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PIPEWORK TRAINING STANDARDS WIN SEAL OF APPROVAL

New standards which future apprentices in the pipefitting trades will be expected to achieve by the end of their training have gained ministerial approval.

The standards, which were developed by a group of employers brought together under the auspices of the Building & Engineering Services Association (B&ES), have been the subject of extensive industry consultation, and were submitted to the Apprenticeship Unit of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) last month.

Formal notification that the submission had been officially approved came from Nick Boles, Minister of State at BIS and the Department for Education, at a National Apprenticeship Week event held at Elstree Film Studios.

Commenting on the success of the exercise – which forms part of phase 3 of the *Trailblazer* initiative – Mr Boles said that apprenticeships represented a real success story.

“By giving employers the power to design and deliver high-quality apprenticeships, we can provide young people with the skills our economy vitally needs,” the minister added.

“I therefore congratulate the Employer Development Group on their involvement in designing new apprenticeships for building engineering services.”

The sector was represented at the event by Colin Acheson, chairman of the Employer Development Group (EDG), which was established to manage the standards revision, and Mary Gowing, chairman of the Specialist Occupation Working Group, which undertook the detailed work on the pipefitting standards.

“This is excellent news for everyone engaged in building engineering services, and will provide the competence and professionalism which our sector will require to meet the technological challenges of the future,” Mr Acheson commented.

“I take this opportunity to thank all concerned for their hard work in securing this very positive outcome.”

Consistent with the principles set out by the 2012 Richard Review of apprenticeships, the key objective of the undertaking is to make sure that future training delivery reflects employers’ business requirements.

Ensuring that apprenticeship standards are fully “Richard-compliant” will also be critical to the accessing of such funding as the Government may make available for apprentice training.

“The present administration has already set this at £2.00 for every £1.00 invested by the employer, explained Peter Rimmer, B&ES head of employment affairs and skills.

“It remains to be seen what policy a future Government will adopt in this regard, but it is likely that there will be less public funding available for apprentice training in the years ahead.”

The approved standards cover building services engineering craftspersons and building services engineering installers. Similar exercises will begin shortly in respect of apprenticeships in the ductwork, service and facilities, ventilation hygiene and other relevant fields. Further small groupings of employers have therefore formed to undertake the relevant work.

Representation on the EDG was drawn from the following B&ES members: Aura Construction; NG Bailey; Briggs & Forrester Engineering Services; C Caswell Engineering Services; Crown House Technologies; Delron Services; Gowing & Hunt; Hargreaves; Imtech UK; Overclean; Priddy Engineering Services; Shepherd Engineering Services; and Skanska Rashleigh Weatherfoil.

Ends

Note to Editors

Further information from Jack McDavid on 020 7313 4909 (jack.mcdavid@b-es.org).

Picture Caption:

“Peter Rimmer, head of the B&ES Employment and Skills Department.”