure	<input type="checkbox"/>			

5. Transferable skills	DLO Communication <i>or</i> O33	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO ICT	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Problem Solving	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Research	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Analysis and evaluation	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Working with others	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Managing own learning and CPD <i>or</i> O34	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Managing client relationship <i>or</i> O35	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	DLO Career management <i>or</i> O36	Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		Yes No unsure	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

**Please detail which optional modules are offered within your Fd .**

(You will be expected to provide evidence at the endorsement event of mapping to an adequate combination of optional modules)

Component	Module	Units mapped to FdFS (tick all that apply)	Credit value
1. Engineering	O1 Thermofluids (L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O2 Electrical/Electronic Principles (L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O3 Control theory (L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Technical Building Services (Mechanical)	O4 & O5 Heating, ventilation and air conditioning (L4 & L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O6 & O7 Refrigeration (L4 & L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O8 Public Health Engineering (L4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O9 Utility Services (L4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O10 & O11 Fire Engineering (L4 & L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O12 Controls & building management systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Technical Building Services (Electrical)	O13 & O14 Electrical Installations (L4 & L5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O15 Electrical Power Systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O16 Lighting Designs	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O17 Fire detection and security installations	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O18 Transportation systems in buildings	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O19 Controls and building management system	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Technical Building Services (Commercial)	O20 Building services engineering systems	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O21 Tendering and estimating	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O22 Measurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O23 Contractual procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O24 Law and contract	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O25 Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O26 Supply chain management	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O27 Specification and documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	
O28 Cost and financial control	<input type="checkbox"/>		

4. Applied Building Services Engineering	O29 Design Methodology for Building Services applications	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O30 Computer Applications in Building Services Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Transferable Skills	O31 Communication or Report Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O32 Managing own Learning or CPD	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O33 Managing Client relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	O34 Career Management	<input type="checkbox"/>	