

MANAGING CHANGE

The Skills For Business Network is at the forefront of the support and investment that has been put in place to drive up skills levels for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. Here in the North East the Network plays an important role in supporting the employer-led Sector Skills Councils, as *informnorth* magazine discovers...

The Skills for Business Network spearheads the nations skills targets and aims to boost the productivity and profitability of all areas of the United Kingdom.

The idea by is to tackle skills gaps and shortages on a sector by sector basis after identifying individual sector needs.

In short, we're trying to get the right people with the right skills in the right place at the right time.

The network was originally established with 'Trailblazers' and is now made up of 25 individual Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) with each one being an employer-led, independent organisation.

Where the opportunity exists, Sector Skills Councils are building upon their own partnership work, exploring ways that they can join forces to collaborate and work more closely together.

The work of the Sector Skills Councils is supported by the Sector Skills Development Agency (SSDA) which underpins the entire network, with responsibility for funding and monitoring.

The SSDA is a non-departmental public body which operates across the UK with its main base in South Yorkshire.

The North East has, in common with the rest of the United Kingdom, a majority of employers who operate and function within a locally dominated economy and SSCs are required to demonstrate they have actively engaged with employers at all levels and in all locations. Their skills needs are dictated by the local labour market and serviced by a

locally based education and learning system. As such, the ability to service the skills needs of local and regional employers differs based on the pressures of the local market place and the policies, practices and support that is delivered at more localised level.

The increasing divergence in skills policy application and implementation to a more local level increases the need for the Sector Skills Development Agency and the entire network to work even more closely with the local economic and learning infrastructure.

This includes each of the appropriate government departments and agencies and is a critical interrelationship that will support the development of a demand led approach that addresses the needs of employers at a regional and local level.

The need to establish and maintain individual SSCs and an SSDA regional presence is not in doubt, the need is to ensure employers are able to

get quickly and effectively to the information and skills solution that best meets their needs.

An important and fundamental key to the entire network succeeding

is the increased levels of employer engagement that we are able to secure; the quality and quantity of employer investment in meeting the skills challenge; and the credibility of the network, working in partnership, to ensure we deliver to British business - both large and small - and the public services which are both critical to the modernisation of our economy.



Judith Taylor

Sector Skills Development Agency

Partnership Manager - North East

Key Responsibilities of the Sector Skills Development Agency within North East include:

- Fund, support and monitor the performance of SSCs
- Ensure consistent, high-quality standards across the Skills for Business network
- Ensure skills provision is designed to meet sector needs
- Provide minimum cover for sectors without a SSC
- Ensure generic skills are effectively covered in the work of the SSCs
- Promote best practice sharing and bench-marking between sectors
- To collate high quality labour market intelligence and to make this available through a website portal.

SECTOR SKILLS COUNCILS IN THE NORTH EAST



asset skills Sector: Property, Housing, Cleaning Services and Facilities Management
 Contact: Lisa Lister, Regional Manager
 Tel: 01429 868 973
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government skills Sector: Central Government
 Contact: Deborah Barker, North of England Manager
 Tel: 0113 341 2613
 deborah.barker@government-skills.x.gsi.gov.uk
 or visit www.government-skills.gov.uk



Sector: Social Care, Children, Young People & Adults
 Contact: Bob Little
 Tel: 01642 345 681
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automotive skills Sector: Retail Motor Industry
 Contact: Michelle Barrett,
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 michelleb@motor.org.uk
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improve Sector: Food and Drink Manufacturing and Processing
 Contact: David Hickman
 Operational Manager - North of England
 Tel: 0845 644 0448
 david.hickman@improveltd.co.uk
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Sector: The UK Health Sector
 Contact: Avis Mulhearn,
 Regional Director
 Tel: 07710 866 947
 avis.mulhearn@skillsforhealth.org.uk
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cogent Sector: Chemical, Nuclear, Oil and Gas, Petroleum and Polymer Industries
 Contact: Mark Chapman, Skills Director
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Lantra Sector: Environmental and Land-based Industries
 Contact: Kevin Patrick
 Partnership Manger (North East)
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Sector: Custodial Care, Community Justice, Court and Prosecution Services, Policing and Law Enforcement
 Contact: Helen Brinton, Workforce Development Advisor - North
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 or visit www.skillsforjustice.com



construction skills Sector: Construction
 Contact: Terry Hanlon
 North East Manager
 Tel: 0844 844 0046
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Sector: Employers delivering or Support Lifelong Learning
 Contact: Mark Wright
 Regional Manager North East
 Tel: 07894 405 687
 markwright@lifelonglearninguk.org
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Sector: Freight logistics industry
 Contact: Alan Smith
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CREATIVE & CULTURAL SKILLS Sector: Advertising, Crafts, Cultural Heritage, Design, Music, Performing, Literary and Visual Arts
 Contact: Victoria Pirie, Executive Director Partnerships & Strategy
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people1st Sector: Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism
 Contact: Karen Couzens
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Sector: Active Leisure and Learning
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energy/utility skills Sector: Electricity, Gas, Waste Management and Waste Industries
 Contact: Ronnie Stephenson
 Skills Director - NE and Y&H
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proskills Sector: Process and Manufacturing Industries
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skillset Sector: Audio visual industries
 Contact: Ruth Palmer
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e-skills uk Sector: Information Technology and Telecommunications and the lead body for Contact Centres
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skillsmart retail™ Sector: Retail
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Financial Services Skills Council Sector: Financial Services Industry
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skillfast-uk Sector: Apparel, Footwear and Textiles and Related Businesses Industry
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Summit SKILLS Sector: Building Services Engineering
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