

ELECTRICAL SECTOR RESEARCH FINDINGS SUMMARY

1. Reason for the Research

In response to new Legislation passed in 2002, the purpose of the research was to identify how ETITO could provide leadership in the Electrical Sector on the current and future skill needs of the sector.

2. Research Objectives

The objectives of the research were to:

- assess the effectiveness of national training for electricians in meeting current and future skill demands
- identify areas for improvement in the national training

3. Research Method

Interviews were conducted with: employers, training providers, trainees, broad stakeholders and career advisors. Surveys were conducted with employees.

4. Information Gathered from the Research

Information gathered is broadly summarized below into 8 headings.

4.1. Recruitment

Most employers do not have a clear plan on how to go about attracting and recruiting the right people into apprenticeships. It is also difficult to attract young people into doing electrical apprenticeships as there are so many other types of jobs that they can choose from.

4.2. Cost

Most apprentices do not see cost as a barrier to doing an apprenticeship. How much it costs employers to train people needs to be looked at, so that employers feel encouraged to take on more apprentices.

4.3. Off-job training

How effective off-job training is in making apprentices more productive is questioned because: the purpose of off-job training is not always clear to employers; what is learnt in off-job training might not match what is needed at work and some teaching / learning needs improvement.

4.4. On-job training

Some employers could benefit from learning exactly how on-job training works and how to include it effectively in their workplace. The Work Task Log books are well thought of, however, effective assessments do not always take place.

4.5. Organisation at work

There needs to be better coordination between places of work and the organisations who provide the training to them.

Employers have very few systems in place to manage the performance of their staff.

4.6. Retention

Lots of apprentices resign in the early stages of their apprentice as: their pay is not linked to the gaining of new skills, there is a lack of further training opportunities, their work is not interesting and there is no opportunity for career progression. There is however a lower rate of turnover for electricians.

4.7. ETITO related issues

Employers would benefit from a clear understanding of ETITO's role and services and the funding support available.

4.8. Future workforce

There is a need to make sure that this industry continues to attract good quality people into it.

5. Recommendations to Improve the Quality and Relevance of Training for Current and Future Skill Needs

Two main areas for improvement are summarised below.

5.1. Better retention of apprentices in the early stages of training

By:

- providing a clear plan that shows what school subjects relate to an electrical career
- having a clear training and career plan for apprentices
- providing support to employers on how to go about recruiting the right people and how to keep these people in the job
- investigating incentives for employers to take on and keep apprentices

5.2. Raising the skill level of apprentices

Over and above 5.1 the following could add to the raising of skill levels:

- review off-job training to see if it matches the skills that are needed at work
- review how on-job assessments are done