

Skills Enhancement Subgroup

Minutes 23rd July 2025

1. Present: J Codd (WCCC), R Hickey (Ireland South East), Ed Connolly (Regional Skills), Laura Power (UNESCO City of Learning), Trevor Sinnott (WWETB), J Beresford (D&WWC), L O'Reilly (DEASP).
Apologies: Grace Power (LEO), P Wallace (WAP), N Quinlan (SETU), C Rossi (WLP), T Ryan (Skillnet), G Wilson (WLP).
2. Minutes 21st May 2025: Matters arising: None
3. Clustering: An international conference will take place in Autum. Southeast Ireland Engineering and Cyber tech will be attending. Funding remains an issue. Industry boards, similar to clustering, exist for hospitality, construction, life sciences, land and marine sciences. National strategy required, regional plans have been finalised.
4. UNESCO City of learning introduced by Laura Power. The definition of a UNESCO C.o.L. is to foster a culture of Lifelong Learning (aside from mainstream education). Larchville Lisduggan will be the first pilot learning neighbourhood. Cork Limerick Waterford and Kilkenny hope to align and create the first UNESCO region of lifelong learning.
5. Fab Lab: Official Lauch postponed to 2026 due to budgetary issues. Ed Connolly will do a feature on the facility.
6. Training Opportunities for Young People: Pa Wallce to provide SICAP update in September.
7. Skillnet Programmes: Skillnet courses will be circulated. Requests for new courses are being made, releasing trainers to run the courses will requires subsidies of approximately €1m.
8. Opportunities for Ukrainians: English language courses are full, numbers arriving continue to fall.
9. WCCC have published a dedicated skills page or one-stop-shop for those seeking to train or upskill. PR drive going ahead in June, radio advert has issued to WLR and a poster for socials and print media is being created by WCCC Comms team. Next FET fair is 9th October in SETU. Strapline "There's a course out there for you" to be used. In future PR. The outreach should be constant, libraries are a good outlet to disseminate PR work, Proposal to invite a library rep to the committee. Proposed by: Trevor Sinnott, Seconded by Laura Power.
10. Breakfast Briefing: Breakfast briefings (linking trainers and employers). One event took place on 5th June in Enniscorthy.
11. Portal: 7 Training videos are available and will be included on the skills web page, new videos can be sent to J Codd.

12. Ed Connolly: A report on sectoral profiles is available and will be circulated.
13. Offshore Wind Farming: Public announcement due in Feb 2026 regarding the Tonne Nua contractor. Data centres want green energy and like to operate in groups of three therefore three towns in the Southeast could benefit. SETU continue to deliver courses in offshore wind tech.
14. A.I. Skillnet continue to deliver courses in A.I. ETB have A.I. programme and are monitoring demand. 10 firms a West Waterford Chamber event on A.I. Solas have level 4,5 and 6 courses with QQI accreditation. It's a fast evolving space and sector specific, some are embracing the technology, others are sceptical. A.I. is evolving and is of great interest to UNESCO C.o.L.
15. A.O.B. UNESCO C.o.L. soft launch to take place during SPRAOI with pop up stand in John Robert's Square. New agenda items to be sent to J Codd.

16. Next Steps

- Circulate Skillnet Programmes (J Codd).
- Continue to monitor medium and long term skills shortages (Ed Connolly).
- JC to publish PR drive advert
- Circulate feedback on Wind Farm Task Force (Ed Connolly, R Hickey).
- PR Skills and Training page on WCCC website, updates are to be sent to J Codd, SETU links to be added, check for videos JC.
- Agencies to continue networking with Clusters or Industry Boards (LEO, WLP, WWETB).
- WAP, ETB and Regional Skills to collaborate on Green Energy projects and courses. Consultancy document on economic opportunities to be circulated
- Invite Library to nominate a representative to the committee

17. Meeting Dates 2025. Wednesday's 11.30am

24th September

19th November

Appendices: Current Skillnet Courses
WST LAES Jobs & Training Pack
Skills Shortages Summary
South East Skills and Training News
PR Advert: Skills Enhancement Training Courses Employment Options