



Dear Sir/Madam,

Please find below the response from the Construction Industry Council in relation to the call for evidence on:

FAIR ACCESS TO THE PROFESSIONS

Your name and contact details:

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The organisation (if any) you represent:

Construction Industry Council (partner in ConstructionSkills Sector Skills Council): 26 Store Street, London WC1E 7BT

Which (if any) particular profession your evidence refers to:

The Construction Industry Council (CIC) is the representative forum for professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations within the construction industry.

It provides a single voice for professionals in all sectors of the built environment. through its collective membership of 30 professional bodies and associations across the built environment.

In addition, CIC represents the views of the higher level of the industry (professional, managerial and technical) in ConstructionSkills – the Sector Skills Council for construction. ConstructionSkills is a partnership between CIC, CITB-ConstructionSkills and CITB Northern Ireland.

Whether you wish your submission to be treated in confidence:

No

Part I: Background detail and facts

In this section we welcome some background detail and facts about the profession(s) your evidence focuses on. For instance:

How many employees are there in the profession?:

Approximately 270,000 individual professionals. This is the number of estimated professionals within the construction industry.

How many are training to enter the profession at any point in time? How many actual new entrants are there to the profession each year?

Approx 3,500.

How many employers are there in the profession? What is the average size of each organisation? What types of organisation (e.g. public, private, third sector) are these?:

27,500 firms of built environment consultants. 79% of all CPS firms operate from a single office and 84% employ less than 10 people - 28% of all firms are single person practices. 2% of firms employ more than 50. Professionals are also employed extensively in local and central government agencies.

What are the expected trends in employment in the profession?

Moderating in the short term due to the recession, increasing gradually subsequently.

What are the qualification requirements for the profession? What proportion are graduates?:

Entry is normally via recognised degree programme, plus a period of evidenced professional experience, plus professional interview (although there are variations between sector professions). High proportion of male employment generally, at approximately 90% of all employees. The male/female split within most CPS firms is not dissimilar to the rest of the construction sector (at between 95% and 98% male), with the exception of architects and planning practices – who employ a higher proportion of female staff (up to 35% female). 46% of all males employed by the sector are full members of the professional institutions and a further 27% of males possess an HNC (or higher) qualification.

Are there non-graduate routes into the profession?

Most Institutions provide for different grades of Membership, allowing access at, for example, Technician, or Associate level and allowing development mechanisms for vertical progression to higher levels of Membership.

Are there routes for people to enter the profession mid-career from other professions?

Some professional bodies provide for this, a few use membership of another Institute as part of their entry criteria. Lateral movement between professional bodies can be more problematic. However, see section 3 below.

How many people receive scholarships each year, how much are these worth, and how are they allocated?

Apart from any available via individual Institutions, there is a £1 million Sector Skills Council scholarship fund (employer-ConstructionSkills match-funded) to support those who choose construction related degree courses.

How many internship and/or work experience opportunities are available?

See above.

Do you know of any relevant academic or other studies of the profession?

Professional services survey and professional skills survey available via CIC website.

Part II: Evidence on current issues or barriers to access to the profession(s)

In this section we welcome evidence assessing current issues or barriers to fair access to a career in the profession(s). This might, for instance, consider:

What is the evidence in relation to levels of representation of new entrants to the profession(s)? (e.g. by parental background, school type)

SSC has carried out extensive research and promotional activity in relation to recruitment into the sector generally (focusing on sector image) to broaden the scope of audience.

What are the typical routes into the profession? (e.g. are there specific courses or degrees necessary for entry)

As above.

What issues or barriers might potential entrants face in accessing the profession(s)? For instance this might look at:

- **The quality and availability of information and advice provided to young people for them to aspire to the profession(s), and find accessible routes in:**

The sector has a dedicated website aimed at entrants to the sector and providing links to the various professional disciplines.

- **The formal or informal networks that can help facilitate experience of, or entrance into, the profession(s)**

Various schemes operated by individual professions.

- **The type of recruitment practices used to recruit new entrants (e.g. interview panels, selection days, assessment centres)**

Mostly interview.

- **The use of outreach and marketing by, or on behalf of, the profession(s)**

See above.

- **The financial obstacles or financial support available to aspiring potential entrants.**

See scholarships above.

- **The availability and funding of work experience and internship opportunities**

See above.

- **The range of potential routes into the profession, including nongraduate and mid-career entry**

See above.

Part III: Current initiatives, programmes and policies to ensure fair access to the profession(s)

In this section we welcome evidence looking at current initiatives, programmes and policies in place to support fair access to the profession(s). This might, for instance, include outreach programmes, internship or work experience opportunities, recruitment and selection practices, or expansion of flexible routes into the profession.

In your evidence you may wish to set out:

- **Who is responsible for delivering the initiative, programme or policy and how is it funded and delivered?**

The SSC is working extensively with sector professional bodies in a variety of ways to forge inter-connectedness between the disciplines. These measures include:

The extensive and pathfinding application of National Occupational Standards to provide a 'common currency' for inter-relating academic, vocational and professional qualification programmes in the sector for progression and recognition purposes; The development of sector Graduate Common Learning Outcomes adopted by many of the professional bodies; development of guidance to identify common Accreditation processes and criteria for recognition of academic programmes by sector Institutions; development of guidance for structuring and focusing Continuing professional Development across the sector; developing a sector-wide Higher Education Strategy to engage HEIs in the skills agenda to meet short, medium and long-term recruitment, learning development and re-skilling needs.

The work is led by CIC as a partner in ConstructionSkills, the work is publically funded, and supported by in-kind involvement of sector employers, Institutions etc..

See also research and promotional activity referred to above – carried out in conjunction with SSC partner organisations. This includes:

A network of Curriculum Centres delivering vocational education programmes direct to pupils; In collaboration with industry and SSC staff with teams of young Construction Ambassadors - over 500 inspiring young people who work in the industry have been trained up as Construction Ambassadors and attend schools across the country to give young people a real life perspective of the industry;

The SSC has managed National Construction Week for the last five years. One of

the focuses for this is encouraging women and visible ethnic minorities to enter construction by providing hands on experience of the industry; Major Positive Image advertising campaigns have been run each year, with associated research revealing a transformation in the image of a career in construction amongst young people, especially women. A website has been developed, www.bconstructive.co.uk, which offers construction careers information and advice for youth featuring positive role models; Delivery of over 3000 professional development days about careers in construction with careers advisers and teachers.

CIC Coaching Scheme is a volunteer programme that aims to raise awareness of the wide variety of career opportunities in the Built Environment Sector by giving children the chance to find out about careers directly from respected local professionals. The aims of the scheme are to:

Address the skills gaps in the professional disciplines

Raise aspirations amongst young people

The scheme is free to secondary schools and enables volunteers from the professions to run monthly sessions over one academic year.

How effective is it at encouraging young people to raise their level of aspiration and/or enter the profession(s)?

See above.

- **Are there transferable lessons from it for other sectors and professions?**

Most probably.

- **Are there any interesting schemes to promote fair access that you are aware of run by your counterparts in other countries?**

Possible different approaches in Romania, Estonia, Poland and Finland – may be able to access leads on these.

Part IV: Suggested actions to extend fair access to the profession(s)

In this section we welcome comments and suggestions about additional initiatives, programmes or policies that could broaden access to the profession(s) in the future. This can include measures undertaken by the professions, government, other non-governmental organisations or a combination of these. In your evidence you might like to consider:

- **What would be the aim of the initiative and how would its success be measured?**

Extensions of the kinds of strategies highlighted above.

- **What are the potential strengths, drawbacks or limitations of the proposal?**

Probably needs to be across sectors to succeed.

- **Who should be responsible for organising, funding and delivering it?**

Sector Skills Councils in conjunction with professional bodies – requires public funding.