

# A Skills Update for ABHI Members

## May 2017

### Welcome

This quarterly Skills Update brings news and skills policy developments to ABHI Members. It covers the Science Industry Partnership (SIP), the sector's only employer member-led voice to government on skills, which is facilitated by Cogent; and Cogent Skills Services, the SIP's expert skills and workforce development delivery partner. ABHI has recently developed an even closer link to Cogent with Philip Kennedy, ABHI Chair, joining the Board. This means the ABHI will be working to further enhance the support and skills product development provided to the MedTech sector.

## Science Industry Partnership

### Introduction

The Prime Minister has, of course, now called for a General Election, which was backed by MPs, and will take place on June 8th. The SIP has reiterated its commitment to work in close partnership with any new government on Industrial Strategy, to continue to make the UK science sector competitive and successful. A continued focus on world class technical education, high quality apprenticeships and greater certainty about the UK's direction under Brexit are central to the SIP's ambition.

Prior to this unexpected announcement, it has been a busy few weeks in skills and education, with the introduction of the Apprenticeship levy and the Chancellor pledging funding in the Spring Budget for skills development. £300m was earmarked for supporting research talent over the coming years under the Industrial Strategy; and £500m a year, by 2021, to support the implementation of the newly announced 16-19 T-levels. The Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) is also up and running.

The SIP has already welcomed the Spring budget measures for technical education: [SIP welcomes Spring Budget Measures](#)

### SIP Action Plan to ensure the supply of 260,000 new scientific entrants

Following the publication of the Science Industry Partnership's Skills Strategy the SIP has now launched a collaborative Strategic Skills Action Plan to deliver the key skills activities needed to achieve the sectors' skills ambition – including a requirement for up to 260,000 skilled people out to 2025 – many in new technology-based scientific and skills shortage occupations. [Full story](#)

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### SIP works up early Life Science Sector Deal for Skills

The government released its Industrial Strategy Green Paper in January and is now seeking employer views. Firstly, the SIP has responded to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation. Alongside this consultation, the SIP is producing the vocational skills dimension to the Life Sciences Sector Deal; life sciences are benefiting from an early Sector Deal, under the leadership of Professor Sir John Bell.

The Sector Deals, which will be more far-reaching than skills asks, will be under the guardianship of the broader sector – recognising that skills are an underpinning foundation and importantly will ultimately be co-designed by Industry and Government.



As noted, the SIP has already published its Skills Strategy setting out a number of recommendations to address the current and future skills challenges facing the science sector. This was followed up by the launch of the Strategic Skills Action Plan in January 2017, which set out a series of strategic actions to deliver the recommendations set out in the Strategy.

The SIP sees the launch of the government's Industrial Strategy Green Paper and proposal

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## Science Industry Partnership

to develop Sector Deals as providing a vehicle to realise the delivery of the strategic actions through collaborative action on skills. Its input to the Sector Deal will focus on the priorities set out by the SIP and the skills solutions that will be needed in the future to connect to the Industrial Strategy and to drive economic growth.

### Apprenticeship levy launched

The government has launched its apprenticeship levy as part of the biggest shake-up of skills for a generation. The levy will require all employers in the UK with an annual wage bill of over £3 million to pay 0.5% of it towards funding apprenticeships. Employers in England can set up an online account to manage their funds and invest in training for apprentices working for them. The government will then provide a further 10% top up to levy contributions each month into employers' accounts. Apprenticeships have long played a vital part in addressing the sector's skills challenge and the commitment to more high quality apprenticeships is welcomed by the SIP. SIP employer members are keen to support a smooth and successful transition to the new system and will continue to work with Government to ensure it is responsive to the sector's needs. [levy launched](#)

### SIP Ambassadors showcase science careers at the Big Bang Fair 2017

The SIP recently took its specially designed, interactive STEM careers kit to the 2017 Big Bang Fair. Committed SIP Ambassadors, who visit schools to show real life careers in the industrial science sector, were on hand to showcase the kit. Liz Greenfield, UK HR Director at Pfizer, who is represented on the SIP Board and leads on the SIP Careers Strand, attended the Fair to champion the Ambassador Network. [Full Story](#)



Photo: Liz and members of the SIP Ambassador team.

For information on becoming a SIP Careers Ambassador contact [rachel.brickell@cogentskills.com](mailto:rachel.brickell@cogentskills.com)

### Standards, Standards...

Two standards have recently been approved by the Department of Education (DfE) approval panel: the Science Industry Process Plant Engineer (Level 6) and the Science Manufacturing Operator (Level 2). The Trailblazer group will now finalise the work based learning guides and develop the end-point assessment plans for these standards. Laboratory Scientist has also been reviewed and re-classified as level 6 and submitted for approval. An expression of interest for a new level 5 Laboratory Technologist has also been submitted. The aim is for all four of these standards to be available from September 2017.

Work is underway with TOPRA, the healthcare regulatory affairs body, on an expression of interest for Regulatory Scientist at level 7. Cogent supported by SIP, continues to facilitate the Life sciences & Industrial Science Trailblazer group and are actively working to identify any future new standards that employers may wish to develop, particularly at degree and post graduate degree levels.

### Everything you ever wanted to know about apprenticeship end-point assessment...

The introduction of end-point assessment (EPA) is one of the biggest changes to the apprenticeship landscape in England. EPAs are underpinned by an Assessment Plan designed by Trailblazer employers. SIAS, established by the SIP, is an apprentice end-assessment organisation which designs and delivers the end-point assessment tests for the new STEM Standards. Here, Christine Sakhardande, Head of Assessment Services, explains what's involved in EPA, in this latest blog [SIAS blog](#)

### Vocational education is changing its image

SIP Chair, Malcolm Skingle recently contributed a Blog explaining that we are currently witnessing the most far reaching changes to further and higher education in decades – including to the funding environment (the Apprenticeship levy) and across technical education more broadly (The Post-16 Skills Plan). [Read the blog](#)



## SIP welcomes Spring Budget measures to boost skills

The SIP's membership of leading science employers responded positively to the Chancellor's Spring budget plans to commit an additional £500 million in government funding, every year, for training 16 to 19-year-olds undertaking technical skills programmes. This funding will be rolled out from the 2019-20 financial year, reaching £500 million a year from 2022.

## Response to Brexit speech

Responding to the Prime Minister's speech setting out the government's twelve negotiating objectives for exiting the EU, the SIP commented: "Science is a critically important UK sector, and is one which requires global circulation of talent. This needs to be maintained between the EU and UK; we would welcome early clarity around the status of EU nationals already working in the UK and vice versa."

[Full story](#)

## SIP Membership - one voice on skills, making a difference

SIP employer members have come together to take responsibility for the skills they need to grow excellence and innovation. In less than a year, the SIP has established itself as a fully-fledged membership organisation with 25 members across chemicals and pharma, and is growing. SIP membership is designed to help companies achieve economies of scale and lower costs through working collaboratively and sharing best practice. It operates in three main areas:

**Strategic Voice and Value**

**Collaboration and Communication**

**Operational Support**

For more information on joining the SIP contact [kate.hutchins@cogentskills.com](mailto:kate.hutchins@cogentskills.com)

## Is your organisation paying the Levy?

If the answer is yes, you should have received a communication from HM Revenue & Customs recently providing you with further information about how you could use apprenticeships in your organisation.

If you are yet to begin planning how to use the levy and need help in either scoping or managing your apprenticeship ambition, including spending the levy, Cogent Skills Services can assist you in planning or managing your entire apprenticeship programme.

## What if you won't be paying the Apprenticeship levy?

If you are a non-levy paying employer, 90% of your apprenticeship training and assessment costs in England will be paid for by the government. Giving many organisations the opportunity to recruit apprentices for the first time.

If you would like a no-obligation chat with one of the CSS Apprenticeship experts, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Matt Syrett, 01925 515 225, [matthew.syrett@cogentskills.com](mailto:matthew.syrett@cogentskills.com)

## Process Safety Management: Open Course Date



Cogent Skills and the Process Safety Management Competence Programme Board (PSMCPB), of which the CIA are a member, are delivering a standards-based Process Safety Management programme around the UK. There are now a number of open course dates:

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for science industries

**8th June 2017, Grangemouth:** Process Safety Leadership (PSL) a one day course specifically designed for Senior Executives

**21st - 22nd June 2017, Grangemouth: Process Safety Management Foundations (PSMF)** this course provides the fundamental knowledge of the principles of process safety management

CSS can also deliver the courses in-house on your site, and bespoke them to the client.

If you would like to find out more about any of the above products call 01325 740900 or email [industry@cogentskills.com](mailto:industry@cogentskills.com)