

Key Partnership and Standardisation Electrical Event

‘Sharing Best Practice in Electrotech’

DCET Electrical Training Exeter, 4th December 2014

Hosted by DCET, City & Guilds is delighted to have held a key partnership event for the electrotechnical sector in Exeter last week. With a particular focus on the four nations, the event demonstrated our commitment to collaboratively reach and support high standards of training and assessment in the electrical sector.



With City & Guilds centres delivering our electrical courses across breadth and depth of the UK, our commitment to quality assurance means we work with our centres to standardise delivery wherever possible. The intention of this event was to bring together the ideas, skills and knowledge of training from a selection of our centres across the country. We were delighted to have attendees from Coleg Gwent, Cornwall College, DCET Training, and Barlows Electrical.

The event was held at [DCET Training](#), who have a long established reputation in the South West of the country, and also a keen interest in delivering excellence through best practices. DCET has delivered City & Guilds courses in electrotech, energy and sustainability for over 20 years, and were very happy to host this event at their premises in Exeter.

David Pye, City & Guilds Portfolio Advisor for Building Services Engineering, introduced the event and welcomed the centres and delegates to DCET Training premises. David updated centres on key strategic developments in vocational education and set the scene for the centre presentations to follow.

Learning Assistant and Quality Assurance

Steven Ward from DCET was our Keynote Speaker. An experienced tutor, assessor and now the lead IQA with experience of electronic portfolios, Steven shared his experiences with City & Guilds

Learning Assistant, our dedicated e-portfolio software. He addressed some initial common challenges faced by centres when first using e-portfolio software, and how to overcome them when using Learning Assistant. He described the benefits associated with e-portfolios, such as reduced paperwork, accessibility, cost reduction, ease of sampling, and the reports that can be produced by Learning Assistant that enable transparency and accountability in quality assurance and standardisation. Learning Assistant also brings benefits to learners, who can access the software on their phones and tablets which enables them to gather and share video, photo and written evidence.



David Pye then worked through a short activity looking at 'risk management' in association with IQA planning. Centres worked through examples of high risk activities associated with the 2357 Electrical NVQ Diploma. In the true sense of 'best practice', delegates were given a challenging activity to help prepare for an EQA visit. Delegates were encouraged to consider IQA activity and shared thoughts on sections they may wish to consider more closely in relation to quality assurance, all of which support in preparation for their next EQA visit.



In the afternoon, delegates and centres worked together as a group considering learners evidence against current standards, Alex Evans of Barlows training commented, "*David and I found it very useful and are glad to see the work we are doing here matches the goings on 200 miles away.*" Delegates were keen to share examples of best practice and were reassured to see that standards across Nations are comparable.

Electrotech Apprenticeship Trailblazer

David Barlow, of Barlows (UK) Ltd, a family run business established in 1948, introduced the next section on apprenticeships. Training is at the heart of everything Barlows do, and the majority of their senior management team completed their training and apprenticeship with the company. David believes strongly in apprenticeship development using a mixture of classroom and on the job involvement. He has been working with a consortium of employers look at the future of apprenticeships in England, with a focus on requirements of electrical training. Known as Trailblazers, the Electrotech Apprenticeship launches in mid-2015 and has strong support across the sector, including some large employers such as Balfour Beatty. City & Guilds has been at the heart of developing the assessment plan for this trailblazer, and will be working closely with employer groups to roll this out in 2015.



David was keen to point out that the group welcomes input from many different sources, and that the draft units are currently available for people to view and feedback on as part of the ongoing consultation. The draft standards are available from www.cityandguilds.com/buildingservices, under the documents tab on the 5357 qualification page.

Support Resources and Funding



Jonathan Bates, City & Guilds Business Manager, updated the delegates on new products to demonstrate our ongoing support to electrical training sector. City & Guilds now offer a full complement of support materials such as smartscreen, textbooks and the new e-books which are proving particularly popular with learners, who find them more accessible than traditional formats.

The final presentation was from our City & Guilds funding expert Lawrence Rowley, who pointed out some of the strategic changes in the Governments vocational education reform plan, and resulting challenges to funding reform across the Nations. Covering Key Stage 4, Key Stage 5, Adult Learning and Apprenticeships, Lawrence highlighted the particular impacts of Performance Tables, and how City & Guilds is responding with new TechBac® programmes. He also discussed the new needs for Awarding Organisations to produce statements of purpose and provide letters of support, to ensure funding for Adult learners.



David Pye reported, *“It was great to see centres presenting to each other and really getting into the spirit of the best practice theme, peer presentations are particularly valuable as centres can really relate to the message and C&G’s can see how standards are implemented which helps with our own development.”*



Stephen Baker of DCET summarised his thoughts on the event, *“It’s nice to meet other Training Providers and share thoughts and concerns with them. Benchmarking and sharing best practice is a necessary part of training and is vital to be able to raise standards.”*

The event was incredibly useful for all those attending, and we look forward to working with our providers to deliver similar events in future.