

Position Statement



Occupational Mapping

April 2024

Introduction

Construction and the Built Environment Advisory Committee (CBEE)

CBEE aims to provide a single voice for CBE in relation to learning and education. It is not funded by government and operates entirely on voluntary efforts and employers who have chosen to invest their time in it.

CBEE includes representation from a wide range of stakeholders who are committed to supporting CBE education. The committee includes employers, professional bodies, awarding organisations, providers and other partners.

We aim to:

Provide a single voice for CBE in relation to learning and education.

Promote a vibrant community to share good practice, discuss issues, offer opportunities for networking and help to create a connected and resilient partnership.

Address skills gaps and help to inspire young people to train and progress to further, higher and professional education and employment.

Occupational Maps

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) state that:

All Apprenticeships, Higher Technical Qualifications, and T Levels are based on occupations recognised by employers. The Occupational Maps bring these together to show where technical education can lead. There are 15 maps, one for each route.

They help employers and individuals to understand routes for progression and how occupations at different levels link together.¹

One of the 15 occupational maps relates to Construction and the Built Environment. IfATE go on to state that:

The maps group occupations with related knowledge, skills and behaviours into pathways, making it easier to see the opportunities for career progression within that particular route. Within each pathway,

¹ <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/occupational-maps/what-are-the-occupational-maps/>

occupations at the same level are grouped into clusters, to show how skills learnt can be applied to other related occupations.

To ensure the occupational maps remain up-to-date, each map is owned by a route panel, made up of industry experts.

Route panels use the maps to support decision making on apprenticeships and technical qualifications. Route reviews are used to help them identify additional occupations that need to be developed.

IfATE states that an “occupation”:

... is a set of jobs whose main tasks and duties have a high degree of similarity across a relevant sector or sectors, rather than being associated with a single employer.

IfATE also states that:

An occupation proposal must meet our occupation requirements for us to agree to its development as an occupational standard. Our occupation requirements can be found here.

Route panels make recommendations on whether occupational proposals developed by employers meet these requirements as part of the approvals process.

Once an occupation is agreed upon, it is placed on the relevant occupational map.

IfATE plans to represent all qualifications that they have approved and the occupations that they cover on their occupational maps.

It is also important to note that occupational maps are not unique to IfATE and have been used, developed and defined in a range of different ways in different contexts. For example in relation to: the development of National Occupational Standards (supporting NVQs and SVQs)² ; creating a European sectoral occupational map³; developing guidance to show technical and vocational education options in India⁴.

This paper, however, relates generally to the work of IfATE and its development of occupational maps and specifically to its work in relation to construction and the built environment.

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/304239/nos-guide-for-developers-2011.pdf

³ http://www.vallaproject.com/clients/valla/files/2d.-good-practice-guide_occup-and-func-mapping.pdf

⁴ <https://ffsc.in/industry-occupational-map.php>

Intent

Is the direction of development and updating of Occupational Maps serving the **Intent** of the reforms?

The Skills for Jobs White Paper (published Jan 2021) outlined the intention, that the future of the technical education system will be based on employer needs with the substantial majority of post-16 technical and higher technical education, and training aligned to occupational standards, will be set by the Institute and developed and approved by employers.

It is intended that the Occupational Maps will be the cornerstone for these reforms. Currently the Maps focus on apprenticeships. But the BETA site does now also refer to T Levels and HTQs. The intention is that the occupational maps and associated data will become the basis for the planning, development, and communication of technical education in England.

We believe that:

- Updating needs further attention to ensure this is timely and swift to adapt to and to address new and emerging skills and occupations. Maps need greater adaptability to ensure new and emerging skills and occupations are reflective of the 'pathways' in the C&BE route
- IfATE has been asked to consider how maps can reflect routes from apprenticeships and technical qualifications into employment both directly and progression routes through study outside the technical education/training piece (i.e. how these map to degrees and professional development) . This suggests that mapping should be able to be of value to illustrate progression not only for employers but also other users including individuals. In this regard current maps need further development to show routes where it is possible to answer the question "how do we get from where we are to where we want to be?". The Mapping remains rather historical which need revision to reflect 'employer/industry reality'. In addition they simply don't reflect the broadness of the vocational pathways open. The maps needs greater adaptability to ensure new and emerging skills and occupations are reflective of the pathways in the CBE route. There is a need to actively promote and reflect newly emerging occupations. We also remain firmly committed and advocate for collective input to pathways to ensure they are right and are valued.
- Mapping of other technical education provision should not be restricted solely to government schemes but needs to be developed (through consultation) to reflect the sector as a whole.
- There is potential for mapping to be better understood and more easily accessed and stakeholders to be clearly and effectively signposted so that they know where to go to in the first instance.

Implementation

How is the **Implementation** of Occupational Mapping shaping up, and what needs more work?

We believe that:

- The development of occupational maps has made and, continues to make, steady progress and this is welcomed. However, the three current pathways and England only/Government funded products remain the only options presented. There are huge areas of other occupations missing (many of which will never be apprenticeships or vocational awards under IfATE) and they need to be addressed where they form a significant element of mapping for the sector.
- There is a growing recognition that there has to be flexibility in approach and most importantly in seeking engagement across the sector. As revisions are made to products (apprenticeships, T-levels, and HTQs), IfATE needs to work with (and listen to) stakeholders to better reflect placing of products in (better informed) pathways.
- The approach requires development so that in due course the complexity of dealing with both demand and supply can be tackled. Mapping should cover the breadth of functions and the depth of activities. This is not an easy task as it is both complex and complicated further compounded by the lack of data sources and validity, time lag, the pace and introduction of initiatives, the push and pull of competing priorities, the lack of alignment between strategy and operation and the disconnection between need, demand and supply.
- It is important to determine the purpose and use of mapping as well as the audience and user. There is a need for greater clarity and precision about who occupational mapping is aimed at and, in addition, to specify exactly what it is for, and for each target what it is for. For example, in the original advertisement for mapping (published 4th July 2022⁵) it was stated that the primary users will be "Employers, Higher Education Institution, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Training Provider's, College's, Professional Bodies, Awarding Organisation's, and other stakeholders with a vested interest in Technical Education". In addition, the same advert referred to user goals as:
 - Promoting, Communicating and Engaging
 - Knowledge gathering
 - HR and Careers
 - Qualifications, Curriculum and Standard Development
 - Consultation and Reporting
 - Industry Innovation.

⁵<https://www.digitalmarketplace.service.gov.uk/digital-outcomes-and-specialists/opportunities/17618>)

- The occupational mapping for CBE needs further work to ensure that it is up to date. This should better reflect the changes being made to occupations.
- Further work needs to be undertaken also to address gaps especially relating to new and emerging areas.
- Mapping should also address progression to professional education where that is supported by the sector. Professional registration standards (not just education) such as MRICS, EngTech, IEng, CEng, RTPI are the registers that apprenticeships can lead to.
- Mapping should illustrate all routes and opportunities for people to get into a sector/profession and be able to see a clear path they can follow if they wish to progress upwards or sideways. Currently the Occupational Maps focus on apprenticeships, T levels and Higher Tech Quals which are all funded programmes. What is missing is the careers advice, work experience and other quals that could be beneficial to people entering professions.

Impact

What recommendations can be made to ensure Occupational Mapping for Construction and the Built Environment has the most eventual **Impact**?

As we look to the future, there will be unprecedented opportunities in the construction and built environment industry. Functions, procurement, and practices will change and become more diverse and evolve within an industry that needs to go through major change together with a growth in specialisation, specialisms and an increasing need for specialists: but this should recognise that specialists may need a solid grounding in a wide variety of knowledge to appreciate how this relates to the fundamentals. Irrespective of the level of occupation there will be a need to recognise diversity, adaptability, agility, and specialisation. Less focus on occupation and more focus on function.

A challenge for the industry is the necessity to acquire new knowledge and skills and new ways of working will need to be harnessed and integrated into education, training, professional and industry standards at all levels to ensure that the construction and built environment industry is modernised and is able to achieve these targets.

In the case of occupational maps, it can be difficult to step back and set out the key features of the broad landscape without being drawn into the complexities of detail. This often results in over complicated and unworkable documents and charts that need continual updating and changing for the smallest amendment and become unusable and are only understandable to those that drafted the maps.

Recommendations

- 1) There is significant work required to establish the mapping framework and prior to launching into the detailed content and descriptors, volume and level, delivery and assessment, and quality assurance, entry requirements, solutions, timescales, periods of review and agencies should be avoided until the initial groundwork has been scoped and agreed with resources and effort quantified.
- 2) Moving forward it is suggested that a key group is drawn together to agree scope, requirements and how best to progress with the development of a holistic industry focused mapping framework. It is important that industry engagement is recognised but also government and the tertiary sector are included as key players to ensure that need, demand, and supply are integrated and are critical to be able to create a useable and workable model for all parts be it industry, government, and tertiary bodies to achieve an optimum framework.
- 3) This is a major opportunity for all stakeholders to work together to achieve step change, however it is important that there is a shared understanding and agreement and that there is no hierarchy of profession or title and superiority or special treatment. It must be seen to be inclusive and is inclusive across the breadth and depth of the built environment. We remain committed to working in partnership, including with for example the Construction Leadership Council, to help develop approaches that are valued and better meet the needs of the sector as a whole.
- 4) It is recommended that this mapping should be based on Function, Role, and Purpose to be defined for each area together with the key outcomes in terms of demonstrating achievement of the outcomes. Thereafter each function will be identified and developed based upon an outcome-based system as units and sub elements defined and measured against performance criteria, range statements and the assessment specification Performance Evidence in terms of product evidence, process evidence and knowledge evidence.
- 5) It is important that the mapping framework and the specification are piloted and tested prior to implementation main streaming to ensure that the system is workable usable and serves its intended purpose.