

Building Services Engineering Foundation degree Framework Specification, and Fd endorsement

Implementation Bulletin 1

Remind me.... what's this about?

SummitSkills is the sector skills council for building services engineering. One of its responsibilities is to ensure that qualifications meet the future development needs of the industry.

A key output of a previous project was the development of a Foundation degree (Fd) Framework Specification.

This provides the structure, principles and content detail that will enable universities and colleges to design and deliver an Fd for the sector that is explicitly based on the needs of employers.

Existing providers of Fds will be able to review their own offer against what will become the industry standard.

This is available at: www.summitskills.org.uk/fds



Updating the Fd Framework Specification

SummitSkills has decided to complete a mini-review of the framework Specification in consultation with members of the steering group responsible for overseeing its original development.

The most significant planned change will be to add to the current list of non-core content pathways the option for specification of alternative content to cover needs not served by the specified learning outcomes.

This addition will allow providers to meet any new or local employer demands that the content currently specified does need meet, while retaining the consistency of core content that employers and other stakeholders have asked for.

We hope to include in the update the addition of information about a scheme for endorsing Fds that have been developed (or amended) in line with the framework specification.

To avoid unnecessary delays to the updating we are not currently planning to consult widely on the changes, or conduct an in depth review of all aspects of the framework specification.

However if you feel strongly that you want to suggest amendments to the current framework specification please email catherine.elliott@summitskills.org.uk by 8 January 2010.

Members of the Steering Group that led the original development will review all draft changes to ensure the needs of employers, colleges, universities, professional bodies and trade associations continue to be addressed.

Endorsement of Foundation degrees that reflect the Framework Specification

A number of Fd providers have previously asked for SummitSkills to endorse their Fds. At the same time employers need to be able to easily identify qualifications that are likely to meet their needs.

SummitSkills is keen to offer an endorsement scheme to celebrate those Fds that meet employers needs as articulated in the framework specification.

Fdf have successfully piloted an Fd endorsement scheme in partnership with a number of other sector skills councils

SummitSkills has been discussing endorsement options with Fdf and hope to start running a scheme for endorsement of building services engineering Fds in spring 2010.

Practitioner Network

To support implementation of the framework specification, and setting up of an endorsement scheme, SummitSkills and members of the initial project steering group will be setting up a network of Fd practitioners.

Membership of this network will initially be open to invited employers, representatives of colleges and universities, and other stakeholders who have demonstrated their commitment to the development of Fds in line with the framework specification.

Members of the network will themselves agree the terms of reference for the group. However, we envisage that network members would be kept up to date about relevant developments and given the opportunity to feature in case studies.

It is hoped that through this group, providers and employers can lead implementation of the framework specification and that they may ultimately take ownership of an endorsement process.

If you are interested in being considered for invitation to join this group, please contact Catherine Elliot at SummitSkills (see below) to register your interest.

Want to know more?

The Foundation degree Framework Specification and a guide for employers are both online at www.summitskills.org.uk/fds

If you have any questions about the framework specification, please contact Catherine Elliott catherine.elliott@summitskills.org.uk

If you are involved in developing, or looking to develop, a building services engineering Foundation degree please contact the relevant SummitSkills operations manager.

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Foundation degrees are not currently available in Scotland, and although they do run in Northern Ireland they are not identical to those in England and Wales.

If you are interested in working with SummitSkills regarding Higher Education provision in Northern Ireland, please contact Trevor Johnston
Trevor.johnston@summitskills.org.uk

Or for Scotland contact Ian Stirrat
ian.stirrat@summitskills.org.uk

Catherine Elliott (SummitSkills) December 2009