# BSE perspective on CSMB, Skills England Report and Skills Policy changes

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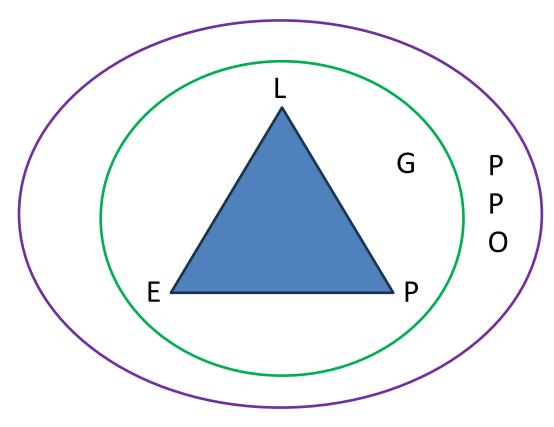




# BSE Perspectives on Skills Policy Changes, Skills England and the Construction Skills Mission Board



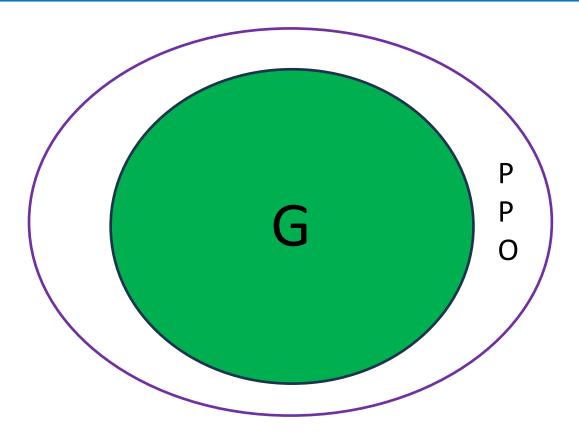
#### Context: The Weakest Skills System in the Developed World?



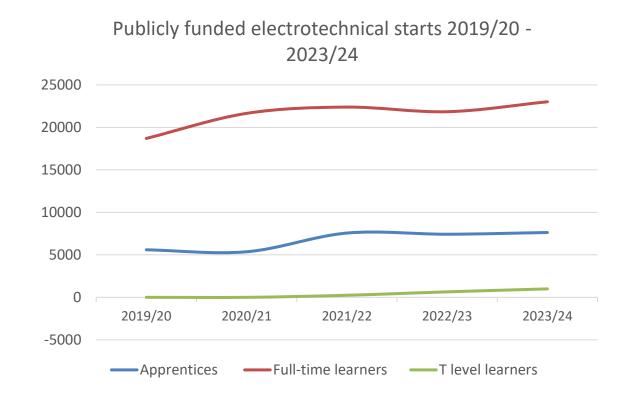
Purpose



#### Context: The Weakest Skills System in the Developed World?



A confused/ misdirected purpose



Imbalanced and wasteful misallocation of resources



#### Context: The Past Year



A still-born (or at least developmentally delayed) 'Mission-Based Approach'

News story

## Government unleashes next generation of construction workers to build 1.5m homes

 Up to 60,000 more engineers, brickies, sparkies, and chippies to be trained by 2029, as Chancellor outlines how the government will train more workers to tackle skills shortages and inspire the next generation into the construction sector.

Imbalanced and wasteful misallocation of resources



#### **Context:** The Past Year



Skills England: Sector skills needs assessments

Construction

June 2025



Rt Hon Sir Keir Starmer KCB KC MP

10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

#### Dear Prime Minister

We, the undersigned, represent a coalition of organisations and membership and professional bodies across the construction and built environment sectors of the UK economy. Together, we set the standards, accredit professionals, and support employers and members in building the workforce capabilities that underpin the UK's economic and social prosperity.

The Governments pledge to build 1.5million new homes over the next 5 years will rely on the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB) of the workforce to deliver this objective.

This relies on having suitably trained individuals working in the construction sector. However, the recent announcement from Skills England that apprenticeship reforms are set to reduce the apprenticeship requirements is cause for concern as it will result in severely weakening the pathway to required training. The proposed reforms include shortening the minimum duration of an apprenticeship to just 8 months as well as mandating a new end point assessment (EPA) that favours a shorter, high-level assessment plan over the current final, impartial stage of an apprenticeship. These proposed government led changes, we believe, will spell disaster for the construction industry and undermine the Government's ambition to generate economic growth.

The Department for Education has unfortunately continued to ignore a key construction representative in the pilot scheme, British Woodworking Federation (BWF), and set an ambitious timeline which is not suitable for the industry at level 2. This view is endorsed by many within the construction sector, which is working post Genfell to increase the SKEB of the construction industry to negate any such occurrence in the future on all buildings.

Ignoring industry voices

Industry <u>non</u>-engagement

Neglect/ indifference to employer demand

Industry now in open revolt?



www.eca.co.uk

#### Construction Skills Mission Board

The Construction Skills Mission Board aims to address workforce shortages in the construction sector by recruiting an additional 100,000 workers annually and enhancing skills training through significant government investment.

#### **Purpose and Goals**

The Construction Skills Mission Board was established to ensure that the construction industry has the necessary workforce to meet the government's ambitious targets, including building **1.5 million new homes** and delivering a national infrastructure strategy. The board focuses on several key areas to drive recruitment and skills development, including:

- Reliable and rewarding careers: Ensuring that construction jobs are attractive and secure.
- New entrant pathways: Creating clear routes for new workers to enter the industry.
- Access to training provision: Enhancing support for training initiatives.
- Funding that works: Ensuring financial resources are effectively allocated to skills training.
- Confidence to employ and invest: Encouraging construction firms to invest in their workforce.



Composition

#### Purpose



#### Construction Skills Mission Board

DISCUSSION POINTS		
No.	Item	Owner
1.0	Welcome, updates and review of previous actions (10 minutes)	Mark Reynolds
2.0	Construction Skills Package (15 minutes)  • Update on the Construction Skills Package.	DfE
3.0	Employment-Led Skills System (10 minutes)  CSMB engagement with industry placements.  Overview of college's CTEC approach.	Nikki Davis
4.0	Local Strategic Coordination (10 minutes)  Update from Liverpool Mayoral Strategic Authority.  Next steps on local strategic coordination.	Steve Rotheram Tim Balcon
5.0	Employer Investment and Delivery (10 minutes)  • Engaging with infrastructure projects and their supply chains.	Alex Vaughan
6.0	AOB & Close (5 minutes)	Mark Reynolds

**Engineering & Building Services Skills Alliance** 

**Sector Skills Plan** 

Agendas to date

Future agendas (perhaps)



#### BSE perspectives – and response



Table 5: Four-year net benefit for employers from an apprentice

Charge out rate	Net benefit
Low	£97
Medium	£26,580
High	£51,292

Sector voice

Boosting employer demand

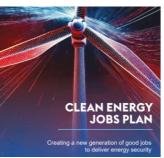


#### BSE perspectives – and responses













Regional action



## Negatives

- Underlying weakness of skills system remains
  - And current policy direction in England looks like making matters worse
  - Switch to DWP might address some, but not all, issues
- In their present form, CSMB and construction skills package look at serious risk of disappointing (yet again)
- A positive, genuinely industry-backed agenda is currently missing/being ignored



## What a positive agenda could look like

- Join up and align CSMB, DESNZ and other built environment skills programmes –
   and embed effective industry voices within them
- Strengthen industry voice at every level of the skills system including (perhaps) an AM2-style industry-owned competence assessment for <u>each</u> trade and <u>all</u> routes
- Reallocate resources to apprenticeships and other industry-recognised routes to competence
- Establish adequate grants/ tax reliefs for employers who invest in workforce development
- Develop closer, mutually beneficial regional delivery partnerships between SME sector representatives and providers

